secretaries of the societies that meet with the association this year will dine together at Kansas City on the evening of Sunday, December 27, at 6:30. The evening will be devoted to the secretaries' conference on various affairs of the association and its relation to the associated organizations.

The executive committee will hold its first Kansas City session in the permanent secretary's consulting room in the Muehlebach Hotel, on Monday forenoon, December 28, at 10 o'clock. Matters to be considered by the committee or by the council should be transmitted to the permanent secretary at the Washington office, so as to arrive by December 20.

The council of the association will hold its first session in the council room at the Muehlebach Hotel on Monday afternoon, December 28, at 2 o'clock.

Other meetings of the council will probably occur in the council room at 9 o'clock on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.

Other meetings of the executive committee will probably occur in the permanent secretary's consulting room at 10 o'clock on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.

Special attention is called to the rule that business to come before the council must regularly be first considered by the executive committee.

FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS OF THE MEETING

Later announcements about the Kansas City meeting will be made in SCIENCE. Full information will be contained in the General Program, which will be available in the registration room at Kansas City on the morning of Monday, December 28. A copy of the program will be mailed free to each member who requests it, provided that every such request reaches the permanent secretary at the Washington office of the association before December 21.

It is planned that a general report of the Kansas City meeting will appear as a special issue of SCIENCE about February 1st. This is to contain reports on the main general features of the convention, the business transacted, and especially a full series of readable reports on the section and society programs, the latter reports based on material to be supplied by the secretaries of those organizations. All new members who join the association before the time of its publication will automatically receive the special issue of SCIENCE.

BURTON E. LIVINGSTON,
Permanent Secretary

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE NORWEGIAN EXPEDITION TO SPITZBERGEN AND BEAR ISLAND

THE *Geographical Journal* gives a description of the principal results of the Norwegian expedition to Spitzbergen and Bear Island carried out during the past summer under the leadership of Dr. Hoel, whose previous labors in the same field have added greatly to our knowledge. In Spitzbergen the sphere of operations lay in the south central part of the West Island, between Van Mijen Bay and Ice fiord, and four parties took the field with a view to completing the survey of the eastern part of the coal-bearing tract in this region. As the country is covered with ice and snow transport was a matter of difficulty, the parties being equipped for the whole summer and each having a kit weighing some 1,000 kilograms; depôts laid out by the Store Norske Company were however of considerable help. Two of the parties set out from Sassendal, and two from Braganza Bay, and they met halfway. They were fortunate enough to effect a connection with the Russian survey points on Stor fiord. Dr. Hoel, Dr. Braastad, and Mr. Orwin carried out geological work slightly further west, and the last-named made the interesting discovery of the skeleton of a giant lizard of Jurassic age, found partly imbedded in shale. No such complete remains had ever been found in Spitzbergen. In the absence of suitable implements for digging out the remains, it was necessary to leave them till another occasion. On the peaks at Van Mijen Bay Dr. Braastad examined remains of fossil trees of Tertiary age. There were large trunks and smaller pieces not so well preserved, and it seemed as if regular lumbering had been carried on. Although the expedition worked in what are considered the best reindeer districts in the country, only eight or ten animals were seen, so that the stocks must have greatly diminished, and there is urgent need of protection. Work was also done on Bear Island by Messrs. Horn and Marstrander, who, besides boring for coal, investigated occurrences of galena in the south-east of the island. It has been proved that mixed seams of sulphate of barytes and galena occur, and that there is one pure seam of galena 30 to 40 centimeters thick, so that the prospects of working it with success are thought to be good. At sea, Captain Hermansen and other officers of the *Farm* carried out soundings and other oceanographical observations. The inner part of Ice fiord was sounded, and data collected for completing the chart of the waters between South Cape and Cross Bay on the scale of 1/100,000. Temperature observations gave the remarkable result that at

nearly all depths the water was warmer than in 1924 by 2 to 3 degrees, even though the temperature was very high last year. The air temperature was also high, and whereas winter minima of $-48°$ to $-50°$ were formerly recorded, last winter the lowest was scarcely $-30°$. It was mild also during the summer, and the glaciers are rapidly diminishing both in length and thickness, so that mountain ridges emerge. Lastly, information is given as to the present position of the coal industry. The Norwegian company continues to work full time, while the Dutch are at present contenting themselves with the erection of works. Much time has been lost by the Swedes owing to a fire in their mine, now extinguished. The Anglo-Russian Company is continuing its operations, and gets good prices on the Murman Coast.

