

THE HON. WILLIAM B. WASHBURN.

The contest for United States Senator to fill the unexpired term of the late Charles Sumner, which will terminate March 3, 1875, resulted on the 17th of April in the election of the Hon. William B. Washburn, the present Governor of Massachusetts. Mr. Washburn was born in Winchendon, Massachusetts, January 31, 1820. He graduated at Yale College in the year 1844, and has since been engaged in manufacturing pursuits. He has for nearly a quarter of a century taken an active part in State and national politics. He served as a member of the State Senate in 1850, and of the Lower House in 1854. He has served three terms in Congress as a representative from Massachusetts. He was first elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress, and served on the committees on Invalid Pensions and Roads and Canals. He was re-elected to the Thirty-ninth Congress, and served on the committees on Claims and Revolutionary Pensions. He was elected and served as a delegate to the Philadelphia "Loyalists' Convention" in 1866, and was again re-elected to serve in the Fortieth Congress. In 1871 he was elected Governor of his native State, and was re-elected in 1872, and again in 1873, to the same position.

The election of Mr. Washburn was effected by a compromise between the supporters of Mr. Dawes and those of Mr. Hoar, when it had become apparent that neither of these candidates could be chosen. The thirty-third and final ballot resulted as follows: Whole number of votes, 267; necessary to a choice, 134. Wm. B. Washburn, 151; Curtis, 64; Dawes, 26; Adams, 15; Loring, 4; Banks, 4; Wendell Phillips, 1; Stephen N. Gifford, 1; John G. Whittier, 1.

MAY.

The derivation of the name of this, one of the most pleasing months of the year, has long been a bone of contention. The old Roman name of *Maius* (which was adopted by the Saxons) for this month is by some asserted to come from *Maia*, the mother of Mercury, to whom sacrifices were offered on its first day. The more probable derivation is that Romulus named this month in honour of the *maiores*, the nobles and senators, and called it *Maius*, as he named the following month *Junius* in honour of the *juniores*—the youth of Rome. During this month the *lemuria*, or festivals in memory of the dead, were observed with great solemnity;

and from this source may be traced the custom of the Dark and Middle Ages, forbidding marriages at this season. In his "Fasti," Ovid says:

"Nec viduae totius ædum, nec virginis apta
Tempora; quæ nupsit, non diuturna fuit;
Hæc quoque de causa, si te proverbia tangunt,
Mense malum Maio nubere vulgus ait."

It was certainly considered unlucky among the Romans to marry during the month of May. The Romans also particularly honoured the goddess Flora during this month with games. Hence the gaily decorated and festooned May-pole, the dancing and processions of villagers decked with flowers and garlands, and the old Jack-in-the-green often seen in the streets of London, to which all English writers on manners and customs allude, especially Stowe, and which are in vogue to this day in the country districts of England. Dancing round the May-pole on the village green on the first of May was, in olden times, almost a religious duty among young people. It was by no means confined to the lower classes. In Hall's Chronicle we find that Henry VIII. went a-Maying with Queen Katharine and her court to Shooter's Hill. And farther back, Chaucer tells us, in speaking of May, in the "Court of Love":

"Forth goeth all the court, both moote and leste,
To teche the floures freshe, and braunch and blome."

Shakespeare constantly alludes to this theme; and John Milton wrote a sonnet on it, as also did Spencer.

