is possible at the council sessions, which are necessarily short and very crowded with legislative business. The annual sessions of the secretaries have already proved to be very valuable in aiding the association officers to cooperate more satisfactorily with the affiliated societies. They were instituted at the Toronto meeting, in December, 1921, and have met with the approval of the affiliated society and section secretaries. They have become an important part of the annual meeting and it is hoped that the definite and continuous organization of the Secretaries' Conference will be of still further advantage to the association and all its affiliated societies.

The New York session of the conference is to be held on the evening of Sunday, December 30, probably at the Lincoln Hotel, Eighth Avenue at 44th Street. A complimentary dinner will be provided by the association, preceded by opportunity for general informal renewal of acquaintance and followed by the session. Those to be invited to this dinner and session are: (1) the secretaries of the affiliated societies that meet with the association at New York, (2) the secretaries of the association sections, (3) the executive committee members and other executive officers of the association and (4) a few special guests whose presence may contribute to the success of the session. Invitations are to be sent out from the permanent secretary's office about December 1. Those who receive invitations are asked to assemble at the room reserved for this purpose as soon as possible after the close of the symphony concert on Sunday afternoon. The dinner is planned for 6:30, but it is hoped that every one will come early.

The letters sent out during the year by the secretary of the Secretaries' Conference have met with such a generous response that a very interesting session is assured. The questions and topics proposed for discussion have been grouped and summarized and the results have been reported to the members. Some of these topics have been placed on a program or order of business for the session and leaders have been asked to open the discussion in each instance. In some cases they will present information and the results of special studies on the questions involved. There will be opportunity for free discussion in the session and it is hoped that all present will take part. Time will probably be available for brief discussion of other topics than those shown on the program.

The program will include the election of a secretary of the conference for 1929, a general introductory statement of the nature and aims of the conference and the discussion of the following topics.

(1) *Meeting and programs.* Relation of the association and the affiliated societies in the preparation and conduct of programs; procedure when affiliated societies meet with section and when they meet elsewhere or at other times. Preparation of programs to avoid conflicts and to bring together scientists in different but related fields. Problem of adhering to schedule in scientific sessions, of encouraging free access from one session to another held at the same time. Messenger service for the biological group.

(2) *Membership.* The work of the secretaries of affiliated societies and of the association's Washington office in maintaining and increasing membership. Getting new members, billing members, handling of members in arrears, dropping from roll members not in good standing.

(3) *Standards of presentation.* Can the general standard of the presentation of papers at our meetings be raised; would it be desirable for the association to attempt to arrange for the preparation and publication of a pamphlet on the presentation of scientific material?

(4) *Exhibitions.* Value of the exhibition feature of the annual meeting and the problem of securing scientific exhibits. General exhibition and special exhibits of technical societies, their relation and availability to the public.

(5) *Is it desirable to consider the possible reorganization* of the association, to have fewer sections, fewer officers, fewer vice-presidential addresses and a simpler organization? Three sections have been suggested, with the societies or other groups acting as sub-sections. The three fields suggested are: the exact and physical sciences (present sections A, B, C, D, E, M); the biological sciences (present sections F, G, H, I, N, O), and the social sciences (present sections K, L, Q).

(6) *Additional topics if time permits.*

GEORGE T. HARGITT,
Secretary, Secretaries' Conference

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE GEORGE HERBERT JONES CHEMICAL LABORATORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE laying of the cornerstone of the George Herbert Jones Laboratory was accompanied by an informal ceremony participated in by the donor, Mr. George Herbert Jones, Acting President Frederic Woodward, Professor Julius Stieglitz, Trustee Harrison B. Barnard, Mr. David Evans and others. The secretary of the board read a list of the contents of the cornerstone box, which included copies of Mr. Jones's letters of gift; photographs of the donor, of the four presidents of the university, of the two presidents of the board of trustees and of Professors

Stieglitz, Harkins, Schlesinger, Glattfeld, Rising and other members of the staff, besides the customary official documents.

