

opinion was not intended to be communicated outside the department, he has not read the file. It was communicated to another officer, and then to Col. Worthington in the ordinary course.

Mr. GERVAIS. I would ask the hon. gentleman (Mr. R. L. Borden) if he makes no difference so far as responsibility is concerned for an opinion whether that opinion is to be sent to a fellow officer or is sent to a person outside the office? In a law office, for instance, one partner often consults another upon some question that arises. Surely, the hon. gentleman will draw a distinction between an opinion given by a lawyer to his partner and an opinion given by a lawyer to his client.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. My hon. friend from St. James division (Mr. Gervais) has made the very best he could of a very bad case. He has got a little mixed in his facts through not reading the file. I will not press him further, because I know how I should feel if I were in the position in which he now is.

Mr. GERVAIS. I would ask the hon. gentleman to show me in what way my facts are not borne out?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. First, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Gervais) said that the Deputy Minister of Militia had given no opinion on this question until he was asked to do so by the Deputy Minister of Justice. He was not so asked until February, and he gave an opinion in the November proceeding. Then, the hon. gentleman says that the Deputy Minister of Militia gave his opinion for the private information of some person without any idea that it would go out of the department. As a matter of fact, as the first three documents on the file will show, this opinion was sent in the ordinary course by the deputy minister to another officer of the department for the purpose of being communicated by him directly or through still another officer to Col. Worthington, and it did go to Col. Worthington on November 16th, long before the Minister of Justice or the Deputy Minister of Justice had come into the matter. So the hon. gentleman (Mr. Gervais) is not very well up in his facts on that branch of the case.

Mr. GERVAIS. The documents on file will show I am correct in my facts.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD. I would direct the attention of the Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) to the matter of the promotion of men in the ranks to be commissioned officers. I have in mind a case which, if it is illustrative of the position in the force throughout Canada, indicates a condition of affairs which, in my

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

opinion, is not conducive to the best interest of the militia. Personally, I do not profess to know much about militia matters. But it does seem to me that one principle ought to be recognized in our militia, and that is that any Canadian who develops an interest in militia matters has the right to an opportunity to rise to the highest position in the militia service. I am aware of a case in which certain members of the permanent force have been disposed to discriminate against a young Canadian whose record in the militia is above reproach, whose private life has been such as to command respect and whose whole career entitles him to commendation. I submit to the minister—whose management of the department, every one, no matter what his politics, will admit, is the best that has been shown by any Minister of Militia in the history of the country—whether he should not give careful attention to a system which would permit discrimination by any commissioned officer against any man in the ranks. There may be gentlemen who have reached positions in the militia force who choose to say that a non-commissioned officer, because he did not happen to be born in a certain condition of life, is not entitled to the emoluments that go to a commissioned officer. The question of how the word 'gentleman' is to be defined may depend upon the views of each individual. I merely call attention to a case which has come under my own observation indicating an abuse which, where it exists should be stamped out in the interest of our militia system, so that any young man, no matter what his position in life, may freely aspire to the highest position in the militia service.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. In answer to the hon. gentleman (Mr. E. M. Macdonald), I have only a word to add to what I have already said. I shall be glad if my hon. friend will put me in possession of facts which will show the existence of such a condition of things as he describes. Because, if there be such a condition of things, I would take the very strongest means to put an end to it. There should be no bar to respectable, well-behaved zealous and qualified men, I do not care what their walk in life, to rise in the militia service. So far as I am concerned, I propose to see that the door shall be open to all. But, while I say that, I wish to repeat what I have already said—and I am not referring to the case which the hon. gentleman (Mr. E. M. Macdonald) has in mind, though I know of that case. But I know of cases—one at least—where a persistent attempt has been made by certain influential people in favour of a man occupying a rather high place in society in his own province, to force me to admit