THE NOBEL PRIZES

ACCORDING to press dispatches from Stockholm the board of directors of the Nobel Prize fund has, for the first time since the first prizes were given twenty-four years ago, decided to withhold all five of the prizes for this year. The reasons for this unprecedented decision is stated to be partly because of lack of qualified candidates and partly because of need for funds for the Nobel Library and the Physical and Chemical Institute, both founded in Stockholm by Alfred Nobel as part of his memorial.

Previous press dispatches had stated that high taxation in Sweden, an indirect consequence of the war, was imperiling the continuance of the Nobel prizes. It was said that the Nobel prizes in 1901 amounted to 709,234 crowns (about $177,600), and the taxes were 88,042 crowns (about $22,000). In 1923 the prizes had shrunk to 574,676 crowns, but the taxes had risen to 578,006 crowns, exceeding the income of the funds. For this reason the Nobel family has petitioned the Stockholm government to exempt the prize foundation from taxation. Their petition is receiving the support of the Swedish newspapers, scientists, literary men and the public generally.

In previous years prizes in one or more of the individual classifications have been withheld, but this is the first time that it has been decided to award none of the five. The five prizes are physics, chemistry, medicine or physiology, literature and the Nobel peace prize.

The Swedish Academy of Science awards the first two; the Stockholm Faculty of Medicine the third; the Swedish Academy of Literature awards the literature prize, and the peace prize is awarded by a committee of five elected by the Norwegian Storthing.

It has been announced that the 1924 physics prize to Professor Siegbahn was in recognition of his important discoveries in the X-ray spectra of the elementary substances.

PLANS FOR INCREASING THE ENDOWMENT OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

THE Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution has made the following announcement concerning the proposed $10,000,000 increase to the institution's endowment:

The board of regents of the Smithsonian Institution announces its decision to go before the American people to raise an addition of $10,000,000 to the institution's endowment for fundamental scientific research and publication. Since its foundation in 1846 the Smithsonian's initial endowment has only doubled, and its annual income of $65,000 has been for years inadequate to maintain its many and varied investigations and publications. Since the war, particularly, the rise in costs has materially cut down those activities, suspending some publications such as the "Contributions to Knowledge" series, cutting others to a third of what they were, and restricting the prosecution of such essential researches as that of Dr. Charles G. Abbot on the sun and its influence on the weather.

At the present moment lack of funds prevents the institution from undertaking sixteen major projects for research. Many of these projects are of immediate importance. Some of them, for example, will lead to an increase in the food supply from the sea, others will furnish data whereby the hardwoods, the fruits, the food, drug, oil and cordage plants of the Philippines will become increasingly available, while a third group will provide formulae to assist the engineer in solving the increasingly complex problems which face him.

The economic importance of such projects as these needs no demonstration. Nevertheless they are, like practically all of the Smithsonian's work, investigations in the field of pure research. They will form the groundwork for the applied scientist. Consequently, they are in the main investigations which will not be promoted unless the Smithsonian promotes them. For that reason the board of regents has determined to ask for an additional $10,000,000 to the institution's endowment.

The regents recognize the fact that the public will be surprised to have the Smithsonian turn to it for funds rather than to the government. But that surprise arises from a common misconception of the institution's position. It is not a government bureau. It was privately founded and privately endowed; it is privately directed and privately financed.

It sprang from the bequest of James Smithson, an English scientist, who never set foot in this country. In 1826 he willed his fortune of $550,000 *in trust* to the United States for "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." Organized in 1846, the Smithsonian began at once making geological, botanical, zoological and ethnological studies of various sections of the continent, col-