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## American Diplomat.

There was more than customary Viennese courtesy in the spontaneous ceremony held in that city Sunday, when George L. Messersmith left the Austrian capital and his post as American Minister there. The presence of Chancellor Schuschnigg and other governmental officials at the railroad station, the flowers showered upon Mrs. Messersmith, the note of deep regret in the Vienna press comment, all attest the great success with which this brilliant career diplomat has filled a most difficult and delicate post.

Mr. Messersmith returns to this country to become an Assistant Secretary of State. The promotion is richly deserved, but congratulations must be tempered by regret over his departure from a key position where he has shown such exceptional skill. Better than anyone else the Austrians know how much he has done for their country, both in making its heavy problems better known here and in tactfully assisting Austria's efforts to preserve her spiritual and cultural values in behalf of world civilization.

It was early in 1934 that Mr. Messersmith went to Vienna, having spent the four previous years as Consul-General in Berlin. Thus he was in Germany when the Weimar republic was overthrown by the Nazis and in Austria when Chancellor Dollfuss was assassinated in the attempt to establish the swastika by coup d'etat there. In both countries his tenure of service has coincided with the flare-up of problems of great danger and complexity. In both he has more than fulfilled his duties, showing always a diplomatic skill which is frequently said to have been an important factor in the preservation of European peace.

There need be no anxiety over the thorough competence of our Department of State as long as it is staffed by men as able and tactful as this former superintendent of schools in Delaware. And while George Messersmith is one who always places his work first it may be hoped that he will be able to utilize the relative tranquillity of Washington to put his notes in order. For if he will sometime write his autobiography for the last seven years it will reveal much of the stuff of which history is made.