CHAPTER I.

"IN MAIDEN MEDITATION."

"What, in this miserable, dreary world, shall I do?"

It was one of the few ripe, completed days of summer-the 10th of August in a Berkshire landscape. And the scene was a garden which certainly looked neither miserable nor dreary. It was such a very fair garden-a riant exil of lawn, belted with flowers and firs; not a large garden by any means, just a beautiful stage which made London people exclaim as they got a glimpse of it in driving to Ascot from greater houses in the neighborhood. "Oh! look how lovely, against that background of dark wood ! Just the sort of thing the theatres can never give us; they always give us moated castles or suburban villas, suggestions of ten thousand acres or half an acre-never anything between !" The impressions this garden gave were of removedness, of light and shadow, of grass and roses. It was blocked away from the roads by rhododendron clumps within the walls; only where the striped boughs had robbed them a little could you get any real glimpse of the garden. But nobody except the people on the Ascotbound coaches cared to see; the villagers knew that Mr. James took a pride in his garden ; the agents round would have said that the Lodge had about two acres, nicely timbered. And as Mr. James hated the villagers, and, never letting his house, had no need of the agents, he did not care what they said, one or the other.

gardened for his health, assisted by a stay- James—that was what she demanded. at-home Welsh gardener and a boy who, was not a wish, it was a resolution. She led a life about as varied as a donkey's at a quickly and of acting upon them at once; well. Sometimes his daughter helped him as a rule they did not matter. Nothing when the gardener and the boy were away dreadful was done by her sudden decisions among the vegetables; she had spurts of activity after occasional lapses into idleness, At that moment she was quite capable of the drink—she could brazen it out, although she knew no chronic discontent, but as a rule she only broke off three or four to go into Windsor again with a clear conof his standard roses and fastened them into science in case any one asked her name and her dress-not that she cared for roses, but they became her well. His daughter's name was May-she was always on the lawn-Phæbe to its forest of Arden (and Phæbe was not more inappreciative of Arden than she). To describe the garden without her would be to describe a cage without a bird; she was there so much, and, alas! she had been there so long. If one wanted a synonym for weariness, it would have been May James upon her lawn.

ness for hire, and whom he had meant to gradual; but slowly it changed her being. be the unpaid nurse of his declining years; | She was like a person with a pet invention; instead, being no doubt tired of nursing she got, after a short time, to think nothing of the one girl-child she bore him; she died [she had before hardly allowed. And as the | young man coming over from Churnborough. cared the very least about anything in life, | chafes till he has tested it-must have his | done up ?" she did not appear to have any grave dis- try-she fretted and chafed, at last, in her relish for death. It was as though she had uneventful days. hequeathed to her daughter all the vitality she ought to have expended herself. Per- shadows and the dew where an orchard haps it had just rested in her-at all events | belted one side of the grass; now and then | can tell you his name. His name is Matit was wide awake in May, as if after not one of them fell with a little soft thud on thew de Nismes; he has come to read with one generation but many of refreshing the turf-over-ripe. She smiled bitterly, Mr. Passmore."

very well and likely to live long-was in James,' indeed ! it ought to be Pomona !" abject terror of death, and hugged two con-solations—the chief being that such of his did not want to ripen much longer. She know in what sort of rank the combination crushed in. The watches and wearing apof themselves had lived to be ninety, the dream, she began to feel that it was about him; he has only lately come. lesser that if he did live to be ninety his autumn. daughter would be only forty-seven-a com petent age which he would have wished her to have reached before she came into the world. He would look at her sometimes, about half as often as he looked at his own tongue in the glass, and the unexpressed wish of his heart would be that she might really clever, but oddness does duty for say an unkind thing and to do a kind cleverness in the country-and knew that one. he liked to keep his daughter at home. She There was always just enough going on enough for four.' only had a pony carriage; she could never to occupy Paul Ball. When she had got an dine out unless they sent for her. They got | item of news, she embellished it and then | said May quickly, influence more by Miss used to her beauty, and latterly had even took it round to herneighbors. By the time Ball's implied invitation of herself than by begun to disparage that, because she had | they had done with it she managed to have | anything else. ("Miss Ball's chatter abnot accomplished the impossible, and mar- heard or invented another to succeed it. solutely stultifies digestion," her father said ried, where there was absolutely nobody to | She never did any particular harm, partly | to her once. "If you must feed her at my

