

A DIANA OF QUEBEC

CHAPTER I.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE *ALBEMARLE*.

CERTAIN moments in a man's life stand out like blazed trees in the forest of his memory. Such a one is that in which I first saw Nelson. Yes, I mean Horatio, afterwards Admiral Lord Nelson, though I was a bigger man than he in those days—or thought myself such—which comes to the same thing. I was larger, physically at any rate, tall, broad-shouldered, and perhaps over-conscious, as I strode down Mountain Hill, Quebec, that first day of July, 1782, of the contrast I presented in my spick-and-span uniform, to the forlorn-looking little naval officer toiling towards me up the slope, steep enough to test stouter calves than his. There never has been much love lost between the two arms of the service, but surely no man could have aught but pity for that scrap of humanity, whose clothes hung upon him like the ill-fitting garb of a larger person. Such was my first impression.