

free. The first planters had paid school fees in England, and they continued the practice in their new home. Thus Governor Winthrop says: "Divers free schools were erected, as at Roxbury (for maintenance whereof every inhabitant bound some house or land for a yearly allowance forever) and at Boston (where they made an order to allow forever £50 to the master and an house, and £30 to an usher, who should also teach to read and write and cipher, and Indian children were to be taught freely, and the charge to be by yearly contribution, either by voluntary allowance, or by rate of such as refused)." This order was confirmed by the General Court. Other towns did the like, providing maintenance by several means.¹

But the logic of events led straight to free schools. The question, whether those who used the schools or the inhabitants of the town should maintain them in whole or in part, was left to those to determine who ordered the prudentials of the town, and these inclined more and more to town support. The cost of the schools tended to outgrow the ability of parents and guardians to keep them up; while private benevolence is commonly slow when the public authorities can touch the lever of public taxation. The poor were unable to pay the tuition of their children, and discrimination between the poor and the rich was odious in the democratic atmosphere that surrounded the colony. And so the germs planted in 1642 and 1647 continued to grow until,

¹ *History of New England, 1630-1649*. Boston, 1853, Vol. II., p. 264.