May James !" "She must be cold or repel- said. She was the daughter of a minor mility of which was not to be taken as literlent !" " Men don't admire her !" they be- canon, the Reverend Dudin Ball, and she al but hyperbolical.) Paul Ball knew well gan to say, torgetting that there was no had a small competency. What was at once enough where she was wanted, and the admarriageable man who had come within the most ridiculous and most laudable about her vent of tea turned her thoughts in other

been perfectly well, and perfectly her godmamma.") careless what they said of her or When, on this August afternoon, Miss could eat another, and Egypt (wake her up what they thought. She was also May James saw Paul Ball approaching her gently) shall have the smaller half." Egypt almost perfectly handsome. Indeed, she across the lawn, with Egypt bringing up was wide awake already, and made short was so tall and so-radiant-looking, and had the rear, she did not feel that the world had work of Paul Ball's bun for her, so that her such a beautiful skin and such glorious hair, suddenly become less dreary. She made mistress did not see how May's thoughts such lashes, such teeth, such a figure, that no movement of impatience, because she had flown back to that choking morsel she the pen would hesitate to describe her per- was so used to Miss Ball's visits; but she had been engaged upon at Windsor when fectiors. If she had but had a squint or a sighed softly to herself and murmured, "Il she had heard the prophecy of her "blowsy" mark the beautiful rest would have seemed | ne manquait que cela !" One of the good future. to have more value, but as she was, her fortunes of her nature was that she could physical perfections were no more remark- sometimes forget the trivial round.

had pulled a good deal; she was tired, and went into a pastry-cook's to get some tea. Sitting there-she took it at a little marble table which she hated ever afterwards-she heard her name. A Woodshot neighbor was being interviewed about her by a Windsor

"Still May James?" she heard the Wind-

All of a sudden her tea seemed to choke James did not like kisses. her, and the bun upon her plate to be a bun? Never-"blowsy,"-looking like that the emotion out of that chance word which others receive about their looks in years of home-thrust; she tied a veil over her face before she drove to Windsor, like one who has done with the world. It never occurred to her that the same remark would have held good about her beauty for years-that the blowsiness was not even hinted at as existent, only surmised as possible in the future. With all the energy of a perfectly healthy mind, she jumped at once to the conclusion that something must be done. It was the most tantalizing conclusion to which she could have jumped, for there was nothing she could plot or plan.

Driving along, she formulated briefly what was expected of her-she must get married. Not the faintest ghost appeared to her imaginings as suitable to be the other party to this compact. To change her name -to be Mrs. Something, if she looked like Mr. James was a valetudinarian, and he Mrs. Something-to leave off being May with his work of clipping, rolling, weeding, was in the habit of making her resolutions to order mutton or have the lawn mown. requesting the curate to espouse her, simply state. Had she a lover, which she had not, she was certainly in the frame of mind to "name the day." To be an old and "blowsy" girl was a "fearful thing."

Of course the fit passed; but something remained from it, permanent in her intertion. She determined that she was "not ly always!" built to be an old maid," and her quick, practical, half-educated mind wrenched itself from the consideration of other things and turned to look at Love. Perhaps it was Mr. James had married late in life a an interesting thing to care for some one. young woman, who had nursed him in ill- How? The concept of this attitude was paid and unpaid, she was not even the nurse else but the one thing the existence of which just after its birth, and as she had never inventor, convinced of his plan, frets and

