

## THE PEACEFUL ISLE

"Neither Mirabel nor her island," she wrote, "should be mentioned in the same breath as hearses and cemeteries, yet, by some dramatic contriving of Fate, a period which promises to be by far the most important in her life has begun and ended by the side of an open grave. When David landed on Lunga, and our most charming and lovable Mirabel was watching him timidly from behind some knob of that little hill in the middle of the island, she saw him scooping out a poor sailor's final resting-place; to-day, when her swimming eyes took their last look at Locksley's coffin before it was borne away to the cemetery, she completed a chapter in her history, though she does not know yet how fully. Perhaps I am mistaken in adding that last clause. Neither David nor I have said a word about the past, yet she has given each of us some puzzled looks, and I am sure that a question has hung more than once on her lips. I wonder!"

Mrs. Beringer was shrewd, and her judgment was seldom at fault. The reference to Cruachan as "a little hill" was due, of course, to debasing Sassenach influence on a woman of Highland birth.

As for David, he had no time even for theorizing. He soon found that the only practicable method of closing down official inquiry was to take the authorities completely into his confidence. It had to be established to their satisfaction that the deaths of the two men could not possibly have been caused by a third party. Then there remained a careful sifting of evidence as to the exact way in which Locksley had brought about the double tragedy, and here the man's own testimony was available.

The letter brought from the island by Mirabel led the officials charged with the investigation to request