

Skinner, Inverurie; Baillie Smith, Peterhead; Messrs John F. White, Alexander Davidson, ship-owner; Douglas Walker of Blairton; Dr Bain, Mr H. R. Souper, Baillie Paterson, Messrs J. Beaton, Longside; A. Hutcheon, Nether Ordley; A. F. M'Pherson, Sauchen; James Aiken, Braemar; James Esslemont, Culsalmond; Hugh Leith, Peterculter; John Gartly, Inch; John Miller, Sandilands; Dr Jackson, Messrs Alexander Ingram, Aberdeen; H. G. Murray, Aberdeen; Alex. Forbes, G. Gerrie, G. B. Esslemont, Dr Maitland Moir, Mr John Webster, L.L.D., M.P.; Lord Provost Matthews, Messrs Alex. Webster, advocate; J. O. Macqueen, S.S.C.; William Smith, advocate; Dean of Guild Sangster, Mr Alex. Anderson, Old Aberdeen.

The Chairman, who was received with a hearty round of cheers, said—I must begin by expressing my pride in the honour of presiding at one of our platforms to-day—(cheers). The honour of course is paid to the Junior Liberal Association, of which I happen at this time to be chairman, and I must say it seems to me a proper thing that the Juniors should have a marked place in this demonstration—(cheers)—if only that they may hand on the tradition to the next generation should occasion arise for the assertion of national liberties—(loud cheers). In the forefront of the great procession in which you have taken part marched the veterans of 1832, the old men who were Junior Liberals when the work was begun which we are met to-day to complete—(cheers). Our Conservative friends—(hisses)—are very hard to convince about the meaning of these demonstrations. They will have it that demonstrations are got up by wire-pullers. You have not come here, they say, of your own free will; you care nothing for the Franchise Bill, or for the reform of the House of Lords; you are not in the least interested in these questions; it is the wire-pullers that are interested, and it is these mysterious beings that have brought you here to-day—(laughter). Well, I will only say that the wire is a very long wire, and a very strong wire, and a wire of wonderful properties altogether that can reach the ears of so many thousands as are assembled here to-day from all parts of the north-east of Scotland—(cheers). You know yourselves whether this is true, whether you have come of your own free will and consent or not—(cheers). But if you are doubtful, be of good cheer, for the same thing has been said by the so-called Conservatives of every Liberal demonstration for more than fifty years—(cheers). They were all got up through the agency of wire-pullers; there was no real enthusiasm, no real conviction behind them. And yet, somehow, what our predecessors then demanded is now universally admitted to have been a just demand—(cheers). Even by the Conservatives of to-day, the demands that the people met in their thousands to enforce when the last great Reform demonstration was held on this spot, are admitted to have been just—(cheers). There is not a single living Conservative out of a lunatic asylum who has a word to say to the contrary—(cheers). Lord Salisbury has expressly said so, and has said also that the Lords in 1832 made a blunder. In refusing to concede what was then demanded depend upon it, the same thing will be said of our demands and the attitude of the Lords twenty years

hence, or fewer. I have said that we are met to complete the work of the reformers of 1832—(cheers). This is true in more senses than one. Then, as now, the cry of a section of the people for a share in the making of the laws by which they were governed was opposed. Then, as now, the opposition came from the House of Lords. The wish of the majority of the nation was opposed by the privileged few. The majority peacefully but firmly asserted their rights, and they prevailed—(cheers). It is the same to-day, and the result will be the same—(hear, hear, and cheers). But mark the difference that half a century has made, the fifty years that have passed since these unchanging hills echoed to the tramp and the clamour of a multitude like this, like this in its numbers, and like this in its purpose. We owe the difference to the men of '32, to the men whose action was jeered at as ours is, jeered at by frivolous individuals who cannot discern the signs of the times—to the men who were brought here by wire-pullers—(cheers). In whatever way the demonstrators of 1832 were brought together their action struck at the roots of hereditary privilege, and we are confronted by the mere phantom of the power which they destroyed for ever. Our hereditary legislators do not pretend to oppose the will of the majority of their fellow-citizens. They do not advance that pretension in words at least. They rather pose as the champions of popular rights. They profess to stand between you and the tyranny of your representatives in the House of Commons. They say that you have not been consulted about this Franchise Bill, that the House of Commons, led by a tyrannical Minister—("No, no")—that is how they speak of Mr Gladstone—is forcing this bill upon an unwilling nation. I leave it to other speakers to say whether this pretence is anything more than a pretence—(cheers)—and to you to show whether you agree with them—(cheers). But another question has been raised, and upon this also we are met to pronounce, whether this new privilege that the lords claim, or this old privilege in a new dress, is essential to the well-being of the country, whether it is not rather incompatible with good government—(cheers). For my own part I believe that hereditary political privilege in every shape ought to be done away with—(cheers)—and that a man's influence ought to go for what it is worth before the ballot-box—(cheers). But you will not be asked to affirm this; you will only be asked to affirm whether in your opinion the House of Lords should be so reformed as that it shall cease to obstruct the working of representative government—(loud cheers).

Mr John Hutcheon, Chief Magistrate, Turiff, who was received with loud applause, said—I have great pleasure in proposing for your acceptance the resolutions proposed to be adopted at the various platforms this afternoon—(cheers). Having read its terms, he continued—It is most gratifying to us all that we are in a position to state that we have already made, through our representatives in Parliament, a demand for household suffrage in the counties, and that not only have the members for the city and county of Aberdeen, the members for the burghs and counties of Banff, Kincardine, Moray and Nairn, done their duty in this respect, but that every city and county in the east and northern