

PREFACE.

Britons proceed, the subject deep command,
Awe with your navies every hostile land :
Vain are their threats, their armies all are vain ;
They rule the balanc'd world who rule the main.

MALLET.

AT a juncture like the present, when the threats of invasion by a foe thirsting for blood, and flushed with the hope of plunder, are loudly reverberated by the rock-defended shores of Albion's Isle—at a moment when every British bosom is filled with martial energy, and every son of Freedom burns with patriotic fervor to distinguish himself in her sacred cause—it cannot be thought unseasonable to present an historical account of the splendid naval achievements of our countrymen—achievements which, while the world shall exist, will shine with undiminished brilliancy, and procure them the meed of deathless glory. At such a period it cannot be improper to place before our gallant defenders the bright examples, to display the deeds of those illustrious characters, whose valour in combat, whose conduct and perseverance, amidst the difficulties and dangers to which a life of maritime enterprize is exposed, have contributed to give to Britain that preponderance in the scale of nations, which she at present enjoys.