

Letter Bk. III

[Sharpe to Abercromby.]

20th of March 1758—

Sir

I do myself the honour to acknowledge the Receipt of Your Letter dated at N York the 15th Inst. & also to inform you that in Consequence of M^r Pitts Letters of the 30th of Decem^r our Assembly is to meet here on Thursday next when you may be assured I will use my utmost endeavours to obtain as large a Number of Men as possible for the Service of the ensuing Campaign but at the same time I think it my Duty to tell you that I am afraid the Assembly will not be prevailed on to exert themselves in such a manner as you seem to expect. It was not without the greatest Difficulty that I could persuade them last Spring to augment our Troops to 500 tho each of the neighbouring Colonies at the same time engaged to raise & support more than double that Number & because the Earl of Loudoun kept some of these 500 all last Summer as a Garrison in Fort Cumberland the Assembly when they met again in October pretended to be much dissatisfied tho our Frontiers had in fact been effectually secured by that Distribution of them & when I desired them to make farther Provision for their Support they were so far from complying with my Request as to Resolve that they never would pay or victual any Forces which should be placed in Fort Cumberland & moreover to insist that our Troops should be forthwith reduced to 300 men. After some time they prepared a Bill for raising money to support that number but the Gentⁿ of the Upper House refused to accept or pass it because it did not appear to them to be so much calculated to promote His Majesty's Service as to introduce dangerous Innovations into our Constitution, & because by restraining the Service of the Troops which they proposed to keep up it infringed His Majesty's Prerogative. When I found that the two Houses of Assembly would not agree on a Bill for the Support of our Forces I informed the Earl of Loudoun how matters stood & intreated him to order some other Troops to Fort Cumberland lest the Garrison that was then there should upon hearing that the Assembly would not support them disband themselves & the Fort with its Artillery be thereby abandoned to the Enemy. but as the winter was now far advanced & the Roads to Fort Cumberland become almost impracticable His Ldp was pleased to engage for the Payment of our Troops as long as they should continue to garrison that place & Col^o Stanwix gave orders for their being supplied with as much Provision as they might stand in need of. Upon this Footing have our Men remained ever since the 8th of October last but I am afraid the Officers will not be able to keep them together