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More Pages from a Journal, with Other Papers by Mark Rutherford

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**MARK RUTHERFORD**

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More Pages from a Journal

With other Papers

More Pages  
From a Journal

*WITH OTHER PAPERS*

BY

MARK RUTHERFORD

*White, William Hale*

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To  
Horace and Susan E. P. Smith  
A Most  
Inadequate Acknowledgement of  
A Great Debt.

M. R.

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## A BAD DREAM

MISS TOLLER, a lady about forty years old, kept a boarding-house, called Russell House, at Brighton, in a dull but genteel part of the town—so dull that even those fortunate inhabitants who were reputed to have resources in themselves were relieved by a walk to the shops or by a German band. Miss Toller could not afford to be nearer the front. Rents were too high for her, even in the next street, which claimed a sea-view sideways through the bow-windows. She was the daughter of a farmer in Northamptonshire, and till she came to Brighton had lived at home. When she was five-and-twenty her mother died, and in two years her father married again. The second wife was a widow, good-looking but hard, and had a temper. She made herself very disagreeable to Miss Toller, and the husband took the wife's part. Miss Toller therefore left the farm at Barton Sluice, and with a little

money that belonged to her purchased the goodwill and furniture of Russell House. She brought with her a Northamptonshire girl as servant, and the two shared the work between them. At the time when this history begins she had five lodgers, all of whom had been with her six months, and one for more than a year.

Mrs. Poulter, the senior in residence of the five, was the widow of a retired paymaster in the Navy. She was between fifty and sixty, a big, portly woman. After her husband was pensioned she lived in Southsea. As he belonged to the civilian branch, Mrs. Poulter had to fight undauntedly in order to maintain a calling acquaintance with the wives of executive officers, and in fact the highest she had on her list was a commander's lady. When Paymaster Poulter died, and his pension ceased, she gave up the struggle. She had no children, and moved to Brighton with an annuity of £150 a year derived from her husband's insurance of £2000, and a life interest in some property left by her mother.

Mr. Goacher was a bachelor clergyman of about forty. He read prayers, presided over the book-club, and by a judicious expenditure of oil prevented friction be-