The apples ripened round her in the long her eyes were heavy with anger, as she re-Of Mrs. James's descent, nobody-not viewed her position slowly. She was sitting even her disconsolate widower-could have on her lawn in a garden chair, ripening, in to marry him," said Miss Ball, annoyed at which was sunk off the coast, off Cape May told much. She became a professional sick. her pink and white dress; she could not being interrupted, "besides, he may be inlet, 49 years ago, and settled into the nurse, some said, because she had an stay the hurrying hours, they flew by her quite a man-some men are dunces all their quicksand, rising again to the surface of the aptitude for the care of the sick; empty-handed; she could neither stop them lives. He played at Churnborough the day water. This is the result of two fierce others because she had had a dis- nor fly with them to the other side of the before yesterday, and when he heard of the storms which recently burst over the Jersey appointment in caring for the strong; world. The world? She knew nothing new organ here and how ill Miss Beaton coast. When the vessel sank she settled, others owned it was because she had no about it; it was anything-opal or was (and how badly you played), he offered so that not even the main deck was visible money and nothing in the world to do. black? Her own fancy or her own to come over every Sunday till Miss Beaton above the sand. The high tide and heavy Whichever it was, she had been dead for gloom colored it. And so at last she threw was better. The lady who told me had been | surf ate away the sand, and where the beach eight-and-twenty years, and nobody talked herself back and looked up at the blue sky in the church; she had seen the back of his was formerly covered only at the highest about her any more, or even remembered and the green leaves, and down again at the head with her own eyes, and said he was tides, the water is now about 14 fathoms that she had been accustomed to exist. She | intense flowers, orange and scarlet and blue | quite good looking.' had no relatives who survived her, and Mr. and the fallen apples; and all the prospect The accuracy of this testimony did not of the sand, and she is now being lightened James had survived all his. He was past brought her was the cry, "What, in this affect May James deeply. "Is he a gentle- of her cargo, which consists of corn. Whef seventy, enjoyed bad health-was in reality miserable, dreary world, shall I do? 'May man ?" she said, after a pause.

CHAPTER II.

" PAUL BALL."

Enter, to her, Miss Paulina Dudin Ball. sober down and get over her forgetfulness | the gossip of the village, whose intimates of his tonic and her distaste to drugs. The called her Cricket-Ball, because she was so and Churnborough is too far for him to get face she never failed to make when she gave lively, and whose contemptuous superiors him his medicine robbed the draught of its called her Foot Ball, because she had no charm. He hardly ever let her leave him, carriage. The rest of the parish, indiscrithough she had been to school as a child. | minate but rude, called her merely Paul When she first came back from school, the Ball, and she had got used to that name. few neighbors they had at Woodshot, see- | She was a thin little woman, with a tongue ing how handsome she was, took some notice like an innocent asp, and she led as perfectof her; but country neighbors, when once ly happy a life at Woodshot as they have satisfied their curiosity, soon be- she could have led anywhere with come used to any way of life. They thought her own inseparable acidity to keep home, might have given the poor man a mor- pointment, "but he dosen't seem to have Mr. James clever and odd-he was not her company. She was equally ready to

because she was not at heart malicious, and | table, give me a bone on the mat, and let "There must be something odd about partly because nobody believed what she her dog have my seat"-a request, the hurange of her vision. She had happy, un- was her devotion to her dog-a little brown channels; she fell to work upon her favordachshund named Egypt (because as Miss ite meal. Meantime babe, child, or woman, she had | Ball artlessly explained, "the Sphinx was

able than those of a La France rose; and It was characteristic of Paul Ball that she to Woodshot Lodge if an opportunity should they contented her all her life. Without always spoke to her dog before she spoke to occur. It need not be difficult; she had enbeing particularly vain or anxious about it, her hostess. "Come along, then-brown tertained two or three of Mr. Passmore's she existed in the sense of her own Toeses," she was saying, "and turn them in boys ere now. Indeed, she dimly remembeauty, until she felt that it had and turn them out and be mamma's own bered one of them—a mature army student reached its zenith. This conviction came | beautiful Poggins "-an exhortation which | -making a sort of attempt to embark in a to her by the merest accident, and in this the little dog obeyed with great dignity flirtation with her years ago. But she had wise. She drove into Windsor one after- while glancing at Miss Ball as if to depre- not much recollection of such things; they

never be politely said.

