

ference of circumstances will admit, the language and arrangements of the Act of Parliament under which the Royal Navy has so long been governed, and its order and discipline so successfully maintained and preserved ; and, Secondly, the formation of such tribunals in Foreign ports as may take cognizance of, and, if possible, finally arrange and decide, all offences committed on the outward passage, or during the time of the ships remaining in such foreign port.

With respect to the first point, it will be necessary to examine carefully, with a view to their consolidation into one Act, all the statutes which relate to the subject, and which are at present very imperfectly known to those whom they most nearly concern. It is obviously impossible to maintain any rational discipline or subordination, except both those who command and those who are to obey, clearly comprehend their respective powers and duties ; and a great proportion of the complaints as well as irregularities in our Merchant Service may be attributed to the absence of such a code as that which I now propose to establish, and which (like our Articles of War in the Royal Navy) should be hung up in some public part of every merchant ship, and always accessible to every one wishing to peruse it.

We have already compressed our Criminal Code within the space of a small octavo volume ; there