"How has the system of extension lectures worked elsewhere?"

"It has been very successful in England, but it is just a question whether precisely the same system would work as well here, where conditions are different. In America it seems to be rather universal; there seems to be a dislike to go beyond a certain depth, but the people take enough interest to talk about it. You get people to argue about a subject afterwards, and you have achieved a good deal; then perhaps they may go on the surface. In America there are some facilities for general education than in England — there is more actual teaching, and there is more of what you would call 'higher education.' Then, again, the Americans are exceedingly liberal with their money for educational purposes. There is more wealth in the States, and more of their schools and universities were founded to promote science. This generosity is exercised almost from day to day.

"How do you propose to work the idea?"

"Well, I do not know much about the means, but it would be run on definite lines, of course. In England, it seems to be quite educational. The system worked by Cambridge is to send capable men to different parts of England. There is a course of lectures, each followed by a conversational class. You may sit out a lecture and understand half of it, but if you can ask questions — why you think an author was right, and such statements — it would not be as the nature of a debate. Then there is an examination at the conclusion of each course. Cambridge appointing the examiner. The examination is not merely to test whether the student followed the subject, but to see if the lecturer had the requisite capacity to impart information in a popular way, and did not talk over the heads of his students, as, in turn, went, talk to the gallery. It is of course possible to deliver an interesting lecture on almost any subject and send the people away with an impression of what you have said. You cannot expect to give them something worth thinking over, that is the essence of the system. A great deal may be done by books, and a great deal is done by journalism, but that is not enough in spreading knowledge and ensuring an interest in it; that is why we have these extension lectures: so much more can be communicated by word of mouth direct, and in a way that cannot be done by books or newspapers. Questions go a great way to get information more than mere explanation. I think there is a great many people who have had but an experience of the hard dry ground of their studies that in many way they fight shy of further study, especially as they are distrusted by the public. Now, if they could be induced to take up some work by pleasant means they might be led to increase their studies and learn that there is more to the world of wealth and of the faculties of the human mind than the trivial man of knowledge. The fact is that there is a real fascination in intellectual inquiry which opens up new fields and new lines of thought.

"Various members of the University take up some subject which is connected with their own professional work, and give courses of lectures upon it. The audiences apart from the strict University courses.

"The idea is not so much to give the people a great deal of information as to show them how interesting such subjects are and encourage them to read on their own account. The ordinary popular lecture does not serve the purpose — it is an amusement for one evening, and the people think little more about it. It is very little good, and moreover often leaves erroneous impressions. You want to show the public that you thoroughly understand the subject, and where you can acquire the knowledge. Now, as to these University extension lectures, the general public do not know what they are for, and perhaps this conversation may enlighten them. We have had not only too many of these, but not enough, but we are doing better. It takes time to get the idea understood, just for that reason we want the system known. It is not for people who are studying here, but for the public. In England it has been working for a number of years, and although the members have been much extended, it has done a great deal of good.

"The Extension system works with that requires a large amount of preliminary knowledge. The tendency is to enrich the subject on which people take some interest apart from any technical knowledge. For instance, it is no longer to lecture on a mixed subject, upon a subject involving an acquaintance with mathematics. History, for instance, would be popular: not contemporaneous history, because you need to look at it from a little distance to understand it; but the history of past years. In America economic conditions were very similar, especially with the mechanics and working man, who took a great deal of interest in the subject, and should think it would take with the people.

"Then, geological, historical, and kindred studies will be taken up. Professor Keats is to give a course of lectures next term in that subject.

"The Extension system is a great idea, and I am going to deliver a course of six lectures on "Lions," chiefly its natural history, illustrated by Eastern views, and an experiment the course is being given twice - on the same day, at two different hour, so that the time large audiences can be interested in.