

**'UNTIL THE SHADOWS
FLEE AWAY'. A TRUE TALE
OF THE LAST CENTURY**

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'Until the Shadows Flee Away'. A True Tale of the Last Century by Jessie Maclaren

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JESSIE MACLAREN

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LIEUTENANT JOHNSTONE APPROACHING HANNA.

—Page 18.

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A TRUE TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY.



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CHAPTER I.

THE LIVING 'JETSAM.'

TS there anything whereof it may be said, 'See! this is new?' Most assuredly, it hath already been in the olden times which were before us. We speak of modern intellectual development and modern refined susceptibilities, and are apt in thought to consider our ancestors (with some glittering historical exceptions) as mere colourless automatons, who clicked monotonously through their allotted span. But, in reality, our grandfathers and grandmothers did not, any more than their descendants, travel to eternity along a macadamized road between high walls. Then, as now, God led His people about in the life-wilderness. Then, as now, every-

day cares and joys, when sanctified, precluded the white robe and the palm of victory. There is indeed *no* new thing under the sun.

When, last June, Mr. Henderson (the recent purchaser of the estate of Winkle) gave a *fête champêtre* on his lawn, it was the district talk for a week. 'My dear Mrs. Henderson,' said one of the guests to the hostess, as she sat down beside her under a gay Turkish tent, ornamented rather inconsistently with the prophet's green banner, and a flag bearing the Henderson arms,—'My dear Mrs. Henderson, how delightfully your *fête* is going off! You must feel in a perfect whirl of excitement, among such a rush of changes in your life. Coming home from India, and buying this lovely place; and Agnes' marriage, and Tom getting his commission,—all within six months! But, to be sure, in these days every one lives sensationally, and feels intensely. It is the natural result of progressing civilisation. I often wonder how the men and women of last century contrived to *yawn* out their dull, emotionless threescore years and ten.'

Emotionless! Ah, if that small ivy-covered ruin, at one corner of the thronged lawn, could have spoken! if its clambering wild roses, and scented wall-flower, could have whispered amid

the blare of the brass band, discoursing polkas around it!

One hundred and forty years ago that ruin was the new House o' Winkle, a two-storied building, with seven little windows in its breadth, and at every corner a tiny pepper-box turret, sticking up like a horn. The lawn sloping towards the beach (it is on the Fife coast) was not then a lawn, but a rough park, where daisies, and golden broom, and white hawthorn kept a glorious flower show; and the hazel thickets backing the mansion were then, as now, locally known by the name of Winkle Woods.

House, woods, and three hundred acres of land, were purchased in 1717 by John Goldie, shipbuilder, and magistrate, in the adjacent burgh of Inverkeithing, at that period a greatly frequented seaport.

At a much earlier date, however, Goldie's ships were well known in the Mediterranean and South American seas, besides being credited as among the soundest craft that entered three or four English harbours. But albeit the family tree of the Goldies was, as it were, planted in ship-making, branches, of erratic tendencies, had sprouted therefrom now and again. Some scions took to seafaring and foreign traffic, enriching