

In question, might and ought—looking to its undoubted justice, looking to the fitness of the citizens to be enfranchised—to have proceeded with a much more accelerated movement, and at a much greater rate of progress than it has done—(loud cheers). Gentlemen, I will not longer delay you, but will call on Mr Esslemont to move a resolution—(loud and prolonged cheering.)

Mr Peter Esslemont, who was very cordially received, proposed the following resolution—being the same as was proposed at platforms B, C, and D—

That this great assemblage, representative of the city of Aberdeen and the adjoining counties, desires to reiterate the demand, which they have already made through their representatives in the House of Commons, for the immediate extension of household suffrage to counties, and to express their hearty approval of the conduct of Her Majesty's Ministers in successfully carrying the Franchise Bill through the Lower House by almost unprecedentedly large majorities, and assured Her Majesty's Ministers that they will have their hearty support in their further efforts to pass it into law during the present Parliament. Further, they desire most emphatically to protest against the unpatriotic, unstatesmanlike, and unstraightforward conduct of the majority of the House of Lords in refusing to pass the bill, and their conviction that such a modification of our Parliamentary system, with special reference to the House of Lords, is necessary, as shall secure that the will of the nation, expressed through its selected representatives, be supreme.

He asked if the demand of the people in reference to the Franchise Bill was unreasonable. The answer to that was provided by the House of Lords themselves. The Lords dare not tell the people that their cause was not reasonable, and fair, and right—(hear, hear)—and the people were going to tell "my Lord Salisbury" and all his following that they were not any longer to stand this humbug—(hear, hear, and cheers). It was not the question with them now—"Is the Franchise Bill to pass"; the question was, and they wanted to know now, once, and for all—when it was going to pass; and it was going to pass this session of Parliament—(cheers, and a Voice—"It must pass"). He had to make three very strong charges against the House of Lords—(hear, hear). He held that they were not patriotic; that they were not good statesmen—(hear, hear)—and, what was more, that they were not honest men—(loud cheers). He did not care whether a man was a duke, an earl, or a lordling; he took our Scotch post, and he said that an honest man was the true nobility of his country—(hear, hear, and cheers)—and therefore he wanted the demands of honest men to be complied with in an honest and straightforward way—(cheers). It had been said that the lords were a supreme and dignified party that stood above all class interests, and who were in the House of Lords without prejudices or reference to party, to see that the parties in the State did not pass heated and ill-digested legislation, and that they were there not as any part of any party faction, but to deal calmly and deliberately and conscientiously with the measures that they believed to be for the good of this great Empire. But what was the position they had taken up now? They had gone to the Carlton Club and joined there with their friends of the House of Commons, and entered into a compact not to deal with the nation, but with a faction of the nation, and they were under

covenant now—after their allies had done the utmost they could to obstruct the passage of the bill in the House of Commons—to use their power to stop the measure in the House of Lords. If the Lords lent themselves to a party and faction which notoriously did not represent the will of the great majority of the nation, they had forfeited all claim to their present existence—(cheers)—and he believed that, on their own showing, they had come deliberately forward and cut off their own heads—(hear, hear, laughter, and cheers)—for they had said—"We are no longer an impartial tribunal; we are tied head and feet to the Conservative party, and we are going to work with them alone." In regard to this charge he must make an honourable exception of those noblemen who stood up for the rights of the people—(cheers). The presumption of the majority was all the greater seeing that there were only 205 men who had united themselves to thwart the will of the people, and to this majority the people declared now once and for all, "We will stand it no longer"—(cheers). He desired to feel as much as any one the responsibility of this occasion. He believed the nation had entered upon one of the most critical periods in its history; but he was one of those who thought there need be no fear—(hear, hear)—so long as they had a virtuous, industrious, and well-doing people—(cheers). They were sure of this bill, and they were as sure of the House of Lords being rectified within a reasonable time—(loud cries of "Abolished"). At all event—(renewed cries of "Abolished")—he went this length, that they must now have done for ever with hereditary representation—(loud cheers)—and a man would henceforth be born a man and not a lordling as far as legislation was concerned—(cheers). He thought there could be no possible claim to hereditary representation. Why, think of it—Would they tolerate for a moment having born foremen of works, provosts, sheriffs, and Court of Session judges?—(laughter). Would they let such positions be given in respect of birth and not of merit? The thing was perfectly ridiculous—(cheers). But he was going to say, and these would be his last words, that if they were to take power—and he believed they were to take the present power—from the House of Lords and place it in the will of the people of this great Empire, the responsibility of their position would be great, and he wished them to realise it. They were the legislators of the greatest Empire in this world; they were the fathers of or of kindred race with all that was enlightened and forward in the great noble Saxon race, and the world was looking to them to use their freedom aright. He believed the people of this country would use their freedom aright, and that they would so conduct themselves and the affairs of this great nation that they would lead on that day when people would give up all that was selfish, and unjust, and privileged, and class; and when they would patriotically and loyally adopt the golden rule that as regarded all classes of the community they would deny no right to their fellow men which they had for themselves, and

Man to man the waird o'er,
Shall brithers be an' a' that.