

Letter Bk. III

[Sharpe to Wm. Sharpe.]

1st of Ian^y [1758]D^r B^r

In my Letter dated the 18th of Sept^r I told you that I was then about to meet the Assembly of this Province once more in hopes of getting from them farther Supplies for the Support of the 500 Men which had been raised here for His Majesty's Service & the more immediate Defence & Protection of our Frontier Inhabitants. On the 28th of that Month the Assembly met but instead of proceeding on the Business that I had recommended to them the Gentlemen of the Lower House took it into their Heads to send for my Secretary in order as they alledged afterwards to get Evidence against their Clerk whom they pretended to suspect of a Breach of Trust in delivering Papers out of the House without their Knowledge but it is now evident that they only wanted to establish a Precedent that they might afterwards require M^r Ridout to attend whenever their Curiosity should incline them to ask questions about any Affairs that his Connection with me should give him an opportunity of knowing. As it was at first supposed that they wanted no more than to ask a trivial question or two about an Election which had happened here a few Days before & was then controverted, M^r Ridout made no Difficulty of waiting on the House agreeable to the Speaker's Desire having first advised with some Gentlⁿ of the Council who were walking on the Parade where our Publick Buildings are placed. What ensued you will learn from the inclosed Address & Message which I thought proper to send you lest any evil minded persons should make it their Business to represent this Affair in a false Light. Our Lower House of Assembly has indeed of late years claimed a Right of calling before them any Person they thought proper & their Commands have been generally obeyed tho as generally exclaimed agst as oppressive, Magistrates have been haled before them to answer for Offences they were never guilty of & to gratify the private Pique & Resentment of any particular Member Gentlemen have at times been put to a great Deal of Trouble & Expen^{ce}. They assumed all the Powers of a British House of Commons & have for some years been exercising those Powers in such a manner as tended to render all the inferiour Courts of Judicature contemptible or subservient to their purposes; before this time however they had not presumed to meddle with any one of a Governor's Family nor did they pretend any Authority over the Gentlⁿ of the Council so far as to call them before the House till the present Session on occasion of the controverted Election abovementioned. Whether the extraordinary