

RUSSIA'S SEA-POWER

P R E F A C E .

FOUR years ago it occurred to me that a historical sketch of the rise of the Russian Navy might be useful, in view of the growing interest displayed in what the authors of the Address of the House of Lords to Queen Anne in 1708 aptly termed "the sea affair." Pressure of other work then prevented me from doing more than accumulate notes bearing upon the subject. Now that public attention is directed to the great naval efforts being made in Russia, and to their connection with the recent supremely important step taken in the

Far East, I trust that the publication of this little book will be deemed opportune.

I cannot claim to have exhaustively treated a large and somewhat intricate subject. I have, however, endeavoured to set forth clearly the main facts connected with the history of the Russian Navy since its inception by Peter the Great, as well as their bearing upon the affairs of Europe during nearly two hundred years. This has involved reference to military operations, and has entailed a degree of condensation by which some of the following pages may seem to be overweighted. History is not a strong point with the British people; and although many able writers are now seeking to elucidate the wonderful story of the British Navy, few among us are