

## CHLORIS OF THE ISLAND

the communication was never made. These gossips were full of the stuff they loved. Before the "Three Feathers" they unexpectedly encountered another group, which breaking swiftly, out of the thick stepped Sir George and eagerly accosted him.

"Mr. Warburton, there are strange tales about, of Sir Stephen Carmichael and—" he paused as his gaze struck upon Chloris. "How comes this lady here?" he inquired, in astonishment. "Does she not know? Her father is dead."

Warburton regarded him steadfastly. "You can give us no news, Sir George," he answered; and behind her guardian he met the curious eyes of Dorothy Holt, which were fastened on him with what he interpreted as a look of triumph.

"Sir Stephen is dead," said he, "of an ancient enemy. His loss was expected, poor man. I trust his family will bear up against the dreadful fact. But there is a successor; the name still remains."

"Indeed, sir, I understand something very different," began Sir George. "I have heard a curious story. The elder son was—"

"I have said you can give us no news," broke in Warburton, sharply, ere the word was uttered, and again was conscious of Miss Holt's face, now bearing a malevolent simper. "Sir Philip remains," he said, "and," he took Chloris's hand, "I wish to make you an introduction to this lady who has promised to be my wife."

Sir George stared, and over Miss Holt's face passed an angry flare of red. "'Pon my soul! Mr. Warburton, you amaze me," said the former. "Well, well; 'tis well done, I vow. But not so—strange—strange!" and he came awkwardly to a stop. "I must offer you my congratulations, sir," he added.