

paired, there was nothing for it but to provide the means by voluntary contributions. But in 1800 the taxing power was conceded to the districts so far as providing building sites, schoolhouses, and furniture was concerned. In 1817 the districts became corporations with the usual powers. In 1827 the districts gained the power to choose and contract with their own teachers, the power being exercised by a prudential committeeman who might be chosen in town meeting, but who was commonly chosen in school district meeting. The end of the road had now been reached. Democratic ideas had triumphed; and it was not until the Act of 1882 swept the new system away that the system of the Puritans was restored. Two limitations remained. The town still determined the total amount of school money to be raised, and levied the tax; but when the money had once been apportioned to the districts there was no accounting and no responsibility. Legally, the certifying of teachers still continued a town function, but this was more nominal than real. The districting of towns was not compulsory, and some were never districted. The foundation of the State school fund was laid in 1834.

The results following the later legislation that has been recounted were both social and educational in character. There ensued the contentions, school politics, irresponsibility, favoritism, small ideas, and wastefulness; the small schools, short terms, low ideals, lack of oversight, poor teachers, and poor teaching that have generally marked the introduction of the Local District System. In 1826 the law