

Mr. SPROULE. The letter of resignation might have been treated as confidential.

Mr. FISHER. Sir, the hon. gentleman knows quite well that the insinuation he is making could not have any foundation. The hon. gentleman could have moved that the papers connected with the resignation of Lord Dundonald should be brought down, and they would have been brought before the country in a proper constitutional way, while by the course pursued the whole has been done in a way which, if this gentleman has such a strong position as his friends think and he thinks, he certainly endangers and injures that position because he has set at defiance all the rules of constitutional government in this country and has left himself open to the most serious reflections and the most serious condemnations.

THE OPINION OF A MILITARY CRITIC.

I shall not go at any length into the question of the propriety of an officer of the Government discussing the actions of that Government, but I will point out this, that there have been instances of a similar character in the Old Country and here. There have been expressions of opinion in regard to the propriety of the General Officer Commanding the militia being independent of the Government of the country and independent of the Minister of Militia. Various authorities have been cited on this point. I am not going into it at any length, but I shall point out the fact that I have here under my hand the authority of an eminent militiaman and military critic in this country. In the course of a correspondence this gentleman inquires :

For my information and guidance might I have the authority quoted which permits the General Officer Commanding, an officer directly under the Minister of Militia, to receive and transmit as General Officer Commanding, commands from His Excellency.

Then in another case the same gentleman says :

May I respectfully request you will be so good as to quote to me the authority which permits the General Officer Commanding to receive and transmit any commands from His Excellency without its being an Order in Council, and then only by order of the Minister of Militia.

And then again he asks for any authority which allows an acknowledgment from the right hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies to him to be forwarded through the General Officer Commanding without the order of the Minister of Militia.