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NICHOLAS MINTURN.

BY J. G. HOLLAND.

CHAPTER XIII.

IF Nicholas Minturn had undertaken to account to himself, or had been called upon to account to others, for the reasons which had induced him to take up his residence in New York for the winter, he would have been puzzled for his answer. To be near Miss Larkin was, undoubtedly, a first consideration. He had a hunger of heart that could only be fed by breathing the atmosphere in which she lived; but this he hardly understood himself, and this, certainly, he could not betray to others. He had had a taste, too, of society; and as Ottercliff could give him no opportunity for its repetition, his life in the ancestral mansion had become tame and tasteless to him. All this was true, but there was something beyond this. He was interested in himself. His interrupted voyage upon the Atlantic had been a voyage of discovery, pursued but half across his own nature. Of independent action he had had so little, that he was curious to see how he should come out in a hand-to-hand encounter with new forms of life. He had no business except such as came to him in connection with the care of his estate, and this was not absorbing. He found his mind active, his means abundant, his whole nature inclined to benevolence, and his curiosity excited in regard to that great world of the poor of which he had heard much, and known literally nothing at all.

He was entirely conscious of his ignorance of the ways of men. He was aware that he had no scheme of life and action, based upon a knowledge of the world. All that he had done, thus far, had been accom-