Auntie May," explained Miss Ball; "she morning (the invitation must somehow come said, 'Mamma, put on your hat and toddle from him), and considered it to a mild acme round to Woodshot Lodge, and let us | companiment from Miss Paul Ball, of "Was hear all the news."

her fond mistress every Sunday.

May, dexterously evading Miss Ball's kiss by-bye and warm its nosey-pose?" by stooping to pat the dog. It was a manœuvre she practiced about four times a sor magnate say. She must look sharp week; it always deceived and always cidentally—that another old maid was comabout it now; that's the sort that soon gets pleased, Miss Ball, and between them they ing to see her at Nile Cottage, as she had

"No chair for me?" said Miss Ball. mountain; she sat staring at it. Eat that "Why do you sit out? Let's go indoors and have a nice long chat; Egypt can lie on the bun, perhaps—she— In fine, she got all sofa. She shall a Poggins Mog, she shall said May, as Miss Ball rose to go. lie on the sophy, she shall !"

"I don't want a chair," said May, and gradual disillusion. It was a desperate sat down on the grass. Once indoors, she knew Paul Ball would stay all the afternoon, but from the garden almost any passing health, she requires change, and there are cloud might drive her home.

> "Give Egypt a bit of your skirt," said Miss Ball, settling herself comfortably in May's chair, "and me a bit too for my feet, and she shall put her manicure toes on poor mamma's," she added to the little dog, in confidential love.

Egypt, curled round on May's skirt, turned her back to Paul Ball, and went off to sleep with a heavy sigh. May stroked the dog's silky ears and kept silent; she never troubled to make conversation with

Miss Ball looked at her, and after premising that she hoped May would "stroke the dog's ears towards the tips to prevent congesting the blood in her brain," she empty air, and taking up her burden of planet. plunged at once into the news with which she had been primed.

"Well, dear," she said, "you know Miss Beaton's no better; they call it rheumatism in the hand, I call it gout; I always knew she drank. So long as it kept in her feet-the gout, I mean, not though what she did with the pedals, I don't know-but now she must give up playing till no one can quite say when."

"What a bore it is!" said May, who was without much sympathy by nature, and did not think it worth while to affect it before Miss Ball—"shall I have to play on Sunday? I can't tell you how I hate it. There are times when I loath music-near-

"No, you won't," said Miss Ball, "you won't ever have to play the organ in Woodshot church again.

"Why not? Has the whole parish risen and declared against me with one voice? or are you going to play?" (in a tone as if this were the less probable alternative).

"There's a man coming," said Miss Ball, in what would have been a shout if it had not been so gutturally suppressed—"a Isn't it a mercy we've just got the organ

"I don't know. Yes," said May. "About how old is the man?"

Ball, rather rudely. "I can't say, but I of 470 tons.

"To read? he must be quite a boy."

forefathers as had taken anything like care had been roughly wrested from her summer might result. "Nobody here knows much wonder where he will lunch? It's hungry | shape of the kernel, but it is now decomwork playing through the morning service; I know Miss Beaton found it so; I asked light. The remarkable state of preservaher in once afterwards, and she polished off | tion is accounted for by the fact that during three parts of my rabbit."

"At the vicarage, I suppose." "But they go to Switzerland on Thursday He can't possibly lune at Mr. Ford's lodg- 2.27, and was in a fair state. ings -- an egg and a piece of tinned tongue ; back to Passmore's. I quite wish I wasn't a lone female. I should ask nim myself. But

parish for that ?" "Egypt would chaperon you," said May; gray. "I dare say the Hall people will want him." "Too far the other side, and you know seat," he said with a smile, "for some how seldom they come. Now I thought gentleman?" that you, as you have your father always at sel. You sit so near the chancel, and I come." would have looked in to join you myself. Your Sunday joint is always more than presently got up and wandered on into the

