

**AN OLD EDUCATIONAL
REFORMER, DR
ANDREW BELL**

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An Old Educational Reformer, Dr Andrew Bell by J. M. D. Meiklejohn

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J. M. D. MEIKLEJOHN

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REFORMER, DR
ANDREW BELL**

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AN OLD EDUCATIONAL REFORMER

DR ANDREW BELL

BY

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PROFESSOR OF THE THEORY, HISTORY, AND PRACTICE
OF EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF ST ANDREWS

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLXXXI

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE, K.T.

AND

JOHN COOK, ESQUIRE,

WRITER TO H.M. SIGNET

The Trustees of Dr Bell's Will,

AND THE FOUNDERS OF

THE TWO CHAIRS OF EDUCATION IN THE

UNIVERSITIES OF EDINBURGH AND ST ANDREWS,

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.



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LIFE OF DR BELL.

CHAPTER I.

ST ANDREWS.

ANDREW BELL was born in the city of St Andrews on the 27th of March 1753.

St Andrews is a place so full of contrasts between new and old, town and country, barbarism and Christianity, that one or two words may be useful about it. The traveller on reaching it sees at once that he has fallen out of the ordinary track—has gone away from the common world, and that he has come into an outlying place,—which cannot be judged by the usual standards we apply to villages, and towns, and cities. Such a cold stony hideousness of street, such a glory of sky, alternately chills and depresses, or lifts and inspires him. Old ruins, rising up bare and gaunt into the heaven, long reaches of monotonous street, quiet fields looking suddenly in upon the town, a bay of the most changeful hues—sometimes black as night, at other times of a blue as deep as the Mediterranean, or

white as molten silver,—steep cliffs, softly moulded hills, and over all a sky of the most various and transcendent beauty—a beauty that is new every few minutes,—these are the features that keep the new-comer in a mixed condition of wonder and dissatisfaction. The sky is most beautiful in winter; for in these high latitudes the sun is low, even at high noon. He does not send his rays down to the earth to enable work-people to get through their work, but he flings them all abroad through the wide and open sky, to light it up with richest gold, to sprinkle over it light traces of green and grey; and, towards afternoon, when the barred clouds lie in long stretches along the low sky, to touch with deepest calm some narrow opening into the beyond. In the evening, as the clouds meet towards the west over the setting sun, there are here and there rifts and openings between them, like quiet lakes of soft light, in which the calm is the visible expression—the true symbol to the fleshly eye of “the peace that passes all understanding.”

The look of some of the streets, even now, is the look of the fifteenth century. Knubbly and rough, like the streets of a Continental town, they must have been, as they still are, trying to the feet of the enthusiastic pilgrim. Perhaps a cart slowly rumbles through one of them once an hour, and this serves to intensify the silence. Winds from the sea push in vast body or in sudden gusts along the wide avenues; and when a storm sends the waves dashing into the rocky coves that line the Scores,¹ the white thready foam is carried

¹ This word is a corruption of *scar* or *scaws*, the old English word for a steep *cut-away* cliff.