

Introduction

The first part of this historical survey dealt with the period 1909-1925, under the aegis of Sir Joseph Pope as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.

The present, second part covers the period 1925-1941, under the aegis of Dr. O.D. Skelton, Under-Secretary and deus ex machina of the Department.

At the end of the present part is given a summary appraisal of the developments at the end of Dr. Skelton's sixteen-year tenure of office. The beginning of that period merits these few introductory comments, before describing in fuller detail the various aspects of the Department's development during this second period. It is only pertinent here to describe the backdrop of the stage as it was in 1925 when Dr. Skelton commenced his long and productive mission as head of the Department.

When this second long period commenced, the Department was confronted with some very important changes of background and tasks, and its history over the ensuing years was that of strengthening itself to meet those changes and new obligations.

There was, first, the new autonomy of the Dominions in their foreign relations, within the framework of a decentralized British imperial structure. The colonial era was closed; the era of equal partnership and more independent diplomacy