

He gloried in shocking the circumspect. He believed in soul-laughter, brain-laughter, and body-laughter. He dealt sledge-hammer blows at the severity of the old Scotch Sabbath, was perfection itself in the rendering of an old Celtic ballad, and could trip the light fantastic toe in the middle of a great public lecture. He was in his pew on Sunday morning, would play croquet of an afternoon, and turn in to the Salvation Army at night. His innocent jests, and right loud healthful laughter have been heard in many a spacious drawing-room. He had the knack of slapping, with impunity, a reverend Bishop on the back or the knee, and of joking the ponderous Oxford dons on their unnatural pronunciation of the immortal Greek. He once shook Carlyle in the midst of an interminable harangue and cried, "Let your wife speak, you monster!" He was vigorously conscious of his own picturesque figure, and paraded it with a comical and dashing audacity. "When I walk along Princes Street," said he to a lady, with a humorous and mischievous criticism twinkling in his eye, "I go with a kingly air, my head erect, my chest expanded, my hair flowing, my plaid flying, my stick swinging. Do you know what makes me do that? Well, I'll tell you—just CON-CERT."

He attributed his longevity to a hearty soul in a hearty body. In his old age he has threshed every mountain in Scotland with his feet, and stood as a monarch on their heights. At eighty-two he took a run to Constantinople. He immensely enjoyed what he jocularly dubbed his two-week "One Shirt Expeditions" over his native heath. He loved Oban and Oban loved him. There was wonderful consistency and continuity in Blackie's make-up, from his cradle to his grave. At eight he didn't know his alphabet, and what is more he never "learned" it! He was born with a contempt for the grammar and for rudiments and for all preliminary drudgery. He maintained his independent and spontaneous eccentricities throughout his life. He was ever the incalculable quantity. I believe he was amusing to himself, and certainly he was to all who came within his range. For fifty years he was the most popular lecturer in Scotland. I remember one lecturing visit he made to Glasgow. It was a Sunday night. His subject—well, it was one of Blackie's subjects—"The Philosophy of Love." He launched out upon