

been so largely attended as might have been expected from the urgency with which their institution has been demanded, and often they have failed altogether for want of pupils. It is probable that many who commenced attendance at the classes had underrated the strain which is imposed by a continuous course of study carried on in the hours that remain after the ordinary work of the day.

Evening lectures  
in University  
Colleges.

In Otago University and Canterbury College the time-table for the ordinary lectures is so arranged that classes for subjects of general interest are held in the evening, or before the usual working-hours of the day begin. It is found that some students, especially those who are engaged in the profession of teaching, have not only the desire to obtain a degree, but also the necessary preliminary knowledge for entering upon a University course, as well as the tenacity of purpose which will enable them to continue in it, while at the same time they cannot afford to give up their appointments and to devote their whole time to study. Owing to the system of classification of teachers adopted by the Education Department, the number of such students is rapidly increasing. There are others who are glad to avail themselves of the lectures in single subjects, without entering upon a full course of study. There can be no doubt that by offering these facilities to irregular students the colleges are effectually promoting the cause of higher education, so long as these evening lectures do not lead to a sacrifice of the interests of those students who devote their whole time to University work. There is evidence to show that even popular lectures, delivered under the auspices of the colleges, have had the effect of awakening a desire for systematic instruction, and have been followed by the formation of regular classes. Short courses of lectures, designed to prepare the teachers of the primary schools to give elementary instruction in the outlines of physical science, have been well attended, and appear to have satisfied a real want.

Evening classes  
at Auckland and  
Wellington  
Colleges.

The deeds of foundation of Auckland and Wellington Colleges require the establishment of evening classes. For some time such classes were held in connection with Auckland College; but they were abandoned in 1872. Last year new classes were instituted. According to the annual report of the Board of Governors, the subjects taught were: (1) Arithmetic, grammar, and composition; (2) mathematics; (3) modern languages; (4) history, logic, political economy, and physical geography; (5) classics; (6) Maori. In all seventy-nine students entered, of whom forty-five attended during the first quarter, and thirty-six during the second. At Wellington College, as has already been stated, part of the University instruction has been given by means of evening classes, but these classes were also arranged to meet the wants of general students, and particularly to prepare candidates for the Civil Service examinations. Last year the attendance at these classes was sixteen in the first term, twelve in the second, and only nine in the third; and the principal of the College proposes that they should be discontinued. The trust deed of Nelson College provides that classes shall be open during two hours of the evening of each school-day, "so soon as the necessary funds can be found to defray the extra expenses;" but we have no evidence that such classes have at any time been established in connection with the College.

Int. Rep., Appx.,  
p. 90.

Nelson College  
trust deed.

New Zealand  
Institute.  
Appx. to  
Journals H. of R.,  
1870, D.—25.

Evening classes in  
primary schools.

The New Zealand Institute at one time intended to arrange for a systematic course of instruction to be given during the winter months of each year; but the project appears to have been abandoned for want of means.

In some cases the staff of a primary school undertakes to conduct evening classes in subjects not confined to primary-school work. This plan has been tried in various districts throughout the colony, more especially in Auckland, North Canterbury, and Otago; but the attempt has, in the majority of cases, failed from insufficient attendance. We think that an arrangement such as this, by which one staff has to do double work, cannot be satisfactory. So great are the differences in the attainments of those who attend evening classes, that classification is rendered much more difficult than in ordinary day-school work; so that one staff is commonly too small to allow of the subdivision of classes which is necessary to make the tuition efficient. Moreover, a schoolmaster's duties demand a considerable portion of his evenings as well as his days; and, while many have sufficient strength and zeal to undertake some addition to their duties, it is not advisable to expect this extra work from all teachers.