

HIS GREAT QUALITIES

themselves with ease and elegance, and all equally influenced by an earnest desire to fill their important position with dignity, impartiality, and affability.

But eminent as have been the services of many of the governors whose memories are still cherished by the people of Canada, no one among them stands on a higher plane than James, eighth earl of Elgin and twelfth earl of Kincardine, whose public career in Canada I propose to recall in the following narrative. He possessed to a remarkable degree those qualities of mind and heart which enabled him to cope most successfully with the racial and political difficulties which met him at the outset of his administration, during a very critical period of Canadian history. Animated by the loftiest motives, imbued with a deep sense of the responsibilities of his office, gifted with a rare power of eloquent expression, possessed of sound judgment and infinite discretion, never yielding to dictates of passion but always determined to be patient and calm at moments of violent public excitement, conscious of the advantages of compromise and conciliation in a country peopled like Canada, entering fully into the aspirations of a young people for self-government, ready to concede to French Canadians their full share in the public councils, anxious to build up a Canadian nation without reference to creed or race—this distinguished nobleman must be always placed by a