

long-seeing man, and I profoundly hope that I will not be misunderstood. (Laughter and Cheers.)

### **INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ENTENTES.**

The CHAIRMAN : I will now ask Sir Max Muspratt, President of the Federation of British Industries, to deal with the question of International Industrial Ententes.

SIR MAX MUSPRATT, BT. : Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—The subject that has been put into my hands might be dealt with in a very technical manner, but I feel at a meeting like this you only want me very shortly to give an historical perspective with a view to possible guidance for the future. The question of International Industrial Ententes is not new. It is as old as the Hanseatic League, when, against the feudal system, industry and commerce had to combine under the auspices of the Hanseatic League.

For many centuries that League did great international work, but it broke down as not giving sufficient scope to individualism and nationalism. The City Guilds of London were not prepared for all time to submit to the privileges of the steelyard ruled from Hamburg, and the same movement was going on all over the world. The industrial era of the 19th century was based on individualism, and, with vast fields of development open, it sufficed for industrial relations for at least a century. In the middle of last century, however, the germs of ententes began to reappear, certainly in scientific and industrial fields, in the form of personal touch between scientists, both academic and industrial, and this form of entente has never ceased, to the great advantage of the world at large.

It took another form in the political field when Richard Cobden went over to France and negotiated the French Treaty, which was supposed to be the harbinger of better relations between the nations of the world for all time to come. Unfortunately, this movement has not thrived, owing to the undue development of a narrow nationalism among the many nations of the world.

To understand the modern problem rightly these factors must be borne in mind. Before the Great War there was a growing industrial competition for world trade, but this was modified far more than was realised by industrial ententes. These varied in character enormously from purely friendly understandings, via gentlemen's agreements, to complicated legal cartels, both national