

an' it 'd 'ave to be rubbishin' stuff 'at 'd tek me. Ah'm ower well known 'ereabouts. Appen ah mud get chance wi' next farm if ah change."

But the seed of resolution germinated in Pam's breast, and some days later, getting Barclay to herself, it pushed its pure blades through the warm soil all suddenly.

" . . . Oh, Mr. Barclay," she begged him, going close under his broad chest, and showing the peeping hands of petition. "You won't be angry with me . . . please?"

"Nay, that ah weean't," Barclay protested staunchly. "Oot wi' it! What 'ave ah been doin' noo?"

"I want to ask you something," Pam continued, a little more softly, and a little more rapidly. " . . . Something very particular. I want you to promise something."

"Ay," said Barclay assentively. "Ah can promise ye, lass. Ah can promise onnybody, so far as that gans. But it's keepin' of it 'at's not i' mah line."

"If you promise *me* . . . you'll keep it," Pam insinuated very softly, but with an almost irresistible forcefulness.

"Ah'm none so sure," Barclay reflected. "Ah know what ye want to ask me."

"What?" said Pam.

"Ye want to ask me to gie it up."

"Yes," said Pam, after a pause. "I do."

"Ah've tried . . . lots o' times," Barclay admitted.

"But not for *me*!" Pam urged. "Not for the *sake* of anybody. Oh, Mr. Barclay . . . you don't know how unhappy I've been at times about you, of late . . . to think that you've saved my life—and his life—and put this happiness in our way . . . and all the time you're not taking any care of your own life . . . at all."

"Why, lass," Barclay told her, but visibly troubled about the eyes by her solicitude. "Ah'm sorry ye've let me be a trouble to ye. Ah've been nowt bud trouble to missen an' ivverybody. Bud where would ye be? . . . an' 'im too, if ah'd kep' pledge sin' last time ah signed 'er? Eh?"

"I know; I know," Pam admitted. "I've thought of that, too."

"Ay," Barclay took up, pleased with her admission. "It's a caution when ye come to think on it. If ah 'adn't been mekkin' a swill-tub o' missen, an' walked back when ah did—it'd 'a been good-bye to ye, an' long live teetawtallers. It just seems as though Lord 'ad called me to Oommuth for t' puppos—though ah didn't know it at time. An' 'ow am ah to know,