

CHAPTER I

EARLY CAREER

THE Canadian people have had a varied experience in governors appointed by the imperial state. At the very commencement of British rule they were so fortunate as to find at the head of affairs Sir Guy Carleton—afterwards Lord Dorchester—who saved the country during the American revolution by his military genius, and also proved himself an able civil governor in his relations with the French Canadians, then called “the new subjects,” whom he treated in a fair and generous spirit that did much to make them friendly to British institutions. On the other hand they have had military men like Sir James Craig, hospitable, generous, and kind, but at the same time incapable of understanding colonial conditions and aspirations, ignorant of the principles and working of representative institutions, and too ready to apply arbitrary methods to the administration of civil affairs. Then they have had men who were suddenly drawn from some inconspicuous position in the parent state, like Sir Francis Bond Head, and allowed by an apathetic or ignorant colonial office to prove their want of discretion, tact, and even common sense at a very critical stage of Canadian