

pounders 2 of 24 pounders, 8 of 12 pounders; 8 mortars of 12 inches; 6 of 8 inches, besides petards, mines, &c. that there had issued a proclamation for masters of merchant ships, captains, clerks, and cadets, to appear to serve on board the King's ships; that cloth had been bought at *Marseilles* for 350 tents, and orders issued for sixty transports: that on the twenty-second they had actually got *ten* ships of the line in the road, and two more would be ready in a week: that at *Toulon* a surprizing number of hands were employed, and every thing was put in practice to hasten the works, and to arm the fleet, which did not require much time: that on the 26th they had completed the loading of the transports, and had taken up more: that they stripped the sea and the land and the islands of their artillery and ammunition, to arm the fleet at *Toulon*: that all these steps left no room to doubt, but that an attack would be made on *Mahon*; and that M. *Richelieu* was to set out next morning from *Marseilles* to *Toulon*, and the whole fleet and embarkation of 23 battalions of foot, and one of artillery, would be in readiness to sail on the fifth of *April*, every thing since the Marshal's arrival, being pushed on with the greatest hurry<sup>i</sup>.

<sup>i</sup> Letters of the 8th, 13th, 22d, 24th, 26th, and 29th.

This is the true state of the intelligence received by M. *Villetes* from *Marseilles* and *Toulon*: but in most of his letters, that conveyed *these facts* to his principals in *England* he has endeavoured to put a quite different inten-

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