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Letter: A.L. Burney to Ida M. Tarbell, March 6, 1907

Burney, A.L.

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Miss Ida W. Tarbell,  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Madam: I am sending you with today's mail some data
which will aid you in arriving at a true estimate of the
character and work of Dudley C. Haskell.

It appears from the family history that the Haskells
and Choates of Vermont were old time Whigs. That about 1833,
Dudley Haskell's grandfather and uncle became interested in
a woollen factory. Circumstances seemed most favorable for
abundant success. The Uncle Haskell was mechanical manager—what
which would now be called engineer. With the repeal of the
tariff a little later ruin overtook the enterprise and the
Haskell children were taught to hate free traders. It appears
that the teaching was successful and the later generations
adopted the free trade doctrine in the true Puritan fashion.

From all accounts Mr. Haskell was a tireless student. He
was educated at Yale, had some military experience, studied law
history, politics, but was always particularly interested in
industrial questions.

He was elected to the Kansas legislature when he was 29
years of age, became speaker at 33, and was sent to Congress
at 34.

His work in Congress is best told in the memorial volume
comprising the speeches of his colleagues—especially
those of Ryan of Kansas, Kelley of Penn., and Brown of Indiana.

"Savoyard" claims that Kelley taught Haskell how to
view the tariff question. Although Haskell relatives dispute
this contention, it is quite probable that Kelley wielded a
considerable influence over him. Kelley was often at the
Haskell home in Washington, in conference on the tariff. The
talk and humor of Kelley compelled him to leave the floor work to
a stronger man, and Kelley exchanged his seat with Haskell
in order to give him a seat nearer the Speaker, Farwell of
Chicago then sat next to Haskell, but he kindly relinquished his
right to this desirable seat and arranged the matter so
that Kelley and Haskell could sit side by side.

I will enclose some personal letters, newspaper clippings
and some typewritten notes which may serve your purpose. Some
are entirely eulogistic, and will only serve to show the esti-
nation in which the writer held him.

As to his power on the stump I know of no better descrip-
sion than that of his old pastor in "Pioneer Days in
Kansas," which volume I mail to you, marked.

In addition to his work on the tariff, Mr. Haskell rendered
conspicuous service in legislation touching upon polygamy, and
upon Indian affairs. Through his efforts an Indian school was
established at Lawrence, Kansas, which bears his name.

I shall be glad to respond promptly to any further inqui-
ries you may be disposed to make.

Yours Truly,  
A. B. Burney