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Letter: Robert Foster to Ida M. Tarbell, February 26, 1907

Foster, Robert

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The  Times
LONDON

AMERICAN OFFICE
1410 H STREET, WASHINGTON, D. C.

February 26, 1907

Dear Miss Tarbell,

After reading your very interesting contribution on the Tariff in the current issue of the American Magazine, I am at a loss to see how you will be able to reach the Tariff Commission in your next article, and therefore imagine that that will have to be put off until the May number. I have received the scrap book and can lend it to you if you still want it.

I have made the following memoranda showing the periods of the Tariff Question in which I took part, aside from the Tariff Commission, which I have already discussed with you :

(A) What I call the revival of the Tariff Sentiment 1883-4. To this I contributed the Tribune letters. Then followed the Blaine presidential campaign. During this time I was on the editorial staff of the Tribune and of the Philadelphia Press, and had more or less charge of the Tariff literature of the campaign.

Between 1884-7 - the Mills Bill and the Senate investigation^{period} - I was the editorial correspondent of the Philadelphia Press in Washington, and a very full account of this period will be found in the columns of that journal.

On December 1, 1887 I started the New York Press in conjunction with Mr Frank Hatton. This was the period of the very active Harrison campaign, the Bowery Parrot "Tariff Talks", and other efforts for popularising the Tariff. You will get a very good idea of these

in the files of the New York Press from its first year until the close of the Harrison campaign in November of 1888.

In 1889 after my appointment as Director of the Census I had very little to do with the Tariff, but furnished McKinley with some statistical matter for the Tariff Bill of 1890. I think I told you about how Harrison, Blaine and Reid regarded this measure after the defeat in the Congressional elections of November of 1890.

In 1891 (on Lincoln's birthday) I ^{opened} the Tariff campaign with McKinley at Toledo, i.e., his first campaign for governor of Ohio, and there, as he said, he nailed the tariff flag to the masthead.

In 1895 and 1896, I wrote the Life of McKinley and went to Japan, making an elaborate study of the resources and manufacturing ability of that country.

In 1897 you will find in an early number of the North American Review an outline of what I thought the new Tariff, i.e., the present Dingley Tariff Bill, should be, and I may tell you that the proof of this article was read by President McKinley and its general outlines approved by him. I think it would be well to look this over, and you will see that the McKinley bill was a much more drastic proposal.

I shall be in New York with my family the last week of our stay in this country, namely, from March 8 to 16, at the Buckingham Hotel and should you care to go over these points with me I shall be glad to be of any service to you that I can. I shall ^{have} with me the principal memoranda and the scrap book.

Sincerely yours,

"Withy Hughes" ^{is not} better than "McKinley, Tariff 1890."

Robert D. Jones

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
The American Magazine,
141-147 Fifth Avenue,
New York