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"O.D. Skelton: The Work of the World, 1923-1941 is a lively and compelling trip through the letters, diary entries, and official memoranda of O.D. Skelton, one of the most important and influential civil servants in twentieth-century Canada."--Publisher summary. Skelton was a towering foreign policy advisor to Canada's prime ministers and a lonely advocate for the country's independence from Great Britain. His accounts detail his work as he co-operated and clashed with William Lyon Mackenzie King and R.B. Bennett over Canada's participation in the international arena. Norman Hillmer's selection and assessment of Skelton's writings offer a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of the federal government as Skelton systematically built up the Department of External Affairs and the Canadian diplomatic service as instruments of the national interest, confronted the Manchurian, Ethiopian, and Czech crises of the 1930's, aligned himself with senior francophone politicians such as Ernest Lapointe and Raoul Dandurand, and watched in despair as Europe and Asia descended into war.--Publisher summary. Providing avenues into a time when Canada was struggling to define itself, this collection shows the ways in which O.D. Skelton pushed the country onto the global stage.--Publisher summary.

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