

STAND BY CANADA.

The school children of to-day are the nation of to-morrow. Now at your desks and books seeking the knowledge essential to guide you through the life that is before you, soon you will be called upon as citizens to aid in directing the interests of your country. This page must necessarily fall into the hands of a number of the statesmen, orators, church dignitaries and men of professional eminence of the future central and western Canada. Among its readers will probably be no small number of the great Canadian women of the twentieth century. Is it strange that one should feel diffident about addressing people of such importance?

The responsibility of the school children of Western Canada, and of Winnipeg particularly, which is the centre of education for this new country, is no doubt far more serious than many, perhaps any, of them imagine. Confederation, when it was proclaimed on the 1st July, 1867, was a trifling affair compared with what it is now. It then included Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, or, as has been said, a few scattered settlements along the banks of a single river and the lakes. It was not until 23rd of June, 1870, when Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territories were added to the Dominion, that the future greatness of Canada revealed itself like a splendid vision to her people. British Columbia and Prince Edward Island were added during the two years following. This completed the formation of our Dominion, and brought under the pleasing shade of the Canadian maple leaf a country more than three million and a half square miles in extent, nearly thirty times as large as the United Kingdom, larger than the United States and almost as large as the continent of Europe, the home of nearly all the greatest nations of the world. This is the country which you will soon have to unite in building up, developing and governing. Belgium in Europe is not much more than half the size of Nova Scotia, our second smallest Province, and yet there are fewer Canadians to promote the welfare and uphold the honor of our great Dominion than there are Belgians to take care of little Belgium.

You know, too, that since the addition of this great Northwest and British Columbia to Confederation, six-sevenths of Canada are in the west and nearly all the people are in the east. Right here in the centre and west of the Dominion the efforts which are to determine whether Canada shall have a glorious or an inglorious future must be put forth. The work is heavy, the hands are few, and the responsibility correspondingly great. It is because our country needs, and will continue to need in an increasing degree,