the cities. Thirty-two provincial hospitals with 6,200 beds, and 303 district hospitals with 5,100 beds were turned over to the zemstvos, all in poor condition and badly mismanaged, without adequate provisions for isolation or care of communicable diseases. An effort was begun to give medical service free to the rural inhabitants, and by 1870 the zemstvos had arranged a system of fixed medical districts, each provided with a small hospital and a qualified physician. By 1890 there were 1,422 zemstvo medical districts with 1,068 hospitals of 26,571 beds and 414 dispensaries, and the number of their physicians had increased from 756 to 1,805, and the number of nonmedical assistants from 2,749 to 6,788. The tendency has been to make all hospital and dispensary treatment free, the care of the sick being recognized by the zemstvos as a natural duty of society rather than an act of charity. Thus the public care of patients developed first and preventive work developed as an offshoot, both being now closely related.

The province of Moscow is said to have the most highly developed organization for the promotion of zemstvo medicine. It supports a hospital for every 10,000 to 15,000 inhabitants, each with from twenty to sixty beds, an average of two physicians, two medical assistants and four sister nurses. Each of the larger hospitals assigns a certain number of beds for general use, for communicable diseases and for maternity cases; each has its dispensary, and all medicines, as well as medical care, are given free; home visits are made only in serious cases. Financial aid is often given to women in childbirth and to invalids unable to go to the hospital. Separate provision is made for mental cases. For prevention, Moscow province is divided into thirteen sanitary districts, with full time medical supervisors, and assistants, and there is a central statistical division, a laboratory and a vaccine institute. There is also a sanitary council for each district and one for the whole province, with district physicians, factory physician and others, all under the control of the provincial and district zemstvo assemblies, working under a sanitary code which was in force before the revolution.

The principal developments of Russian public health have been along medical and bacteriologic lines, in the control of the more acute communicable diseases and in the field of vital statistics. The statistical bureaus of the central council of public health and of the larger cities are better equipped with funds and with highly trained specialists than our own. The bacteriologic and chemical laboratories are also highly developed and in charge of high grade men with leisure and inclination for productive research. Sanitary engineering is somewhat neglected, but when the time comes its development will be fruitful. The most important future development of public health in Russia, as elsewhere, Winslow believes, must be along educational lines in venereal diseases, tuberculosis and infant mortality, and the largest single task is the last. The great strategic point in the Russian health situation is the remarkable development of social medicine along curative lines and the close connection between curative and preventive work. The opportunity for developing educational preventive work in connection with such a system is practically unlimited.

NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTION FOR THE WELSH MUSEUM

We learn from the London *Times* that a valuable collection of insects, shells and minerals has been presented by Lord Rhondda to the National Museum of Wales. The collection was formed by the late Mr. Robert H. F. Rhondda was led to purchase the collection by the result of over fifty years' work. Lord Rhondda was led to purchase the collection by the reports submitted by the specialists who examined it, Miss Bowdler Sharpe and Mr. J. Davy Dean, and the majority of the specimens being exotic, the collection will supplement the specimens already in the museum, which are mostly British.

The *Times* states that Mr. Rippon was a talented artist and musician, as well as a great naturalist, and both wrote and illustrated his work on "Icones Ornithopterorum." He devoted a great amount of time to the care of his collections, and Dr. W. E. Hoyle, director of the museum, states that as a consequence the

condition of his specimens leaves little to be desired. The insects in the collection number over 100,000, and the shells 52,000. Mr. Rippon's great wish was that his collections should not be broken up, but that they should have some home where they could be of public or private use.

The Rippon collection will enable the National Museum of Wales to teach natural history in a way it could not attempt without such ample resources. It will also enable the student to examine exotic types and be of great aid to the specialist in the determination of species. So complete is the series that such gaps as occur, either in the insect collection or the shell collections, can be easily filled as opportunity offers in the future. Many of the larger and more curious shells and insects are familiar through the pages of standard works on general natural history. No illustration in any book could, however, do justice to the wonderful coloring of some of these exotic insects. An idea of the extent of the collections in the Lepidoptera alone will be gained when it is stated that in the Papilionidæ (the Swallow-tails) there are over 3,000 specimens, and in the Nymphalidæ (or Fritillaries) there are over 5,000. Dragon-flies, May-flies, crickets, grasshoppers, the wonderful stick and leaf insects of the tropics, the many and curious flies belonging to the order Diptera, the beetles or Coleoptera which number over 40,000 specimens, the ants, bees and wasps or Hymenoptera are too numerous to do more than mention.

The shells, or Mollusca, are exceedingly numerous and well represented in all the large and beautiful forms from the coral reefs of the Pacific, among which may be mentioned the Cones, Cowries, Olives, Woodcock shells, Volutes, and many others. There is an example of the rare Orange Cowry, used by the natives of Fiji and New Caledonia as a badge of royalty, and many Volutes for which high prices have been given. Many large and beautifully colored bivalve shells crowd the cabinets.

The collection of minerals comprises about 3,000 specimens many of which are from such widely distant parts as Siberia, Japan, South America, etc., all carefully named according to Dana's Manual.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND THE WAR

THE British government has been induced to abandon the intention to use the British Museum at Bloomsbury for the purposes of the Air Board and the Natural History Museum at South Kensington for other government departments. Lord Sudeley directed attention to the proposed appropriation of these buildings in a question asked in the House of Lords on January 9, and, in reply, Earl Curzon said that, as regards the British Museum, he was glad to state that for the accommodation of the Air Ministry it was no longer necessary to appropriate that building. As to the Natural History Museum, it had been found, after detailed examination, that any attempt to convert the galleries into public offices would involve the closing of the building to the public, extensive internal rearrangements, and the consumption of an enormous amount of labor and material and very considerable delay. In these circumstances it had been decided that there was no necessity sufficiently urgent to warrant the use of the museum as had been contemplated. *Nature* remarks:

This decision has given much satisfaction to all who cherish regard for national prestige and understand the intellectual stimulus or practical value of the collections in our national museums. What astonishes us, however, is that Sir Alfred Mond, the First Commissioner of Works, and a son of the late Dr. Ludwig Mond, should have placed himself in such an indefensible position by putting the scheme before the government. It is difficult to comprehend also why, before deciding to requisition the building, the government did not inquire as to whether such action was imperatively needed, and consult the trustees and other responsible authorities as to what its consequences would be. If that had been done, a storm of protest would have been saved, and Earl Curzon would not have had to confess in the House of Lords that there was no real necessity for the proposed occupation, which would, indeed, have been more like the act of an invader than of a government entrusted with the care of national interests in every direction. The trustees of the museum, at