

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SINCE the publication of a small pamphlet last year, the chief object of which was to vindicate Sir R. Peel's Naval Administration, and to prove that the exertions made during that period, both for the improvement of our great maritime arsenals, and the increase of our Navy, deserved the gratitude of the country, many of my friends have pressed me to undertake some more extended and popular observations on this subject, in the hope of dispelling the erroneous impressions which prevail on many important points, and directing public attention to those great questions which are at present almost entirely lost sight of, amidst the petty political and personal attacks with which our newspapers daily teem. I at first declined a task which I foresaw might, if fully and conscientiously executed, involve me in disputes and controversy; but on further consideration, I could scarcely feel justified in refusing to lend my assistance (such as it may be), where the object to be attained is so vitally important, and I was encouraged by the recollection of the success which attended a similar effort made by me on a former occasion, when having, in a pamphlet (to which I did not then affix my name), endeavoured to draw the attention of the public