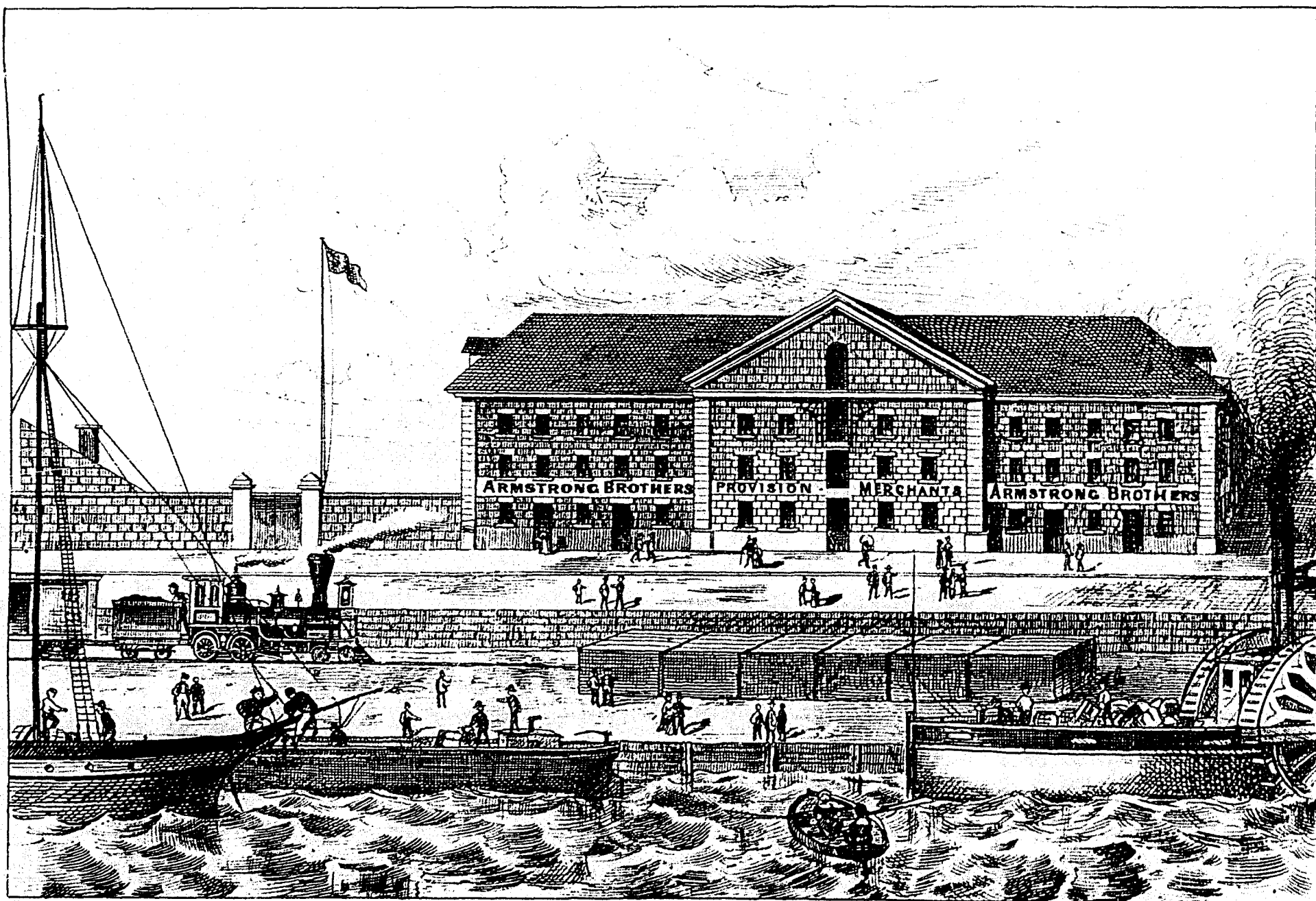
These May-poles were terrible thorns in the sides of the Puritans, and eventually, after much wrangling and opposition, an ordinance was passed by Parliament on the 5th of April, 1644, ordering that "all and singular May-poles, that are or shall be erected, shall be taken down and removed by the constables," etc., etc. They were, however, quickly put up again on the restoration of Charles II. Washington Irving records in the "Sketch Book" his pleasure on first seeing a May-pole.

On the 2nd of May is commemorated the invention (or discovery) of the real Cross by the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, the identity of which was supposed to have been proved by the dead body of a man immediately coming to life again on touching it.

On the 3rd of May died poor Tom Hood, in the year 1845; and on the 9th, 1805, the immortal Schiller was lost to the world.



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