

**THROUGH WAR TO
PEACE: A NOVEL.
THREE VOLS. VOL. I**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649721825

Through War to Peace: A Novel. Three Vols. Vol. I by Mrs. Augustus H. Maule

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

MRS. AUGUSTUS H. MAULE

**THROUGH WAR TO
PEACE: A NOVEL.
THREE VOLS. VOL. I**

THROUGH WAR TO PEACE.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. AUGUSTUS H. MAULE.

THREE VOLS.

VOL. I.



LONDON:
REMINGTON & CO.,
134 NEW BOND STREET,
1882.

[All Rights Reserved.]

251. i. 606.

THROUGH WAR TO PEACE.

CHAPTER I.

4



HE green waters of the Atlantic lay shimmering in the August sun, whilst some 500 feet above, the soft west wind was soughing through the topmost branches of a small grove of fir trees which overhangs one of the loveliest bits of the North Devon coast.

Amongst the straight stems of these trees a young man lay stretched out at full length on the mossy ground, with his hands clasped under his head, and his deerstalker cap pulled nearly over his eyes. By the side of him, on a fallen log, sat a lady no longer young, and the likeness discernible between the two testified to the fact that they were mother and son.

The stillness was unbroken save by the booming sound made by the long Atlantic wave, as at regular intervals it broke over the great rocks and boulders, and swelled in and out of the holes and caves with which that part of the coast abounds.

It was a handsome face that lay there in all the repose of dreamy rest—a handsome and a good face.

Straight regular features with deep set dark grey eyes, now more than half closed. There was no hair on the face saving a black moustache which scarcely hid the lines of the well formed mouth. The hair, where it could be seen, was black as a raven's wing, and closely cut, and the long shapely limbs, as they lay partly defined in the knicker-bocker suit of rough heather tweed, betokened a man of no slight stature or inferior strength.

The same regular features, while redeeming the mother's face from plainness, were yet for a woman too hard in outline to give a pleasing impression, and the same dark grey eye had in her a restless longing look at times which gave a sense of unrest. The mouth too

had that compression about the lips which told of a nature curbed and disciplined till much of its original grace and beauty had been lost.

There were lines in the forehead also, speaking of care and disquietude, and the smooth dark hair was visibly streaked with white.

There had been silence for some time, and while her son had lain in dreamy rest at her feet, the mother's eye had rested on the distant sea line, with that far off look that suggested an active brain, busy with thoughts that carried her far away from her present surroundings.

The silence was broken at last by the young man saying in a half dreamy tone, more as though he were speaking his thoughts aloud than addressing his companion,

"I wonder if Alice will come after all."

Something in the words as they broke the train of his mother's meditations must have jarred on some hidden chord, for there was a ring of pain in the tone of her voice as she answered half playfully,

"My dear boy, you think of nothing now

but what Alice is going to do. Can't you make yourself happy for one afternoon without her?"

The tone was not altogether lost on the first speaker, and turning over on his side, he stretched out his hand caressingly towards his mother, saying, "Dear old Mum, I don't think you half like Alice, and yet she is very fond of you".

Catching sight as he spoke of the flutter of a white dress through the trees coming towards the place where they were, he sprang quickly to his feet, and went to meet the new comer.

Before going further, it may be as well to retrace our steps a little, and see who and what these persons were.

Myra Elliott had married when she was very young. Perhaps this may be some excuse for the choice she had made.

How many mistakes in after years we qualify by saying, "I was very young then," and yet we know that we have been guilty of other greater errors in judgment which can merit no such extenuation, but which in the silence of our own hearts we acknowledge

were committed when our hair was growing grey, and when, if ever, we ought to have known better.

Perhaps it were truer to lay the blame of the thousands of mistakes, miserable life-long mistakes, that are made day after day and year after year in the matter of marriage, more upon want of education than upon want of experience.

But if this be so, is there no remedy? and if there be, for God's sake let each one put his or her shoulder to the wheel, and never rest until, by some means or another, this moral plague be stayed in our midst.

We know that preventable disease has slain its thousands and ten thousands in our land, and at last people are waking up to a sense of this awful waste of human power, and beginning to use the God-given gift of reason to bring scientific research to bear upon the commonest evils of daily life, so that in the years to come we hope and believe that such things as we have seen shall be seen no longer.

But—if preventable disease has slain its thousands, how many millions of what might

have been useful happy lives—living centres of sweetness and blessing—have become instead centres of bitterness and cursing, through the hideous mistake of an ill-assorted marriage.

What can be expected where mothers act as though to know every language better than their mother tongue, were the crowning point of a woman's education. Far be it from me to say for a moment that a perfect knowledge of foreign languages is any unfitting part of refined cultivation, but while this is done, leave not the other undone.

The language that is written upon every leaf and flower, every stone and blade of grass, written so that all may read, who care to read, the great world's story is too often passed by, and the habit of patient observation and induction which such study would necessarily bring, is lost for ever.

Look at the dress too of the women who will be the mothers of the next generation—that is to say, if the unnatural distortion to which they bring their bodies do not effectually prevent their ever being mothers at all, a consummation one would scarcely regard as