

CHALMER'S-HILL CONTROVERSY AND THE C. P. A.

To the Editor of the Halifax Philatelist:

SIR,—I cannot pass unnoticed one thing in the proceedings of the late Convention of the C. P. A., and that is the attempt to have our Association support Chalmer's claim to the invention of the postage stamp. Now, I think those present did a very sensible thing by putting that resolution under the table, as the only means of preserving harmony in our ranks. I claim it would be an unjust use of a proxy to vote for such a claim, when I believe that by far the greater majority do not see their way clear to support Chalmer's claim. These proxies were not given for that reason, and therefore the "springing" of this resolution did not justify even the support it got. Out of 27 votes cast in its favor a U. S. member *dropped in 24 proxies* in its favor; only *one* Canadian supporting him. Chalmers, Jr., seems to have plenty of money; did he make this attempt to "carry our fort by storm," or was it a bold bid to get us to recognize him. I respect every man's opinions, and admire all who favor and can support their claim, but British fair play and justice we must have, and I object to forcing down Pat. Chalmers' ideas into my mind. I have received Chalmers' circulars and pamphlets,—every one he has issued—and I have read them thoroughly, and I do not wonder that he has won the sympathy he has in the U. S., where he has distributed his pamphlets by the thousand, besides sending books, postage stamps and photos as inducements to read them. To read his pamphlets one would think he had it all his own way; that Chalmers, Sr., was an ill-used and unfairly-treated man. But look at the other side, hear what the London Society have to say; hear what the Quaker City Philatelic Association have to say; read Pearson Hill's "Origin of the Postage Stamps," read Major E. B. Evans', and George Henderson's answer to the Chalmerites,—all this and more too—and then I say you will agree with me that the Chalmers' craze is a "bugbear." Mr. Chalmers has a bad cause, and all the money he spends cannot bolster it up; and in Hill's pamphlet he is shown up in his true light. In his twenty-seven circulars and pamphlets he has so kindly sent me he has not established one iota of his claim. The only Society in the U. S. which, without prejudice or undue haste, considered this question in all its phases for months, came to the conclusion "That the testimony advanced by Patrick Chalmers in favor of his father does not establish the claims advanced. That if he had been the inventor it would have been acknowledged long ago; and that in his *proofs* advanced he has not deuced sufficiently strong reasons to change our resolve that Mr. James Chalmers *did not* invent adhesive postage stamps." Now, a discussion on this subject is so much space thrown away, and I do not intend to enter such, suffice it to say, "hear both sides before you make up your mind."

Yours philatelically,

JOHN R. HOOPER,
Vice-Pres. C. P. A