

EDITORIAL NOTES AND COMMENTS.Father Lana's Book of 1670.

More than 100 years before the invention of the Balloon by the Brothers Montgolfier (1783) a remarkable work, foreshadowing the balloon, had been written by a Jesuit Priest named Francis Lana. The work was entitled, "Prodrome dell'Arte Maestra" and was published in Brescia in 1670. The book contained "A demonstration, how it is practically possible to make a ship, which shall be sustained by the air, and may be moved either by sails or oars". The appearance of the work made a profound impression upon the world at the time and is probably responsible for the expression aerial "navigation" which has persisted down to the present day. All works dealing with the history of Aeronautics refer to Father Lana's book, but none, so far as I know, have quoted from the work itself, so that the book is only known by its title and by the picture of Father Lana's machine which has been widely reproduced.

On the 29th of May 1679, and again on the 5th of June 1679, Dr. Robert Hooke read before the Royal Society of England a translation of a portion of Father Lana's book "Prodrome". This translation, with the remarks of Dr. Hooke concerning it was published in a work entitled, "Dr. Hooke's Tracts and Collections 1674-1679", a copy of which may be found in the Boston Public Library.

A few years ago, at my request, Mr. Edwin P. Grosvenor visited the Boston Public Library and made a copy of Hooke's