"You know how papa hates strangers,"

"Nicely you have these buns done," she said presently; "toasted and split; I think I

In that moment her mind was made up that she would invite Matthew de Nismes noon; it was a long drive, and the pony cate such advice in public -- a way dogs have seemed to her rather absurd and ugly. Now

of looking, which says politely what could she would perhaps regard them with altered eyes; she cast about considering how she "She thought she's just come and see could get her father to church on Sunday 'em then an own Poggins, and did it take Egypt's thoughts must have recurred its bit of bun-bun like a lady, and did it with great regularity, as she appeared with | want its milk in mamma's saucer, and did it say it was getting a chill on the grass, "It's you who tell me the news," said and did it think it must go home to beddy-

Herein Paul signified that she had sat out long enough, and had enough tea, and-inhad got to do it with a certain grace. May lately taken to calling her small domain; and between the two of them young Matthew de Nismes would be nicely canvassed and his future cut and dried.

"Are you going away at all this autumn?"

"Visits," said Paul Ball, with a little sharp nod, "not for my own sake; you know I never want to go-almost as great a fossil as you, dear May-but just for Egypt's half-a-dozen houses I can take her to. Your old friend Lady Helford's in the list too, now that poor dear Dandy is mercifully removed. Think if I'd had pug grandchildren! But now I shall spend the greater part of September with her."

May smiled as she looked at the little dog, and wondered if Egypt would regret Dandy's demise at Helfordsleigh (one of the ed us that a fleet of balloons has just started few houses at which she herself had been in this direction from a point about ninetyallowed to visit), or whether she too meant | eight miles to the northeast." to abide in single blessedness.

"Good-bye," she said, stooping again from Paul Ball's kiss, in the familiar man-

"And did 'em wag 'em's precious tail, and | "The those balloons have been on the did 'em come with ma?" The girl's eyes fol- | way fourteen minutes already! They ought lowed the old lady and her dog across the to be in sight! (Shouting through the lawn; but she was not thinking of either. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Oldest British Vessel Afloat.

The Victory, framed in English history as Nelson's flag-ship in his last battle at Trafalgar, and upon whose deck he received in the course of such battle his fatal wound in multisonous tube)-"It is, sir!" 1805, is the oldest vessel affoat belonging to the British navy. This Victory, the last of over the fortifications. Is that done?" six vessels of that name which have successively figured in the annals of British naval history, now stationed at Portsmouth, was launched at Chatham on the 7th ci May, 1765, or more than a century and a gaurter ago. She was the flagship of Admirai Kep pel in 1778; of Lord Howe in 1782; and of Lord Hood in 1793. The following vessels rank next in order in point of age, the dates after their names being those of their launch or addition to the navy :- Foudroyant, 1798; Eagle, Hibernia, 1804; Implacable (ex Duguay Trouin), 1805; Leonidas, 1807; Conquestador, Excellent (ex Queen Charlotte), 1810; Forte (ex Pembroke), 1812; Cornwall (ex Wellesley), 1813; Cornwallis, Briton, 1814; St. Vincent, 1815; Trincomalee, Myrtle (ex Malabar), 1819; Pitt (ex Camperdown), 1820; and Ganges, 1821. The only wooden vessel now in the navy "What a horrid question!" said Miss effective list is the Dart, a surveying vessel

Raising a Wreck after Fifty Years. Intelligence has reached Queenstown of "V'hat does that matter? I'm not going | the two-masted schooner James A. Fisher, deep. This leaves the vessel entirely clear the vessel sank she carried with her Capt. edy. "He is half French and half English," Andrews. She is in a remarkable state on parel of the crew are still on board. The corn, although burned black, preserved the posing under the action of the water and the entire 49 years not a breath of air reached her. One of the watches which has been found on board of her was stopped at

Guessed it.

The car was not half full, but the youth I suppose I should be drummed out of the in the new spring suit plumped himself down by the side of the handsome girl in

"Possibly-aw-you are holding this

"I was," she said with a sigh of disap-

And the youth in the new spring suit car ahead.

