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BY THE REV. B. SHERLOCK.

THE old Romish notion of supererogatory holiness, like most of the errors of that system, is but a Satanic exaggeration of a precious truth. That truth is seen in the wise arrangement of Divine Providence, by which some men are formed and endowed with gifts and attributes of holy character, which seem more than are necessary for their individual salvation. For such men are thus enriched, not for themselves alone, but for the good of the many, whose path is illumined by the superior light which they reflect from the great Sun of the moral universe.

It is not much to be wondered at, that in those ages of religious darkness which passed over Christendom during the unhindered sway of an unscrupulous priesthood, prodigies of sanctity should not only be elevated by popular feeling to the position of mediators, but should be credited with an excess of merit which the Church might turn to good account in aiding the salvation of others. The authorities of the Church declared many of the commonplace and undistinguished Christians of every locality and generation to be fit for heaven;—for what use then, men would ask, is the much greater holiness of some, if not to be utilized in that way?

Happily saved from such falsity, we yet joyfully recognize the fact, that the Head of the Church does not leave us to be edified only by the letter of the Book, and the indispensable virtues of ordinary Christian life, but in one place he calls forth a Saul, head and shoulders above his brethren in spiritual stature, that a whole people may be led to moral victory, and in another he endows a Samson, whose spiritual might proves itself by the saving of "heaps upon heaps" of the aliens from the grace of God, and the

* We purpose illustrating in this Magazine the doctrine of the Higher Christian Life, by remarkable exemplifications of its power, rather than by didactic treatises. In pursuance of this design the accompanying biographical sketch, as well as others which have already appeared, has been prepared. As opportunity may offer, others of similar character will hereafter appear.—ED.