

ciple to be important, realizing that the Government are taking the proper course in the expenditure of the money of this Province in connection with the public institutions, to lay down the principle upon which the articles for these institutions are purchased.

Before entering upon that, and asking the House to bear with me while I give a few figures in connection with that principle and its operation, I wish to say a word with reference to the last clause of the resolution which we are asked to support to-day. This refers apparently to the distribution of stationery by the Queen's Printer's Department of the Government. Now, I wish to say this, having made considerable enquiry as to what classes of goods are required there for the purpose of distribution, and for the uses of the different officers under the Government, that all the large lines, lines in which you would require any respectable amount of one kind of goods, are purchased practically by competition in the open market, and the result shows from the records, and the invoices, and the prices that are paid for those lines of goods, that the very lowest possible wholesale price is paid for the same. Then I wish to say to the House and the country, that there are a very large number of articles purchased of which only a small amount of each particular article is required during the year, and it would be utterly impossible, it would be inadvisable and improvident, and not in the public interest, to ask for tenders for those different lines of goods. So I claim, from the examination made, that public tender is exercised and used in connection with that department as far as it is possible to do it with advantage, and only those articles are purchased in the open market without competition that it would not be advisable to have purchased in any other way.

UNFAIR CRITICISM.

With reference to the first part of the resolution, which involves the principle upon which the action of the Government is based, with regard to supplies for all our public institutions, I wish to say a word or two. First of all, the statement in the resolution—with all respect to my hon. friend—is not, I think, a fair statement. The impression that would go abroad from the wording of that resolution, if one were not aware of the facts to the contrary, would be that no goods were purchased for those institutions by public tender, and the resolution asks that all be supplied by public tender. I wish to make it clear to the House and to the country, that a very large proportion of the