

Leon-Alexandre Giradet : envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Republic of Czechoslovakia

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EDOUARD VON STEIGER.

President of the Swiss Confederation for 1945.

(The following personal notes are reproduced with acknowledgments from the January number of our excellent contemporary "The Swiss American").

President von Steiger was born on July 2, 1881 at Langnau in the canton of Berne. His father was Robert Karl Albert von Steiger, engineer and head of the Building Materials Administration of the Swiss Federal Railroads; his mother was Anna Sophie Johanna von Wattenwyl. The von Steigers belonged to the highest ranking families of Old Berne. They came to Berne in 1446 from Sion in the Swiss Valais.

Edouard von Steiger received his education in the Lerber School at Berne, then studied law at Geneva, Leipzig and Berne. After passing his state examination in 1905 he practiced law at Langenthal and Burgdorf, and since January 1, 1909 at Berne. In 1914 he was temporarily General District Attorney, then, from 1914-1917 member of the Berne Town Council. Mr. von Steiger belongs to the Citizens Council of Berne since 1921. He is President of the Direction of the Bürger Hospital of the City of Berne, and from 1922-1929 he was President of the Citizen's Party of Berne.

In the year 1914 Mr. von Steiger became a member of the Assembly in which he later on presided over the Commission of Justice, and afterwards over the Commission of State Economics. In 1939 he was elected President of the Assembly.

Mr. von Steiger became President of the "Einwohner" Savings Bank of Berne in 1928. He also became consultant of numerous economic organizations, is a member of the Bank Council and Bank Administration of the Swiss National Bank, and since 1938, a member of the Board of Administration of the Swiss Federal Railroads. From 1930-1935 he was Central President of the Swiss "Alt-Zofingerverein." Finally, on December 3, 1939, Mr. von Steiger was elected a member of the State Senate and only one year later he became a member of the Swiss Federal Council. As such he assumed charge of the Department of Justice and Police.

Switzerland's President is a man of unusual experience in government matters and a brilliant orator in both the German and French languages. Politically he belongs to the conservative faction of the Farmer's Party, but he has always shown great understanding for current needs. Mr. von Steiger is married to the former Beatrice von Mülinen and father of two daughters.

LEON-ALEXANDRE GIRADET.

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Czechoslovakia.

We extend our heartiest congratulations to Monsieur Léon-Alexandre Giradet on his appointment as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Czechoslovakia.



Monsieur Giradet was born on the 22nd of June, 1889, at Lausanne, and is *Originaire and Bourgeois* of Prailly (Ct. Vaud). He was educated at the College in Lausanne, and terminated his University studies, in the same town, with the degree of doctor-of-law, and then became *Avocat au Barreau Vaudois*.

In 1917 he joined the Federal Political Department, and at one time occupied the post of private secretary to the late Federal Councillor Gustave Ador. A year later (1918) he was promoted Secretary of Legation, and later for some time was attached to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva.

In 1924 he acted as Chargé d'Affaires in Warsaw. From 1925-1927 Monsieur Giradet held the post of First Secretary at the Swiss Legation in Washington, after which he spent two years in Berne, where he was attached to the commercial division of the "Département fédéral de l'Economie publique." In 1929 he joined the well-known Engineering works of Adolphe Saurer in Arbon in the capacity of general secretary, and later on was appointed Sub-Manager of this concern, which he left in 1938 to re-enter the diplomatic service.

In that year he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in London, where he was put in charge of the commercial division. In 1943 Monsieur Giradet was promoted Counsellor of Legation and from November 1943 to August 1944 acted as Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in London.

During his stay in London, Monsieur Giradet took a great interest in the activities of our Colony. He was ever ready to help and give advice when it was needed. He has, during his official appointments, rendered great services to our country for which we extend to him our sincere thanks.

Monsieur Giradet will be missed by the Colony, among the members of which he made many friends, and our best wishes will accompany him to his new responsible post.

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