

& thereby to exempt themselves & their Constituents from all Taxes whatever, that in fact it is the most equitable Way of raising Money in this Colony that can be proposed because as our Estates consist for the most part in Servants & Negroes those who have most property pay the greatest Share of the Tax, that the Assembly Men's Wages (which amounts annually to a considerable Sum) & other Publick Charges are always paid or defrayed by a Poll Tax, that by a perpetual Law of this Province it is enacted & provided that whenever the Gov^r shall find it necessary to order the Militia to march for the Defence of the Province a Poll Tax shall be laid for the Payment of such Militia, and that they shall not be paid after any other manner whatever. These Hints you will make use of as you may have occasion. I can truly say that Nothing would have given me so much Pleasure as the Assemblys making the Interposition of Parliament unnecessary but really if an Act of Parliament is not made for us very shortly instead of reducing the Power of the French in America which if these Colonies exerted themselves properly might be easily done We shall be ready to fall a Prey to their first Attempts I am sorry to send you such an Account of the Fleet that was ordered to America last Summer as you will find in the inclosed Paper; We do not hear whether the French Squadron is yet returned to Europe, but I beleive such a Piece of Intelligence would at this time be very acceptable to the Inhabitants of the Principal Towns in the Northern Colonies. If the Wind should not serve to carry this Vessel out of Potuxent within these two or three Days I shall endeavour to get other Letters on Board, & if I should be deprived of that opportunity I shall not fail to send some by the next Packet & by a Vessel that is to sail from this Port in a Fortnight or three Weeks.

Letter Bk. I.

p. 317

[Lord Colville to Sharpe.]

Original.

S^r

As I am directed by my Instructions to correspond with you on his Majesty's Service; I take this first opportunity of acquainting your Excellency, that I am appointed Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels in North America. And that you may be acquainted with our Strength in these Parts, I subjoin a List of the Ships in this Harbour: I omit those appointed to particular Stations; because as yet, I am not acquainted with the Orders they may be under, or the Service they may be upon.

By M^r Secretary Pitt's Letter to you of the 19th of last February, I am encouraged to apply to your Excellency, for