

thereon & as our frugal Gent^a have directed in the Bill they Letter Bk. III are framing that no more than 200 Men shall be raised & supported by this Province unless the Neighbouring Colonies send a Number of Troops to act in Conjunction with us I give over all thoughts of marching against Fort Du Quesne this Summer which I beleive is too strong for me to reduce by Virtue of His Excellency's Commission without either Men, Artillery, Money or Provisions. By a late Return from the Lieut^t Colonel of the Virg^a Regiment I find they do not yet muster 500 Men about 200 of whom are at Fort Cumberland to guard & defend His Majesty's Stores there, & the Rest are posted at different places on the Frontiers of that Dominion: About a Fortnight ago a Cap^t of the Virg^a Regiment with a Detachment of 60 Men fell in with a Party of Indians on this Side the Fort & were entirely defcated, the Captain, Lieutenant & 15 private Men were killed or much wounded & left to the Enemy, & the Rest of the Detachment retired for Shelter to a little Stoccado Fort which happened to have been built near the place of Action; another Party of Virginians had just before attacked a small party of Indians with Success the Indians were led or commanded by a French Ensign habited as an Indian who was left dead on the Field & in a little Bag tied about his Neck were found Instructions from the Commandant of Fort Du Quesne of which I inclose you a Copy. Many of the little Forts that have been raised for the protection of the Frontier Inhabitants both in Pens^a & Virg^a have been attacked & some of them reduced; the Indians carry some of those that they make Prisoners & sell them to the French, some of the Women & Children they keep in their own Towns with an Intention to incorporate them with their Tribes, but in general they seem to delight in putting such as are unhappy enough to fall into their hands to a cruel Death. Two or three of their Captives who have lately made their Escape inform us that the French (how numerous I cannot learn) are all employed in building Barracks or Houses near Fort Du Quesne for the Reception & Conveniency of many other Tribes of the Western Indians who have lately come into their Alliance & are to be constantly employed henceforward in harrassing & depopulating these poor defenceless & infatuated Colonies. The Communication between Fort Cumberland & our back Inhabitants has been for some time cut off & the Country for 60 Miles on this Side of it is laid waste & abandoned. I should be pretty well contented if our Assembly would enable me to take such Measures as in my Opinion would most effectually secure the Inhabitants of this Province from any future Incursions, at least till the Switzers shall be able to act offensively; but they are too opinionated as well as too parcimonious to put it in my