

THE BOOK OF MARTHA

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The book of Martha by Mrs. Dowdall

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MRS. DOWDALL

**THE BOOK
OF MARTHA**

THE BOOK OF MARTHA



THE BOOK OF MARTHA

BY THE
HON. MRS. DOWDALL

WITH A FRONTISPIECE BY
AUGUSTUS JOHN



LONDON
DUCKWORTH & CO.
HENRIETTA ST. COVENT GARDEN
1913

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CHAPTER I : MARTHA

THIS book ought by rights to have borne Ruth's name on the cover instead of mine. Of the fifty years I have lived the first twenty were scattered and lost. The remaining thirty were gathered as they came, and threaded on a wire which formed them into a serviceable chain; that wire was Ruth. She has now broken off and formed other ties, therefore the years that remain will probably be scattered like the first, for there can be no second Ruth. It may be, even, that I shall be driven to spend my declining days in an hotel. Meantime I have a record of experiences common to many Marthas.

When I decided on the title it happened to be Ruth's day out. I had intended, as a matter of course, to submit the name to her, and then, suddenly, a wave of mutiny swept over me.

"The book at least shall be mine," I said