

For a long time the public men of the United States failed to respond to the wishes of Canada. Our efforts, like those of our predecessors, proved unsuccessful. We then ceased to seek reciprocity and Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared that the next overtures on the subject must come from the United States. We fully realized that, while better trade relations with our neighbours to the south would be beneficial, they were not essential, and we were prepared to deny ourselves the benefits of their markets rather than agree to terms which would be unfair to Canada.

Some months ago a change of sentiment took place on the part of the United States authorities. They frankly recognized that their policy of exclusion was unwise and they expressed a desire to re-open negotiations with Canada. The Government welcomed this change of attitude and expressed willingness to meet the representatives of the United States for the discussion of the question. If we had not done so, we should have deserved and receive the condemnation of all fair-minded men.

MANUFACTURERS NOT INJURED.

In previous reciprocity negotiations the chief stumbling-block had been the question of manufactures. Canada was ready for a free exchange of many natural products, but was not prepared to adopt a revolutionary policy respecting manufactured goods, as it was felt that in the United States, owing to the larger market, manufacturing industry was much more highly specialized than in this country. The representatives of the United States had desired to include manufactures, and the impression prevailed in Canada, with too much justification, that unless Canada was prepared to treat natural products and manufactures alike no reciprocity agreement could be made. So long as our neighbours adhered to their position in this respect, no progress was made. But, after a full discussion with the Canadian Ministers, the representatives