

MY
SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS;

OR,

THE STORY OF MY EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

“Ye gentlemen of England
Who live at home at ease,
O, little do you think upon
The dangers of the seas.”

OLD SONG.

RATHER more than eighty years ago, a stout little boy, in his sixth or seventh year, was despatched from an old-fashioned farm-house in the upper part of the parish of Cromarty, to drown a litter of puppies in an adjacent pond. The commission seemed to be not in the least congenial. He sat down beside the pool, and began to cry over his charge; and finally, after wasting some time in a paroxysm of indecision and sorrow, instead of committing the puppies to the water, he tucked them up in his little kilt, and set out by a blind pathway which went winding through the stunted heath of the dreary Maolbuoy Common, in a direction opposite to that of the farm house,—his home for the two previous twelvemonths. After some doubtful wandering on the waste, he succeeded in reaching, before nightfall, the neighbouring seaport town, and presented himself laden with his charge, at his mother's door.