

INTRODUCTION.

The real provocation or motive for the armed expedition to the Ohio in 1754 was not frankly stated by the Governor to the Legislative Assembly of Virginia, or in any state paper by the British Ministry, and is only to be gathered from the official letters of Governor Dinwiddie and the correspondence of other parties, well informed in State affairs, of that period. The following extract from a letter written by Governor Dinwiddie to Colonel Thomas Cresap, and dated Williamsburg, January 23, 1752, presents the views then held by the Colony of Virginia as to the obligations it was in duty bound to observe toward the French in the region of the head-waters of the Ohio: "Sir: You herewith will receive the Opinion of the Council in Answer to your Letters. As to making Reprisals for the Robberies done by the French on the Ohio, it is inconsistent with the Laws of Nations, while We are in Peace with France, and your Letter is too general: if you can give a particular Account of the different Robberies, we must apply to the Governor of Canada for Redress; Upon his Refusal, we may proceed in another manner." The Governor shortly after writing this letter became interested in "the Ohio Company," which was a creation of the