

## CHAPTER I

### RETROSPECT

**B**EFORE introducing to the reader the soldier-statesman who is the subject of this memoir, it seems advisable to give a short sketch of existing conditions in the country which he was called upon to govern. Indeed it is almost necessary thus to prepare the ground for the advent of our proconsul, so that the reader may properly understand the kind of furrow he had to break. One may affirm too with perfect safety that the great lull which fell upon Canada at the close of the stir and turmoil of the Seven Years' War and the downfall of French power on the St. Lawrence, presents few attractions to the mind of a reader exhilarated by the glamour of those dramatic incidents. Most of us, on closing that page of history which influenced the future of two hemispheres far more than Waterloo, have felt little inclination to concern ourselves with the immediate fortunes of a few thousand war-sick and isolated French-Canadians. The historical student has turned more readily to the greater problems that so soon began to agitate the people of those British provinces after their safety had been secured by the fleets and armies of the mother country. Most people have a vague, but sufficiently accurate notion,