



INTRODUCTION.



IT had originally been my intention to give the Latin text of the two following tracts, with an English version in small type at the foot of each page ; but as nearly all the subscribers to the work expressed their wish to make the book an English one with ample notes and elucidations, I determined to yield to their desires, although the notes involved many days of careful labour and research. I have therefore omitted the Latin text, and devoted the space thus gained to biographical and, so far as was possible, to bibliographical notes. In editing the two pamphlets I have been greatly assisted by Lieutenant S. Hughes, R.N., to whom I offer my warmest thanks. His professional knowledge has been invaluable to me in those portions of the work which deal with navigation.

The first tract, by the celebrated Hugo Grotius, first appeared in 1542, 4to, without printer's name. It attempts to define the origin of the