There's Magic in it.

What must be the satisfaction and grati fication, at so small a cost, of one who writes like this? Mr. W. Mason, editor of the Retford and Gainsborough News, Retford, Eng., says: "I had suffered from a sprained knee for twelve months, without being able to obtain relief from the pain, when I rubbed the knee thoroughly for twenty minutes with St. Jacobs Oil. That night I traveled 200 miles by railway, the next day I walked 25 miles, and the pain had entirely disappeared. I have never had the slightest return of it since."

Is the most ancient and most general of all diseases. Scarcely a family is entirely free from it, while thousands everywhere are its suffering slaves. Hood's Sarsaparilla has remarkable success in curing every form of scrofula. The most severe and painful running sores, swellings in the neck, or goitre, humor in the eyes, causing partial or total blindness, and every other form of blood disease have yielded to the powerful effects of this medicine. Try it.

Hood's Sarsaparilla Sold by all druggists. \$1; six for \$5. Prepared only

by C. I. HOOD & CO., Apothecaries, Lowell, Mass.

100 Doses One Dollar

War in 1902.

Commandent of Fortress-" Is the horizon clear.'

Sentinel (at the telescope) -- "Yes, but our friends on the planet Mars have signal-

"How long has it taken the message to

"At Mars' present distance from the earth sir, it requires about seven minutes "Good-bye," said Paul Ball, kissing the for the light to travel from there to our

electro-multisonous speaking tube.) What ho! Within, there! All hands! Turn the 40,000,000 candle-power electric burning glass toward the northeast! Bring out the aluminium aerial rams and have the flying torpedoes in readiness on the elevated platform! Lively, now! Is it all done?'

A thousand Voices (through the electro-

"Then turn the balloon-proof hood up "It is !"

"Then everything is ready. Let the enemy come on." (Yawns).

"August Flower"

How does he feel?-He feels blue, a deep, dark, unfading, dyedin-the-wool, eternal blue, and he makes everybody feel the same way -August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels a headache, generally dull and constant, but sometimes excruciating-August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels a violent hiccoughing or jumping of the stomach after a meal, raising bitter-tasting matter or what he has eaten or drunk-August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?-He feels the gradual decay of vital power; he feels miserable, melancholy, hopeless, and longs for death and peace-August Flower the Rem-

How does he feel?—He feels so full after eating a meal that he can hardly walk—August Flower the Remedy.

G. G. GREEN, Sole Manufacturer, Woodbury, New Jersey, U. S. A.

He was not too Late.

A short time ago an elderly gentleman was walking along the road between Briton Ferry and the Town of Neath, when a ragged little urchin stopped him and enquired of the gentleman if he could tell him the right time. "Yes, my boy," replied the gentleman,

pulling out his watch; "it is just two o'clock." "Oh," said the boy, "then go and hang yourself at half-past two," with which odd remark he took to his neels and bolted up

The old gentleman, annoyed at the insulting reply, followed as quickly as he could with the intention of calling the boy to account for his rudeness. After running for about half-a-mile the boy suddenly turned

a corner, and his pursuer lost sight of him. When he reached the corner, puffing and blowing, the old gentleman saw a navvy standing there, and he questioned him as to whether he had seen a boy pass,

The navvy replied that he had seen nothing of the boy and added, "But what are you blowing about, mun ?"

"Why, the little urchin," responded the gentleman, "asked me the time, and when told him it was just two o'clock he said, 'Go and hang yourself at half-past two !" "Well," said the navvy, looking up at

the church clock, "Wha's yure hurry?



Johnston, N. B., March 11, 1889. "I was troubled for thirty years with pains in my side, which increased and became very bad. I used

you have twenty minutes yet !'

ST. JACOBS OIL

and it completely cured. I give it all praise."

MRS. WM. RYDER. "ALL RIGHT! ST. JACOBS OIL DID IT."