

slovenly habits in his mother and sisters ; for that chivalric feeling towards the gentler sex, which has preserved many a man from the early attacks of vice, never exists in the heart of him who has had the barriers of refinement broken down, ere he left his childhood's home.

Mrs. Wharton was not deficient in personal cleanliness ; few women are found guilty of so revolting a fault ; but she wanted personal neatness and order. She had learned to treat her husband as she was accustomed to do her brothers, and while she never appeared before company in an *undress*, scarcely ever honoured him with any thing else. Her breakfast dress has already been described, and if the day happened to be rainy, or any thing else occurred to induce her to deny herself to visitors, she generally greeted her husband's eye in the same loose and flowing robes at dinner, as well as tea. Her total ignorance of every thing like method, was visible throughout all her domestic arrangements. Instead of directing her servants, she only reproved them, for she found it much easier to scold when a thing was *ill done*, than to attend to having it *well done*. Her domestics soon became familiar with her ignorance of the details of house-keeping, and availed themselves of it, to neglect their duty as much as possible, and, when she began to add to her other defects, that of *indolence*, her household fell into a state which cannot be better designated than by the expressive Irish word, '*Through-oltherness*.'

The scene which I have already described, was but the beginning of domestic discord.—Disappointed and annoyed, Mr. Wharton would not deign to tell her the exact nature of her fault, and point out the mode of remedy, while the wife was daily pained by some ebullition of ill humour, which made her sensible of an error committed, without enabling her to understand how it might be avoided for the future. There was a want of confidence between them, which threatened the most painful results to their future comfort, for while Charles was daily becoming more discontented with her ignorance of system, she, conscious that she really took pains to please him, was gradually acquiring the belief that he no longer loved her. There was no want of will to do right, but she sadly needed some kind hand to guide her into the true path, and thus, while each possessed, in an unusual degree, the elements of happiness, the poison of distrust was embittering the existence of both. The husband became moody at home, and soon began to seek, in the excitements of society, oblivion

of the discomforts of his own fireside, while the wife, feeling herself neglected and forlorn, gave herself up to despondency, and became more careless than ever of her personal appearance. The bright beauty of her countenance vanished, and in the hollow-cheeked, sad-eyed, dowdyish woman, who sat, hour after hour, in a great arm-chair, devouring the last new novel, it was scarcely possible to recognize the bright-faced and cheerful-tempered bride of the once devoted Charles Wharton.

Such was the state of things at the end of the first two years of their married life. Mrs. Wharton, disheartened and dispirited, took little interest in her family concerns, while her husband, accustomed to seek his enjoyments elsewhere, found always something to censure at home. Fortunately his good principles kept him from the haunts of dissipation, or he might have added another to the list of those who have been driven, by an *ill-ordered home*, to a *well-ordered* tavern or billiard-room. His mother had long seen and mourned his evident disquiet, and, while she partially divined its cause, was in doubt as to the course which she ought to pursue. She was aware of the danger of interference in the domestic concerns of another, but she could not bear to see her son and his sweet-tempered wife so estranged from each other.

"You are unhappy, Charles," said the old lady, one day, when they were alone. "Will you not tell me the cause of your trouble ? is it your business ?"

"No, mother, my business was never in a more prosperous condition."

"Then something is wrong at home, my son ; can you not confide in me ?"

"Oh, there is nothing to tell ; Mary is one of the best-hearted and good-tempered creatures in the world, but—"

"But what, Charles ?"

"She has one fault, mother, and it is about the worst she could have."

"The worst, Charles ? is she ill-tempered, or deficient in affection for you ? does she run into extravagant excesses for dress or company ?"

"Why, mother, you know she has none of these defects ?"

"Then, Charles, she has not the *worst* faults she might have."

"Well, well, perhaps I used too strong a term, but really I am heartsick—I have a house, but no home—I have servants, but no service from them—I have a wife, but no helpmeet : I cannot yet afford to keep a house-keeper, and