

# The Melrose Lyceum

by Arnold W. Williams



LYCEUM HALL, Main Street, Melrose, from a photo taken in June of 1867.

The Melrose Lyceum was founded in 1865 by a committee of Melrose residents chaired by Dr. William F. Poole. Dr. Poole, an eminent librarian, served as librarian of the Boston Athenaeum for thirteen years, and of the Mercantile Library Association of Boston for four years. He wrote numerous articles on problems of the day, and during his lifetime contributed a number of historical articles and reviews to the newspapers. For many years he was president of the American Historical Association and of the American Library Association.

With this background it was natural that he became vitally interested in developing lyceum courses of lectures

and concerts in this city. Others shared his enthusiasm with the result that the Melrose Lyceum sponsored many fine programs over the span of many years.

The lectures and concerts were first held in the hall on the second floor of the Lyceum Building, the larger of the two buildings shown in the picture. The building was located on the west side of Main Street between West Foster and Essex Streets, having been moved there from its original location at the corner of Grove and Berwick Streets, where it was known as Academy Hall.

At its original site the building was used as a private school that flour-