SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

The system of bringing down the Estimates for the coming year in two batches is probably necessary if the House of Commons is to have early information and to pass upon the larger portion of the expenditures proposed for the next fiscal year. The system however affords opportunities for introducing items of expenditure which are not as carefully scrutinized as is desirable. The introduction of the Supplementary Estimates is always a signal to the members that the House is near Prorogation. These Estimates are the last serious business to be introduced by the government. As at a concert when the last number on the programme is reached there are many in the audience who begin preparations for leaving, the concluding piece has no attractions, so at Ottawa, when the Supplementaries are laid on the table the members begin to clear out their desks, to, as it were, put on their overcoats and address telegrams home announcing when they may be expected. Hence the expenditures covered by the later batch of Estimates pass without rigid scrutiny. These items have been growing year after year, under successive Ministers of Finance and they will increase, probably, unless some effort is made to reduce them to a minimum. This year the supplementary estimates amount to, $8,369, 241, which sum, added to the main amount of $50,398,823 raises the total expenditure proposed for the next fiscal year, June 30th, 1901 to June 30th, 1902, up to $58,768,064. The disproportion between the amount of the estimates introduced during the early life of the Session and those introduced in its dying hours has become too great, the latter being 14.30 per cent, of the total. It will not be regarded generally as in the public interest and for public expendutures aggregating $8,369,241 to be made without the items being thoroughly examined by the House of Commons. Yet it is in the items comprised in Supplementary Estimates that are found those which, when the money has been spent, arouse the severest criticism in after Sessons of Parliament. Then, when objections are made, when such outlays are condemned the retort is made: "Why were not the items objected to when the Estimates including them were laid on the table?" This is apparently most reasonable. But let any one take up the schedule of estimated outlays for 1901-2 and he will find that it consists of scores of items for all kinds of works all over the country, each one of which ought to have been carefully considered before being passed.

THE MUTUAL LIFE OF NEW YORK has just completed its new office premises in London, England, which are said to be handsome and commodious. They need to be handsome to be worthy of such a site as Cornhill.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS.

The second International Congress of Medical officers of Life Assurance Companies will be held in September next at Amsterdam. A circular we have received reads :

"The interest excited by the first congress at which numbers of learned medical officers were present, the important discussions originated and the practical conclusions drawn, distincly proved the importance and necessity of those recent meetings.

At the second session, which is organized at Amsterdam, new questions referring to Life and Accidents Assurance will be examined. We are enabled to mention the following subjects : Otitis media ; arythmia cordis ; phosphaturia, arteriosclerosis precox ; the medical examination of women ; appendicitis, glycosuria ; albuminuria, etc. A committee consisting of Managers of Insurance Companies, Actuaries and Medical Officers will offer a definitive proposition for a universal form to be adopted in medical examinations. In view of the social and humanitarian purpose of all provident Institutions, the Congress of 1901 will exhaustively consider, and if possible, formulate the conditions on which it would be likely to be practicable to extend assurance to invalids and under-average-lives."

The Continental Physicians are anxious that their co-workers from this side should share with them the benefits of the Congress. This is a good chance for out Medical Examiners to enjoy a good holiday and assist their profession as well.

PROMINENT TOPICS.

The panic that culminated so rapidly has collapsed as a public topic, though its effects, and probable results are of urgent interest in financial circles. Panics have usually made and left their mark deeply on trade generally by disturbing confidence. Bank failures have hitherto been caused by panics. Happily the recent one upset no bank, nor excited any general distrust in the mercantile community. Stocks after showing the "ground swell" usually seen after a storm are settling down to their intrinsic value on an investment basis :

The New York "Post," however, says :

"Towns like Waterloo, Des Moines, and Davenport, in Iowa ; Winona, Mankato, Minnesota ; Fargo and Bismark, North Dakota ; Yankton and Deadwood, South Dakota ; Lincoln, Nebraska, have had from one to twenty-five citizens apiece--merchants and farmers--in Chicago for weeks reaping profits from corn and placing them in railroad stocks. They have not represented many people, but a great deal of money. A great many of them are now preparing to get back home as best they can. They had capital enough for an ordinary market, but an affair like the Northern Pacific panic has simply left them penniless."

In these districts there will be a large crop of store failures.