

what seems to be a good customer coming along, saying to him, 'Excuse me, but have you the same religious belief as I have?' Even the young lawyer who has just hung out his shingle would be in rather a peculiar predicament if he were to ask his first client about his religious belief before he would do anything for him. As we expect all our young people who go out in the world to fight the battle of life, to deal with all they come across, no matter what their religious belief is, surely, in preparing them for this fight, we ought to prepare them all together. In fact, I go so far as to say that I think even the sexes should not be kept apart in school. When I went to school down here on Le Breton Flats—for I was born in this town, then called Bytown—there were no separate schools here, except one somewhere in lower town. The boys and girls all went to school together, and friendships were formed then which have lasted through life. Those who went to that school have to-day all a warm feeling for each other; but those who went to the separate school in lower town—and there were very few—were to us as aliens and foreigners. On my return to this city after twenty years absence, I could not receive a warmer welcome from any of my own relatives than I have received from some of the Roman Catholics with whom I went to that school; and I felt almost as warmly towards them as to my own kin. I could name a number of men who went to that school, and I do not think one of them is a worse Catholic or a worse Protestant from having been educated side by side in the same room. Although this is my personal belief, I am a Liberal—a Liberal in more ways than in name—and I wish every person to enjoy his own opinion. I know that a great many of my fellow men do not believe as I do on this question, and I am quite willing that they should enjoy their belief and act accordingly. There are a great many Protestant clergymen nowadays who are clamouring for more religious education in the public schools. We hear of it every year at all their public gatherings. At their synods, their general assemblies and their conferences, there is nearly always some deliverance made on this question, demanding more religious teaching in the schools; but it has been a question to me how we could accomplish anything of this kind and please all these bodies and at the same time please our Catholic brethren. I am sorry to say that the Roman Catholics can get on more easily in that respect than the Protestants can. It is a hard thing to say, but it is true all the same. Now, I think the educational clauses of these Autonomy Bills solve this problem to a great extent. The half hour of religious teaching every day after half-past three o'clock can be conducted according to the wishes of the trustees, which will depend a great deal on the wishes of the people themselves. That is one way to

have more religious teaching in the public schools. I am sorry to say that these Bills have been misconstrued, and in a great many instances I believe purposely misconstrued. Many petitions have come in here professing to be in favour of provincial rights; but it is a peculiar thing that in not one of these petitions, so far as I have seen them, was any reference made to anything in regard to which provincial rights were being invaded except the schools—not a word about the public lands, although any one who has read the British North America Act knows that the public lands belong to the provinces as exclusively as education. The people have also been allowed to go on the idea that it is the old separate schools such as we have in Ontario and Quebec that are being established by these Bills. I do not think that is the right thing to do. I think the members of this House who sent out the headings for these petitions should have seen to it that the people understood what they were signing. I do not believe that outside of the Orange body one man in twenty who signed those petitions would have signed them had he understood what the Bills were meant to do. I have had letters from some of my constituents, and I have seen some curious scraps in the papers; and just to let you see what peculiar ideas some people have on this question, I am going to read one or two things which are almost too good to keep. The following, from the Grand Master of the Orangemen in British Columbia, appeared in the Orange 'Sentinel':

In reply to your request for my views upon the Autonomy Bill as it affects the educational standing of the new provinces, I would denounce it in the strongest terms possible. I believe it to be the most serious retrograde movement that has arisen within this fair Dominion of ours for many decades. Now at least the critics will cease to cry that we Orangemen have no work to do. I can see just one possible blessing arising out of this unworthy attempt to force separate schools upon the district concerned, and that is, that Orangemen from ocean to ocean should be so roused that the order will receive an impetus such as it needs, and after the conflict enter upon a period of growth hitherto unapproached. This is not a question of party politics, nor yet of anti-popery; it is a direct assault at the foundation of our liberty and rights. It is very evident that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has sold himself and his country to the Roman Catholic church, and in return has received his return to power with such an overwhelming majority. There is no denying the fact that we have been deceived; the time is short; we must fight like men, with the spirit of our noble ancestors. The victory may long be delayed, but we shall win. In the name of the God of battles have we unfurled our banners; this is His fight, and with a prayer upon our lips let us face the foe, fight honourably and doubt not; we shall win such a victory as shall make history and wonderfully advance the cause of religious liberty. Let us remember Sir Richard Grenville and his little ship 'Revenge,' as, wounded in the side and head, he raises himself and cries: