



## The Company of Cutlers' Feast,

17 MAY 2018

The Cutlers, Feast took place in the Hall on 17 May 2018 and had the normal array of guests from local dignitaries through livery masters from London to, of course, a good number of Freemen and Friends.

The Keynote speaker was, as always, the Senior Warden, Nick Cragg this year. He said that the road to future success and prosperity for everyone in the Sheffield City Region is at a crossroads. He cited the four key challenges as Brexit and the economic landscape, devolution, productivity, skills and education. He then spoke about each in turn concluding with the fact that in this Region our manufacturing spirit is strong and that we are ready for the opportunities which lie ahead.

He urged everyone to make a success of devolution lest we get left behind and not to let down the younger generation which relies on us to ensure that they had access to the jobs they needed.

The response to his speech came from the principal speaker, Lord Andrew Adonis, who acknowledged that we have very little control over our exit from Europe at this time but forcefully pointed out that what we do have control of the future of this "great Sheffield City Region - one of the most important and successful manufacturing regions not just in this country but in the world."

He went on to say that "The big issue which faces this Region now is how to reinvent greatness.

"First and foremost, you need leadership. It is a huge, huge plus for you as a Region that you now have a Metro Mayor in Dan Jarvis, who is held in high esteem in London." Lord Adonis said that he would be able to unify the Region in a way that would not be possible by single individuals. "My strongest piece of advice to you is to get behind him to see there is a proper devolution plan in place."

He also said that we should make good use of our excellent universities and UTCs to ensure that our young people were given every opportunity to succeed.

In responding to Lord Adonis and addressing more than 300 invited guests, the Master Cutler, Ken Cooke, thanked everyone for making this one of the best attended Feasts in many years.

He supported every aspect of the Senior Warden's speech and particularly urged everyone to ensure that the devolution deal was "unlocked" so as to bring much needed investment to the Region. "Without unity of purpose we will be left in the wilderness," he said.

The evening concluded with a speech by the Master's Chaplain, Cannon Keith Farrow, who in an enjoyable and entertaining speech revealed that he had recently been mistaken for the new Bishop of Sheffield (who was attending the Feast and seated two places away) - a mistake he did not correct, adding: "If the Mitre fits...".