

NOVEMBER 25, 1871.]

FOREST FIRES IN THE WEST.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the news of the burning of Chicago came the intelligence of vast conflagrations in the forests and prairies in the States of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. These terrible fires have probably destroyed many times the number of those who fell victims of the burning of Chicago, though the damage to property is much less in actual value.

The worst calamity occurred in the State of Wisconsin, where, in the woods between Green Bay and Fox River, a conflagration raged many days, laying waste a strip of country thirty miles wide in Shawana and Oconto counties. The towns of Marinette, Peshtigo, and Little Sturgeon Bay were destroyed. At Peshtigo 320 lives were lost, seventy-five at Little Sturgeon, and hundreds more in other places, while many families were driven out of house and home. Farm buildings, fences, and bridges all over the country were swept away. Thousands of square miles of valuable pine forests were destroyed. Bears and other wild beasts were driven in dismay from the woods, and were flying about in every direction. All supplies of food for man and beast have been destroyed, and starvation during the coming winter stares them in the face. The double-page illustration in this number of the Weekly gives a graphic idea of the terrors of this unexampled conflagration.

It has been estimated that in the State of Wisconsin the fire extended over an area of 150 square miles, through a region of pine and hardwood timber, which was thickly settled. The drought in August had dried up springs, streams, and vegetation, and parched the ground to such a depth below the surface that the soil itself burned, and living trees were falling from the action of the fires which undermined them. All outstanding property was swept away, there being no water available to stop the fires. Barns and their contents, hay-stacks, corn, wood, and other property, with hundreds of miles of fences, were burned. The hardest fights against the flames were made at the saw-mills located among the pine forests of Green Bay region, but many of them have been burned.

WOMEN AT THE POLLS.

FIVE adventurous women of this city marched boldly to the polls on last election day, and demanded to be allowed to vote. Among them was Mrs. VICTORIA WOODHULL, who, fresh from an interview on the house-top with the roving spirit of DEMOSTHENES, drove up early to the polls in a fine carriage. This lady was more determined and more demonstrative than her sister reformers. She was not to be bluffed off without an argument. Her lawyer was at hand, but she required no prompting. When her right to vote was denied, she planted herself on the Constitution of the United States, and insisted that the inspector should read the clause on which she founds her claim. The objection that no copy of that document was at hand was immediately met by the production of a pocket edition with which the fair claimant had come provided. The Republican inspector was in-



THE HON. JOEL PARKER, GOVERNOR ELECT OF NEW JERSEY. [PHOTOGRAPHED BY C. D. FREDRICKS & COMPANY.]

clined to receive her vote, but his Democratic colleague was immovable. He would not even look at the Constitution, and finally put an end to the scene by telling the persistent lady that she "obstructed the polls, and must get out." Miss TENNIE C. CLAFFLIN met with the same rebuff; and then, seeing that their efforts were fruitless, the ladies departed. Our artist has delineated this serio-humorous rencontre in the sketch on this page.

The only one of the five who succeeded in voting was a Mrs. MILLER, who afterward openly boasted that she had cast a ballot for TWEED.

The World suggests that if this is a fair sample of the use which women will make of the ballot, the opposition to their demand will be stronger than ever, and humorously expresses the fear that Mrs. MILLER may have "chosen some untrustworthy Greek—ALCIBIADES, perhaps, or possibly PISISTRATUS—as her guide and counselor." DEMOSTHENES is wholly occupied by his prior engagement with Mrs. WOODHULL, but the World suggests the names of several other distinguished Grecian spirits who might be glad to undertake the task of directing Mrs. MILLER's political conscience.

THE HON. JOEL PARKER.

We give on this page a portrait of this gentleman, who has just been chosen for the second time to fill the gubernatorial chair of New Jersey. Mr. PARKER owes his election more to the personal esteem in which he is held by his fellow-citizens than to the strength of the Democratic party, the Republicans having a numerical majority in the State. He was first elected Governor in 1862, and proved himself to be an honest and able administrator of affairs, and so truly patriotic that in several of the strongly "Copperhead" counties of New Jersey he was burned in effigy by members of his own party.

HUMAN MISERY IN LONDON.

M. TAINE, in his notes upon England, gives an equally terrible account of the two extremes of human life as they appear in the most neglected and poorest districts of London. Speaking of Shadwell, he describes "small streets, dusty courts, infected by a smell of rotten rags, and tapestried with poor clothing and linen hung out to dry. The children swarm. At one moment," says M. Taine, "I had fourteen or fifteen round me, dirty, barefooted, the little sister carrying the baby in her arms, the nursing of a year old, with its bald white head. Nothing can be more distressing to see than these white bodies, these flaxen tangles, these pasty cheeks plastered with dirt of long standing. They come running up, showing the gentleman to each other with curious and greedy gestures. The motionless mothers look out from the door-ways with lack-lustre eyes. The narrow dwelling may be seen within, often one single room in which all is heaped together in the foul air. The houses often consist but of one story; they are low and narrow hovels in which to sleep and die. What an abode in winter, when the window remains shut through continuous weeks of rain and fog! And that this brood may not die of hunger, the father must not drink, must never be without work, must never be ill. Here and there is a heap of street sweepings. Women were working among the rubbish. One of them, who is old and faded, had a short pipe in her mouth. They raised themselves from their work to look at me, showing brutalized, disquieting faces, like female Yahoos: perhaps that pipe, with a glass of gin, is the last idea which comes uppermost in their idiotic brain. Could any thing be found therein above the instincts and appetites of a savage or a beast of burden? A miserable black cat, lank, lame, and bewildered, watched them out of the corners of its terrified eyes, and stealthily searched about a dust-heap; the old woman followed it with looks as wild as its own, mumbling as she did so, and evidently calculating that it represented two pounds or so of meat!" M. Taine thinks the street boys of this part of London more wretched-looking and more repulsive than the Parisian "voyou," and attributes this to the "climate being worse, and the gin more murderous." But the same story is true of most large cities. Our own New York could supply M. Taine with pictures quite as terrible in their repulsive misery as those which he has drawn of the London slums.



MRS. WOODHULL ASSERTING HER RIGHT TO VOTE.—[FROM A SKETCH BY H. BALLING.]