

Letter Bk. II. readiness to march the Saturday following but Friday morning he sent to me desiring I would give my Attendance at a Council that he had called upon the Receipt of your Letter. The proposition or question submitted to us was whether he should march again immediately to attack Fort Du Quesne against which we were unanimous & I think you would not have been of a contrary Opinion had you seen the Troops & been acquainted with their Disposition & wants, You know I presume how much of the Artillery Ammunition Stores & Camp Equipage fell into the Enemy's hands & how much Col^o Dunbar destroyed by the Order of the General before he died. p. 123 he has scarcely any thing left beside 4 six pounders which he has taken with him to Pens^a You have been informed how many Officers were lost in the Action & how many of those that survived it are unable to undertake another Campaign. All the Generals Instructions & Papers being lost Col^o Dunbar is unacquainted what Powers he had & is cautious how he ventures to do any thing but what absolute Necessity requires. The Soldiers who escaped are wasted with fatigue & so much dispirited that I question if Orders to march westward would not incline half of them to desert their Colours. The Destruction of so many Horses & Waggon for which the Owners have no immediate prospect of being satisfied will vastly increase the Difficulty of getting either in these Provinces & as there has been no Fund established by the Colonies, & Colo Dunbar will not draw Bills as the General did, I do not conceive that 'twould be possible to attempt any thing at present with probability of Success. I do not apprehend that the French whatever the Indians may will come yet a while on this side the mountains but in case they should the Engineers are of Opinion with me that twould be impossible to defend Fort Cumberland against any number of them or against any Artillery therefore you will conclude that it is not a very proper place for a grand Magazine. Those Gentⁿ tell me there is an Eminence about 16 miles lower down the River just at the Forks of Potowmack both which it commands that is the best if not the only place in that part of the Country, which would be easily rendered strong & defensible. Mess^{rs} M^cKellar & Gordon promised me to review it again as soon as they were able & to send me a Plan of such Works as they would advise p. 124 us to have constructed thereon which I will send you & if you approve thereof will join with you in having them perfected immediately a place of Strength somewhere on our Frontiers I think the present posture of Affairs requires & I know of no other spot so proper & convenient but what is commanded by some adjacent Hills as is the Case with Fort Cumberland; from This I would propose to have a Line of small Forts or