

pression of the ludicrous—on perusing the soiled piece of paper on which was scrawled with hideous chirography, and worse orthography, beginning with capitals, no less than *twenty-three* names—none less, or more! Although we long preserved the paper, as a curiosity, having now lost it, we cannot at the present time detail all the names, much the order in which they stood. The list we remember began with *Sarah* and ended with *Victoria*. It ran in something like the following order, “*Sarah, Maria, Desdama, Lucretia, Lucenda, Beauty, Aurora, Almira, Mary, Eliza, &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., &c., Victoria.*” The minister, who was afraid he could not go over such a list, sacred as the occasion was, without laughing, sat before the parent the inconvenience and folly of so many names, but without the effect of convincing him. He agreed, however, at last, to a compromise; namely, that the minister should pronounce the *first* and the *last* names, and that he himself would put in intercalary ones. This, you will say, was an extreme case, still it was only an exaggerated instance of what is too common, and which has disfigured a highly respectable gentleman of our acquaintance, with *half-a-dozen* names.

One good, substantial, significant name, in our humble opinion, is certainly preferable to half-a-dozen unmeaning ones. We do not profess to have reduced this *nominal* business to a system, but we venture to throw out some hints. Names, then, might, we think, be so selected as to teach the bearer some useful lesson, to remind him of the faults and obligations of his birth; or to awaken within him noble aspirations. Now the gentle reader must not suspect the writer of advocating a return to the days of cant, when sacred things were degraded by ludicrous combinations. We do not want any more *Praise-God-Barbones*, or *Through-much-tribulation-we-must-enter-into-the-kingdom-of-heaven Smiths*. The significance of many Hebrew names, such as *Jabez, Benjamin, Samuel, Ebenezer*, (see the circumstances under which they were given in the Scriptures) adapt them to the purposes of memento, monition and instruction. Naming a child after a distinguished personage, may have the tendency of inspiring him with a desire to emulate his character and conduct. Hence were eminence in the person after whom the child is named is not enough, but there should be eminence in virtue, or in that which is worthy of imitation. The writer remembers its striking him as very much out of taste and character that a certain minister of the Gospel whom he once knew should have called one of his sons after *Tamerlain* a heathen conqueror. He also once met with a pretty little boy who through the ignorance of his parents, bearing the name of *Timori* of odious memory. But Gideon, David, Luther, Wesley, Howard, Oberlin, Neff, Tell, Washington, Gari-