

The Daily Ontario
Jan. 28 1872

UNFORTUNATE FIRE.

BURNING OF MARCHMONT

ONE LIFE LOST.

During the terrible storm that raged this morning, about half-past two o'clock, the inmates of "Marchmont" were alarmed by fire proceeding from a wooden structure in rear of the building. At the time the wind was sweeping directly into the apartment, sweeping into the sleeping rooms, and the alarm very naturally produced a panic ^{most} of the inmates, terrified by the ^{imminent} danger that threatened them, rushed out of the building, and those not able to make their exit in this manner (some of the smaller boys) were thrown as gently as possible from the windows into the snow. In a few moments of time the nineteen human beings that a minute before were quietly slumbering in apparent security were in almost a nude state exposed to the pelting storm with no shelter nearer to them than 100 yards. Two of the smaller boys that had been thrown from the window, seemingly unconscious of the danger, ran back into the burning building, and although a cry was raised to arrest their attention, only one of the little fellows made his escape. The other boy who was a little deaf, perished in the flames, and his charred remains were this morning removed—a limbless, unshapen trunk. The lad who lost his life was known as Robert Gray, aged 6 years, brought out in 1871.

Miss McPherson is now in Europe, preparing to bring out another lot of boys, and the Home was in charge of Miss Bilbough, a lady whose philanthropic spirit and generous devotion to this work has greatly advanced the most charitable and christian enterprise.

There were only twelve boys in the Home at the time of the fire, and seven adults chiefly employed in providing suitable places among the farmers of the country for the young lads brought out, and seeing that they are properly cared for. The whole number were deprived of everything they possessed in the way of clothing and

valuables in the building, and a vigorous effort was at once made this morning to supply urgent needs. The town was canvassed, and a short time sufficed to clothe the boys so as to make them presentable. For their thoughtfulness and ready attention in this manner a number of ladies of the Town deserve hearty thanks.

As soon as possible after the first alarm was given the firemen of the Town were alert, but there was no work for them when they arrived with their apparatus on the ground—the devouring element having completely gained the mastery.

The neighbors in the vicinity of Marchmont opened their doors and entertained the sufferers until late in the day, when they were relieved by others charitably disposed, and the little fellows found warm meals and protection in the families of our best citizens.

We understand an inquest is to be held this afternoon, but there seems to be no possibility of ascertaining the cause of the fire, so well protected were all the avenues of danger by the careful and painstaking ladies and gentlemen who had the Home in charge.