

# BELFORD'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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NICHOLAS MINTURN.

BY J. G. HOLLAND.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE finest lawn is sometimes deformed by a rock so huge in bulk and harsh in outline, that it is beyond the gardener's skill to make it beautiful, either by climbing turf or fringing shrubbery. Mrs. Coates had her trials, among which was Mr. Coates, to whom a dress coat was an abomination, and a white cravat a thing of ugliness, and a torment forever. It was in vain that she represented to him the responsibilities and requirements of a forehanded man who had given the best advantages to his offspring. She respected his talent for making money; she had a dim idea that he was her superior in mental gifts, and she knew as well as a woman of her nature could know, that he held her in a sort of good-humoured contempt; but she felt that he did not take as kindly as he should to polite life, and that in this respect, at least, she was his superior.

There was another matter, which had always been a source of mortification to her—Mr. Coates was a stammerer. He never said much, but what he did say, was broken into so many pieces, that she was always afraid that his auditors could not put them together and make words and sentences of them. He had the habit of his daughter—perhaps he had bestowed the habit upon her—of accumulating material while conversation was in progress, and then coming out with it at unexpected times and in surprising ways. Unfurnished with her nimble tongue, he aimed at laconic condensation, and made the most of his brief efforts. He hung in the social sun like an icicle, now and then thawing to the