

## LORD ELGIN

tions, a political sagacity and a strict adherence to sound methods of constitutional government, which entitle him to the gratitude of Canadians, who might have seen their country torn asunder by internecine strife, had there been then a weak and passionate man at the head of the executive. As it will be seen later, he, like the younger Pitt in England, was "the pilot who weathered the storm." In Canada, the storm, in which the elements of racial antagonism, of political rivalry and disappointment, of spoiled fortunes and commercial ruin raged tumultuously for a while, threatened not only to drive Canada back for years in its political and material development, but even to disturb the relations between the dependency and the imperial state.

The legislation which gave rise to this serious convulsion in the country was, in a measure, an aftermath of the rebellious risings of 1837 and 1838 in Upper and Lower Canada. Many political grievances had been redressed since the union, and the French Canadians had begun to feel that their interests were completely safe under a system of government which gave them an influential position in the public councils. The restoration of their language to its proper place in a country composed of two nationalities standing on a sure footing of equal political and civil rights, was a great consolation to the French people of the east. The pardon extended to the rash men who were directly concerned in