

British Ministry designed to test the strength and disposition of the French in maintaining their claim to that vast region of country and to see what support measures for asserting a counter-claim would receive from the Colonies. The movement on the part of Virginia was by no means a spontaneous outburst on the part of the people. On the contrary, the measure was set on foot by the Governor, almost without conference, except with his Council, although he solicited aid from the other Colonies soon after he had committed himself to the enterprise. It seems more than probable that the project was inspired more by state-craft and private interest, than from any ambition on the part of Virginia to repel Indian depredations or to acquire additional territory. While the expedition was a war measure, war had not been declared, and the propriety of, and necessity for, the measure were not apparent to, or sympathized in, by the mass of the people in the several Colonies and was, to a great degree, unpopular with the Assemblies of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The following extract from a letter written on the subject by Governor Dinwiddie in January, 1754, to Lord Fairfax, discloses some of the State motives and, at the same time, shows the indifference of the people. He says: "As the French Forces on the Ohio intend down as far as Logstown early in the spring, I think it is for His M'y's Service and the Protection of the Settlem'ts of this Dom'n to do all in our Power to prevent their building any Forts or