

Letter Bk. III dition but by what I can find his hopes are all frustrated & the Assembly after sitting a Fortnight continue averse to making any Provision for their own immediate Defence unless the Governor will accept a Bill imposing a Land Tax for 20 years which it seems is a Duration of 19 more than by His Instructions he is at liberty to agree to. You will easily judge from what has been mentioned that these two Colonies are in a deplorable Condition; Virginia is in much the same Circumstances & I find the Indians have lately begun with the Inhabitants of North Carolina, in all the Northern Colonies too they are at present in great Consternation on Account of the Loss of Oswego & our Naval Force on Ontario Lake I presume you will have a particular Account of that Affair long before this can reach you all we have heard as yet is that the Garrison consisting of about 1600 were made Prisoners by a Body of 6000 French & Indians that laid Siege to the Fort. This general Account is confirmed to me by Ld Loudoun who has thereupon writ to me for a Number of Recruits for the Royal American Regiment without the Assistance of which His Ldps seems to think himself unable to oppose such an Army as the French may possibly march into the Province of N York. On the Receipt of His Ldp's Letter I met the Assembly yesterday & have pressed them to comply with His Lordship's Requisition by appropriating to that use part of the Money lately granted for His Majesty's Service. I cannot judge as yet how far I shall succeed with them tho I find they are in general very averse to sending Men to the Northward & draining as they say their own Country, but as the Officers are now at Liberty to enlist Servants I think the most prudent thing they can do will be to make an Act for raising at once 500 or 600 Men for His Ldp by drafting the Militia. As soon as the Assembly shall come to some Resolution on this Matter, I propose to push once more for a strict Militia Law & to persuade them if possible to vote an Additional Number of Troops for the Defence of this Province, If I succeed our Frontiers will I hope be pretty well secured for the present & we shall have a Number of diciplined Men ready to take the Field in the Spring if an Expedition should be undertaken to the Westward. As I do not press our Assembly to raise Money but only to appropriate a Fund that already exists I hope We shall proceed with harmony at this time for unless they should think proper to blame me for constructing the Fort of Stone & Earth instead of Wood & thereby encreasing the Expence of it I do not see how they can express any Dissatisfaction at my Proceedings since last Session. I shall next week by Mr Wayne's Vessel acquaint you with my Success & with any thing of Consequence that might happen before that time—