A committee from the department of chemistry, of which Dr. Julius Stieglitz was chairman, recommended the choice of subjects for the carved figures of the building, and these are being put into position as the construction goes forward. *The University Record* says:

There are three niches, each large enough to hold one figure. For these three figures we have selected the following men: Lavoisier, the great French chemist of the end of the eighteenth century, who is considered the founder of chemistry as a science; Wohler, the great German chemist, who was professor of chemistry at Göttingen University and might be considered the founder of the science of chemistry of life, and, third, the great Russian chemist, Mendeléeff, whose periodic law for the chemical elements was enunciated about 1869.

For the head on the outside of the first floor of the west side of the building, Dalton was chosen, the great English chemist, who is considered the founder of the modern atomic theory.

At the entrance of the building a head of Willard Gibbs was selected; and on the other side, a head of August Kekulé. Gibbs was an American and the founder of modern physical chemistry. Kekulé, a German, is the founder of modern organic chemistry.

Other symbols include the Bessemer converter, indicating the fundamental connection between chemistry and industry; the medical caduceus to indicate the connection between chemistry and medicine or life; a balance, of the shape and type used by Lavoisier; a retort, a common symbol of the science of chemistry itself; a pair of crystals of optical opposite faces, which commemorate the great work of Pasteur, and a spectroscope, commemorating the fundamental work of Bunsen with the physicist Kirchhof. If the spectroscope should not lend itself to this use, the symbol of a hexagon, an important milestone in the development of organic chemistry by Kekulé, will be substituted.

HIGHWAY ENGINEERING

LEADING highway officials of all parts of the world are coming to the United States in 1930 to study the methods of road improvement and the use of roads in this country, according to a statement made by Thomas H. MacDonald, chief of the Bureau of Public Roads, who recently returned from a meeting of the International Road Commission held in Paris. Mr. MacDonald went to France as head of the official delegation representing the government of the United States. After the meeting he investigated highway development in the British Isles and countries of western continental Europe. Mr. MacDonald says:

Not only was the invitation extended by our congress through President Coolidge accepted unanimously, but from comments of delegates from other countries it is evident there is a deep-rooted, world-wide interest in what is being done to improve highways here.

The great distinction which exists between our program and that of other nations is that, while here the whole country has adopted motor transportation, elsewhere car use is still largely in the hands of a few.

The rapid expansion in the United States faced our engineers with an urgent demand for the immediate improvement of hundreds of thousands of miles of highway. At the same time, increased valuations growing out of bettered transportation facilities and a moderate tax upon the vehicle itself made it actually cheaper for the public to have roads than to go without them, so we were able to embark upon a construction program without parallel in the history of public works without dislocating our financial system.

Concurrently we were faced with the question of whether it was cheaper to build these roads slowly and laboriously by human labor, as most other countries now do, or whether we should work out mass production methods and so meet the national demand quickly. Experience has demonstrated that the latter plan is by far the more efficient and less costly.

Foreign highway engineers, who are as well versed as our own men in the technique of road building, or are better versed, are, in the main, only now arriving at the stage where they must meet similar problems in their own countries; hence their interest in the sessions here in 1930.

Further, because of the wide diversity of geographical, climatic and soil conditions in the United States, coupled with varying degrees of wealth and population, it is possible to approximate here the basic problems which confront engineers from abroad, whether they are interested in congested areas, such as England has, in primary roads, such as are needed in the newer countries, or in questions of mountain roads, such as those faced by Austria, Switzerland and other nations.

So the United States in 1930 will be a giant laboratory in highway development and motor transportation where highway officials from other countries will find an opportunity to see not only what has been accomplished from an engineering point of view, but also to observe the social and economic influences of our good roads.

At the same time our engineers will have an opportunity to learn what is being done in other countries and to compare notes with their foreign colleagues.

THE AMERICAN STANDARDS ASSOCIATION

UNANIMOUS approval by the thirty-seven member bodies of the establishment of the American Standards Association to succeed the American Engineering Standards Committee is announced by William J. Serrill, assistant general manager of the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia, who was chairman of the Standards Committee, and now becomes president of the American Standards Association.