

**WEST NEWTON
HALF A
CENTURY AGO**

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West Newton half a century ago by Lucy Ellis Allen

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LUCY ELLIS ALLEN

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**BY
LUCY ELLIS ALLEN**

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The Author.

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by Lucy Ellis Allen

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DEDICATED
TO
The Lucy Jackson Chapter, B. A. R.
OF WEST NEWTON

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WEST NEWTON HALF A CENTURY AGO

“ We watch the flights of the sun through space, shortening winter and bringing spring and summer, with birds, leaves and fruits, and yet it is not half as wonderful as the passage of a human soul, glowing and sparkling with ten thousand effects as it moves through life, carrying its atmosphere and influence, as does Nature.”

Man is indeed a force producer and force bearer, journeying forward and exhaling influences on all sides.— But once the *good* man appears, his power is irresistible and such was the case in West Newton some half a century ago, when there came to this little village such men and wo-

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men as most of us have heard of, since childhood.

“Their presence made sunshine and right living easy, their coming changed the climate and their influence can never wholly die—”

At that period which we are considering, the world was alive to the greatest interests; education, freeing of the slaves, temperance, and true government. In all these questions, West Newton men and women took a lively interest and gave the village the reputation of being a most progressive community.

Among the noble group who called West Newton their home, the name of Horace Mann stands first; a man who chose as his topic for consideration when graduating from college: “The Progressive Character of the Human Race.”

All are undoubtedly familiar with the spot where Horace Mann's

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house once stood at the corner of Chestnut and Highland Streets, where now the Saffords reside. Horace Mann was a member of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts and served on the State Senate, at an earlier period; and through his personal exertions, Massachusetts established a *Board* of Education and Mr. Mann was at once placed at its head as Secretary. During his residence in West Newton, in addition to other duties, he wrote the reports of the board for the people of the State. These reports discussed in a forcible manner, many new questions on education and they had a great influence in elevating the standard of public sentiment and of school instruction, not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the whole country and world, as they were published in many languages. His earnestness in advocating new methods and new