

small Force that we shall be able to collect this Winter or early Letter Bk. II.
in the ensuing Spring.

In pursuance of His & Governor Dobbs's Advice & Approbation I propose if possible to raise 700 Men immediately who will I hope (if a very severe Season does not soon set in) be able in Conjunction with the 3 Independant Companies to carry the Fort called Fort Du Quesne which the French have built upon the River Monongahela before a Reinforcement can be sent the Garrison from Canada or the French Settlements in that part of the Continent which they call Louisiana. This one Scheme & erecting a Fortress which we conceive absolutely necessary on an Island in the River Ohio opposite to Duquesne Fort is all that I can entertain very sanguine hopes of being able to execute with so small a number of Men as will I apprehend (unless some Draughts be sent from England) compleat the Corps that will be under my Direction; as most of these will be required in Case our Enterprize succeeds, to garrison the two Forts above mentioned & one that is already begun at a Place called Wills-Creek on Potomack River, designed to be a Magazine for the Troops that shall be employed in the Service; But if the several Colonies should be persuaded to increase our American Forces enough in the Spring to afford us a Prospect of making a succesful Attempt upon the Fort that the French have compleated on Buffaloe River near Lake Erie you will be pleased to think that I will with the greatest Alacrity prosecute that Service tho I must at present confess that the Strength of the Enemy in those parts, their superiour knowledge of the Country which is likely to be the Scene of Action & their numerous Alliances among the Indian nations forbid me to flatter myself unless the Colonies grant Supplies beyond my Expectations with hopes of any very important Successes against our Enemy, who are strengthened by unanimity among themselves, upon this Consideration I cannot indeed but entertain some Suspicion that these His Majestys Dominions can never be effectually secured from the Encroachments of the French & Devastations of their Indian Allies, farther Hostilities on our distant & scattered Inhabitants & such Indians as may venture to declare in our favour be prevented & a free Trade with the natives which we are now threatened to be entirely deprived of ensured to us unless the Enemy be compelled to relinquish at once the several Fortresses that they have built on the Lakes & Rivers behind us & we take possession of & garrison them ourselves. But as I look on this as too great a Design to be executed or ever attempted with such Assistance & Supplies only as the several Colonies will be prevailed on to advance without they be supported by such a Body of Troops from home as I dare not