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LOUIS CHAPUIS — 80 YEARS OLD.

For the last few months the editor has had the melancholy duty of bidding a last farewell to departed members of the Swiss Colony, amongst them many personal friends.

It becomes, therefore, all the more pleasing to offer, on behalf of our readers and the entire Colony, heartiest congratulations and an affectionate tribute to one who for 66 years has been a well-loved and highly respected member of the Colony.

Louis Chapuis will celebrate, on the 4th November 1957, his eightieth birthday; this is an event in the life of our friend which should not pass unnoticed.

On his reaching a further mile-stone in a life so rich in achievements, it behoves us to look back and review some of the events which have occurred, as well as mention some of the services he has for so many years rendered to the Swiss community.

One may ask what is the secret of our friend's popularity; the answer is, his integrity, simplicity, kindness and generosity.

The writer has been privileged to enjoy his friendship for well nigh 40 years, a friendship which has never been troubled, and I am glad to say remains as close as ever.

Although Louis Chapuis has spent the greater part of his life away from his native land, he has remained loyal to the country of his birth, which he loves so dearly and consistently. Never is he happier than when visiting the canton of Vaud, from which he originates and to which he is so deeply attached.

* * *

Louis Chapuis was born at Lausanne in 1877, and together with his brother Carlo — both being orphans — arrived in London in 1891 to join his uncle, Mr. Henri Comoy, who at that time was considered to be a pioneer of the Briar Pipe Industry in Great Britain.

At the early age of fourteen he started an apprenticeship during which he acquainted himself with the many intricacies of briar pipe making. By sheer hard work, honesty and an indomitable will to succeed, he soon gained the confidence of his principals. Before long he was promoted to the position of foreman, and later to Manager and Managing Director, and at present he holds the position of Chairman of the Board of H. Comoy & Co. Ltd., the firm with which he started as a boy 66 years ago, and which to-day enjoys a world-wide reputation.

With a view to developing the export trade of the concern he undertook many travels. In 1907 he opened the market in America, which country he has since visited 35 times; further voyages took him to, apart from European countries, Australia and New Zealand. Through his initiative and driving power the London factories were modernised and further developed. New factories were built in France and Austria. It might be mentioned here that Louis Chapuis was a Founder member of the Briar Pipe Trade Association, over which he presided for many years.

Although his professional duties required his full and constant attention, he nevertheless found time to take an active part in the life and the doings of the Swiss Colony in London. He joined the Swiss Mercantile Society in 1898, and in the same year he founded "La Fraternelle Suisse", of which he was President for five years. This Society, which at one time had a membership of over 300, was wound up — after five years of lively activity — when he resigned from its leadership.

In 1902 he became a member of the "Société de Secours Mutuels", and fourteen years later (1916) joined the City Swiss Club, of which he was President from 1938 to 1942. For services rendered to the Club he was elected an Honorary Vice-President.

During the last war our friend was the Chairman of the Swiss Relief Centre, which under his able leadership did such splendid work. He is a member of the Swiss Benevolent Society (committee), the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, the Swiss Economic Council, Swiss Rifle Association (non-active), and sits on the Advisory Council of the "Swiss Observer". In addition to his many activities he has always taken a keen interest in Masonic affairs; he is a Past-Master of the Helvetica Lodge and has been honoured with the London Grand Rank.

Louis Chapuis married in 1918, and it is no secret that this marriage proved an exceedingly happy one; and if he can to-day look back on a fruitful and successful life, it is in no small manner also due to his charming wife Adrienne for the inspiration and support she has loyally given him through many years. He had three children, two sons and a daughter; his elder son, Louis André, is following in his father's footsteps, both in business and in the Colony. During the last war he lost his second son, Paul; his daughter, Evelyn, recently announced her engagement and will shortly be married.

* * *

May the writer on this 80th birthday express the sincere wish that a benevolent Providence will allow our friend to remain amongst us for many more years to come, enjoying good health and the companionship of his dear wife and children to whom he is so affectionately devoted.

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