

to Cardinal *Altieri*, and that of Sub-Dean of the Sacred Colledge to Cardinal *Barbarini*, who have accordingly taken possession of them. Since the death of Cardinal *Ginetti*, the French Ministers have renewed their solicitations for the promotion of the Bishop of *Laon* to be Cardinal, in which matter the Pope hath promised to give them all the satisfaction imaginable; in the mean time great preparations are making for the equipage of the Duke d' *Esrees*, that Bishops Brother, who is suddainly expected in quality of Ambassador Extraordinary from his most Christian Majesty, he intending, as is said, to appear here with extraordinary Magnificence. The Ambassador from the Crown of *Portugal* in this Court, having after many instances made to that purpose, at length obtained the Popes Bulls for the filling up the vacant Bishopricks in *Portugal*, hath some days since declared his intentions of returning very suddenly home, in order to the giving his Master the Prince Regent a more particular account of all that hath passed in his Negotiation here.

Some endeavors having been formerly made here for the concluding a Marriage between the Duke de *Gravina Orfino*, and the Lady *Ludovica*, Sister to Prince *Gasparo Altieri*, in which at first there seemed to appear some difficulty; that matter was finally by the interposition of Don *Pedro d' Aragon*, when here, and several other persons of Quality, agreed on, to the great satisfaction of the Friends and Relations on both sides, who are now framing the Articles of Marriage, and making all necessary preparations for its consummation, which is to be suitable to both their Births and Qualities; and in order to it, the said Duke de *Gravina* is daily expected here from *Naples*, where he at present is; in the mean time several congratulatory visits have passed between the Families of *Orfino* and *Altieri*; it is said the Pope will in favour of this Marriage confer upon him the title of *Principe del Soglio* (as they stile it here) that is, declare him his Nephew, though in the second line, besides several other particular favors his Majesty intends to place on that family.

Brussels, March 25 The 23 instant Our Governor the Count de *Neer* y returned hither from *Bruges*, *Ostend* and other adjacent places, where it is said he found all things in a very good posture; his Excellency hath lately caused six Orders to be every where published, that no Officers of what degree soever they be, presume to leave their Garrisons, until they have first his Excellencies leave so to do, under very severe penalties. We have advice here, that the French Troops in *Lorra* in begin to march, that several small Boats are in the mean time preparing near *Douclery*, upon the River *Meuse*, where they intend to embark their Infantry, and so pass great part of the way by water. The Duke d' *Aerschott* hath by his Excellencies Order been to visit the several places under his Government, giving every where such necessary directions as the present state of affairs require; and especially taking care that the Soldiers be kept in good discipline, that the Inhabitants receive not the least disturbance from them. From *Ostend* they write, that there was newly arrived several vessels from *Spain* with Soldiers, and that there was daily more expected, which being arrived, would make up 2000 men compleat.

Hague, March 27 We are told that the States General have given directions for the marching of several Companies, both of Horse and Foot towards *Bergen op Zoom*, and such other places as lie most exposed to any foreign attempt: they have likewise ordered a general Muiter to be made, as soon as may be, of all their forces near the River *Issel*, and accordingly have desired the Council of State to bring in an estimate of the expence of such a review. It is said that the States of *Holland* have a Fonds re-

dy upon any urgency which may happen, have resolved to take up at Interest four millions of Guilders, at two and three per Cent. at which Rates they have great sums daily offered them. The preparations for our Fleet goe on apace, so as to have the Fleet ready to sail about the middle of the next month; Lieutenant Admiral de *Ruyter* hath desired to have the chief Command, and by his example the other principal Officers likewise have offered to serve at sea this Summer.

From *Munster* we have advice, that there was arrived Monsieur d' *Amerongen*, on the part of this State, and that he had desired Audience of the Bishop, who had returned for answer, that during the approaching Holidays of *Easter*, all publick business was to be laid aside, that afterwards he would readily hearken to any thing he should have to propose in the name of the States his Masters; in the meantime we are further told from thence, that that Bishop hath been forced lately to disband several of his Troops, not being able to find subsistence for them any longer in his Countries; and that most of his Regiments are very weak and thin, being in many places filled up with Raw Country People. From *Lunenburgh* we are told, that those Princes continue to enforce their Strength daily by New recruits from all parts so that all thoughts of accommodation seem now layd aside. Our Letters from *Cologne* tell us, that the Emperour having declared that he will take that City under his express protection and defence, hath accordingly sent the Marquis de *Grana* to keep the Town in his Imperial Majesties name as Governor, which it is said hath very much encouraged the Inhabitants, who now begin to hope that the Storms which have so long threatened them may at last pass over. Some Letters arrived from *Bremen* speak of a Letter the Emperour hath lately written to the Duke of *Wolfemburgh* to require him immediately to retire his Forces out of *Hoxter*, in order to the entering upon some further Treaty of Peace, which affords great matter of discourse in those parts: what that Prince may do in that matter, we expect with much earnestness to here.

Paris, March 28 Our Letters from *Marseilles* tell us, that at *Thoulon* there are sitting out, 15 stout men of War, which it is generally believed are to be employed against the Corsairs of *Tunis*; and the rather because Monsieur *Mariel*, is returned with his Squadron of 12 Ships from thence, who arrived at *Thoulon* the 15th instant, nor having been able to effect any thing in order to an accommodation with those People; Three of the said men of War are almost ready, and may depart in few days, and in three weeks tis thought the whole Fleet will be ready to follow; which as is said will be Commanded by the Marquis de *Strancey*: They farther add that they have at *Thoulon* about 9 men of War more, which are to carry from 50 to 70 Guns, some of which are already launched, and the others well advanced on the Stocks: That they have there Advice by a Baque from *Argiers*, of 12 men of War those Corsairs have had abroad these three Moneths, without sending in any purchase; and what more distracts those People, is, that they have not received the least advice from them ever since their departure.

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Whereas the right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of His Majesties Treasury, did formerly publish, That upon Monday the 10th of April next, Propositions should be by them received for Farming the Countrey Excise: These are now to be notice, That upon the said 10th of April, their Lordships will also receive such Proposals as shall be offered for Farming the new additional Duty of the Countrey Excise, imposed by the late Act of Parliament in that behalf; and such as shall be fit to make any Proposals, are to make them as well for the new, as for the old Duty.

G. Downing.