

Au revoir,

Mr. Chancellor !

He was already talking of laying down his burden several years ago. For it was becoming more and more difficult to manage his business affairs as well as the ever-increasing work of the Chancellery. Nobody, however, wanted to believe it, since it seemed impossible to dissociate the name of Otto Mayer from the function of Chancellor. So much of the Olympic Movement was embodied in the man himself. Even those who knew of his proposed step were astonished when he announced his resignation for the end of September.

To resume an activity which has been spread over more than eighteen years would be a perilous undertaking. Moreover, those who have followed the history of the Olympic Movement since the last war are well aware of how complex and delicate was the task.

When, in 1946, Otto Mayer had the title of Chancellor conferred on him by the late Mr. Sigfrid Edström, then President, he was already a personality in Lausanne, a man whom it was a privilege to know. The International Olympic Committee had found an ambassador worthy of its prestige. Very soon the name of the Olympic Chancellor reached over all frontiers. Today Otto Mayer can count among his friends people from all over the world, as much in the heart of the International Olympic Committee as among the leaders of the International Federations, the National Olympic Committees and the representatives of the sporting press. It must never be forgotten that, he had considerable difficulties to handle during those eighteen years in the service of the Olympic Movement — and in an honorary capacity let us remember. If he was appreciated by everyone, it was due to his knowledge of the movement, to his innate authority and to his untiring devotion. To all these qualities Otto Mayer added the precious gift of diplomacy, something which can never be taught.

That which is less well known perhaps, and which has no less value, is the perfect kindness, the courtesy and the respect with which the Chancellor treated his collaborators. Those of them who had the good fortune to work with him learned, through him, to love the Olympic ideal, which he made his very own, often to the detriment of his own affairs.

Mr. Mayer has in fact decided to retire. But we are sure that the International Olympic Committee will still make an appeal to him and to his experience and knowledge. For it is not true to say that nobody is indispensable. In the routine of everyday life, it is no doubt a possibility, but never in essential things. And he who will have been the only Olympic Chancellor belongs to that race of men who leave their mark on a function, a movement, an ideal.

It is for this that his resignation does not mean a farewell.

It is for this that we shall see you again — often — Mr. Chancellor.

M. M.