

THE BATTERY AND THE BOILER.



CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH THE HERO MAKES HIS FIRST FLASH AND EXPLOSION.

SOMEWHERE about the middle of this nineteenth century, a baby boy was born on the raging sea in the midst of a howling tempest. That boy was the hero of this tale.

He was cradled in squalls, and nourished in squalor—a week of dirty weather having converted the fore-cabin of the emigrant ship into something like a pig-sty. Appreciating the situation, no doubt, the baby boy began his career with a squall that harmonised with the weather, and, as the steward remarked to the ship's cook, “continued for to squall straight on end all that day and night without so much as ever takin’ breath!” It is but right to add that the steward was prone to exaggeration.