

In all this space of time, parliamentary taxes formed no part of the colonial system of government. In truth, in all the laws relative to the colonies, the expressions sanctioned by usage in the preambles of financial statutes, to designate taxes or duties to be raised for the use of government, were studiously avoided, and those only of free gifts, of grants, and aids lent to the crown, were employed.—The parliament, it is true, had frequently imposed export duties upon many articles of commerce in the colonies; but these were considered rather as restrictions of commerce, than as branches of public revenue. Thus, until the year 1764, the affair of taxation by authority of parliament, slept in silence. England contented herself with the exercise of her supremacy, in regulating the general interests of her colonies, and causing them to concur with those of all the British empire. The Americans submitted to this system, if not without some repugnance, at least with filial obedience.

It appears evident that, though they were not subjected to parliamentary taxes, they were not useless subjects to the state, since they contributed essentially, on the contrary, to the prosperity of the mother country.

It cannot be asserted, however, that ill humors were not agitated, at intervals, between the people of the two countries, by attempts on the one part to maintain and even extend the superiority, and on the other to advance towards independence. A year after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, (1749,) a grant was made, near the river Ohio, of six hundred thousand acres of excellent land, to some merchants, whose association was called the Ohio Company. The governor of Canada, at that time a province of France, having had intelligence of this establishment, was apprehensive the English had the intention of interrupting the commerce of the Canadians with the Indians, called *Tuigtuis*, and of intercepting the direct communication between Canada and Louisiana. He therefore wrote to the governors of New York and of Pennsylvania, to express his surprise that the English merchants had violated the French territory, in order to trade with the Indians: he threatened that he would cause them to be seized, wherever he could find them. This traffic, however, not having been discontinued, detachments of French and Indians made prisoners of the English traders, at the commencement of the year 1751.

The Indians friendly to England, indignant at the outrage their confederates had sustained, assembled, and, scouring the forests, fell upon the French traders, whom they transported to Philadelphia.—Not content with this vengeance, the inhabitants of Virginia dispatched to M. de Saint Pierre, commanding, for the king of France, a