

Chirsty gave her curls an angry shake as she saw him, but he had to be acknowledged.

"This is himsel'," she said, with the contempt a woman naturally feels for her husband.

Thus cornered, Tammas opened his mouth wide, to have his photograph taken, as it were, by the two ladies. The elder smiled and said,

"I am glad to make your acquaintance, James."

Tammas thinks she said more, but could never swear to it. To keep up with her quick way of speaking was a race for him, and at the word "James" he stumbled, as against a stone. When he came to himself,

"Thank ye, mem," he said, "but my name——"

Here Chirsty gave him a look that made him lose his words.

"Let the leddies pass, can ye no?" she exclaimed.

For a moment Tammas did not see how they could pass, unless by returning to the house, when he could follow them and so get rid of himself. Then he had the idea of descending.

"At the same time," he said, picking up the lost words, "my name——"