

THE LITERARY GAZETTE.

THE

VOL. I.

AUGUST, 1839.

No. 9.

(ORIGINAL.)

THE GOLD MEDAL.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

ARCHIBALD LOCKHART was the only son of the head assistant in his Majesty's dock yard at——, a clever and high spirited youth, who at a very early age, had given singular proofs of an extraordinary mechanical genius. Mr. Lockhart was justly proud of his son's abilities, and his workshop was the common lounge of all the lads of genteel parentage in the neighbourhood, where his models of ships and boats, were examined and criticised, as genuine feelings of approbation or caprice influenced the spectators.

Like most clever people. Archibald was not averse to praise; but his love of truth, and natural good sense, made him reject flattery with contempt. Our young student had one great fault—he was a sad sloven: and was too deeply engrossed with his mechanical speculations, to attend to the ill-natured sarcasms, which were constantly levelled against his want of neatness, and the general disorder that pervaded his commodious workshop. The bluntness of his manners, and his total indifference as to the fit and fashion of his garments, gave Archibald no uneasiness. He could not comprehend why the world made such trifles a matter of serious importance. He smiled at the weakness of its votaries; and they, in return, laughed at his ignorance.

Under a rough exterior he possessed a good and generous heart; and his frank and independent spirit never suffered a consciousness of his own superior talents to detract from the genius of another. If the work of a rival really possessed merit, it was duly appreciated; and he never withheld the knowledge he had acquired by his own observation and experience from those to whom he thought it might prove beneficial. Archibald Lockhart was no common every day character. His sterling worth atoned for a thousand eccentricities; and those who knew him the longest loved him the best.

Among his numerous circle of acquaintance, he had vainly sought for a companion of his own age, who could enter into his mechanical pursuits and speculations. His heart yearned for a friend; and

the pleasure he felt in any new discovery lost half its relish in not being shared with another.

At this period a change took place in the King's yard. The second assistant was removed to Chatham; and a Mr. Crawford supplied his place, in whose youngest son Archibald found that friend, whom he had so long and eagerly sought.

The pursuits of the two lads were the same—but a decided difference in person, disposition and manners, marked their respective characters. Lawrence Crawford was an elegant gentlemanly youth. He was not handsome, but his face and figure were pleasing; and always set off to the best possible advantage. His manners were easy and agreeable, and without possessing the excellent heart of his unpolished friend, he was a universal favourite, both with young and old—with less genius than Archibald, his abilities were more general, and of that useful kind, that he could apply them to many different, and not unfrequently, opposite purposes. Lockhart could plan—Crawford execute. The one struck out the original idea—the other improved, and rendered it perfect. Both were ambitious, and equally the pride and ornament of their respective families.

Delighted with having found a companion whose tastes were so perfectly congenial with his own, Lockhart reposed the most unlimited confidence in his friend. He communicated to him his plans—shewed him his designs, and made him a partner in all his mechanical speculations—so great was the intimacy that existed between the lads, that they were known in the yard, by the familiar appellation of Lockhart and Co.

Pleasing as this union was to the parties concerned, it was not so agreeable to the parents of the young men; Mr. Crawford was very vain of the abilities of his son, and he could not bear to see them so far surpassed by a youth, who was his junior by two years. He could not appreciate Archibald's worth, whom he called an ill-behaved, ungentle fellow, and by no means a suitable companion for his accomplish-