

WHEN I WAS A BOY.

When I was a boy, oh! when I was a boy,
And play'd with my hoop, or my top, or my toy,
In sunshine or pleasure my time pass'd away ;
I lay down to sleep, and I wak'd up to play :
I knew not the care that on manhood attends,
But thought the whole world must be made up of friends ;
And Hope spread her pictures my fancy to charm :
How bright were the prospects, the colours how warm.
With roses and flowers of every hue
She artfully hid all the thorns from my view :
Oh, Hope, thou deceiver, I cling to thee yet,
Though often have tried thee and found thee a cheat.
Thus into the future my thoughts often ran,
And painted the pleasures if I were a man !

When I grew a man, oh! when I grew a man,
And the lessons of life beginning so scan,
The toils and the troubles of every day
Were lasting, though pleasures all melted away.
I found that the world had a mask on its face,
And long had I held but a shadow in chase;
And blight after blight made my roses all fade;
As they wither'd and fell, their thorns were display'd.
The idol I'd worship'd when gaily it shone,
Now stripp'd of its tinsel I found was but stone.
In youth I was counting the years coming on,
And now I look back to the days that are gone.
Past pleasures or future the present destroy,
And I sigh for the pleasures when I was a boy.