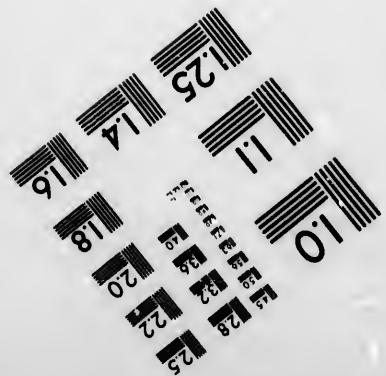
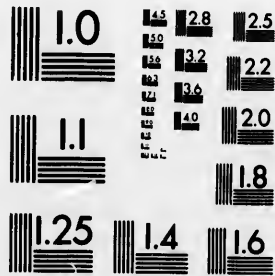


**IMAGE EVALUATION  
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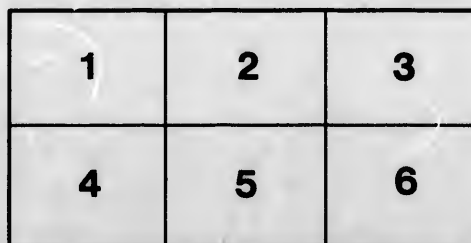
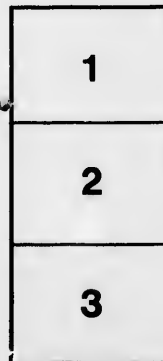
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A PLEA

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→ FOR THE ←

YOUNG MEN OF MONTREAL.

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The following sermon, preached by the  
VERY REV. THE DEAN OF MONTREAL, in St.  
George's Church, on the 21st Sunday after  
Trinity, has been printed by request, in the  
hope that its more general circulation may  
prove of value, beyond the object for which it  
was originally delivered.

Nov. 15TH, 1889.

# A SERMON

BY THE

VERY REV. JAMES CARMICHAEL,

DEAN OF MONTREAL.

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ISAIAH 62, 10. Prepare ye the way of the people; cast up the highway; gather out the stones.

I suppose that there are few things harder than, in all things and for years, to do what our own conscience tells us is right. Of course the habit of right-doing, like all habits, relieves to a great extent the difficulty; but even with the best of men and women—those really religiously good and most like Christ—call it what you will—their “nature,” the “old Adam,” at times will break out and leave them in misery, because their conscience tells them that they have done wrong. And indeed these are the people who feel the trial keenest, for their hard-gained habit is the habit of right, and wrong, when it is done, seems to them like a foul splash of blood on a clear white marble floor.

Right-doing is hard because wrong-doing is so easy. Some people object very strongly to the doctrine of what is called “natural depravity;” but, object as one may to the doctrine, the fact remains. It is easier for a young child to do wrong than right. You have



to train it to do right. It is easier for a young man to do wrong than right; often for an old man. The terror of wrong-doing is its ease—the smoothness of the road.

On the other hand, as I said, it is hard to do right continuously and victoriously. Our own nature; the example of so many about us; the free habits of a free life; the thousand inducements to evil that throng about the path of the inexperienced—some, or all these things combined, are barriers in the way—obstacles to right-doing; and he or she who through God and Christ avoids them or overleaps them and passes onward, even falteringly and repentantly, on the straight road beyond, may often stop on the upward journey and say "Thank God."

But Christ demands more than a holy selfishness—a battling only for ourselves. His own example, the gist of His whole teaching, plain as the sun in the heavens, tells us that we should strive to help others, and as far as we can, either take obstacles to right-doing out of a brother's way, or else make those obstacles as few as we can make them. I have heard it said that the rage for taking obstacles out of the way of young people is apt to create a race of invertebrate Christians—beings without habits of self-control, and manly or womanly determination. But I have no fear of this, if only on the ground that each age seems to bring its own dangers, and that we do something in our own day and generation, if we simply prevent them from accumulating.

Now, if you ask me what I consider the greatest obstacle to right-doing, in the present day, I say: Intem-

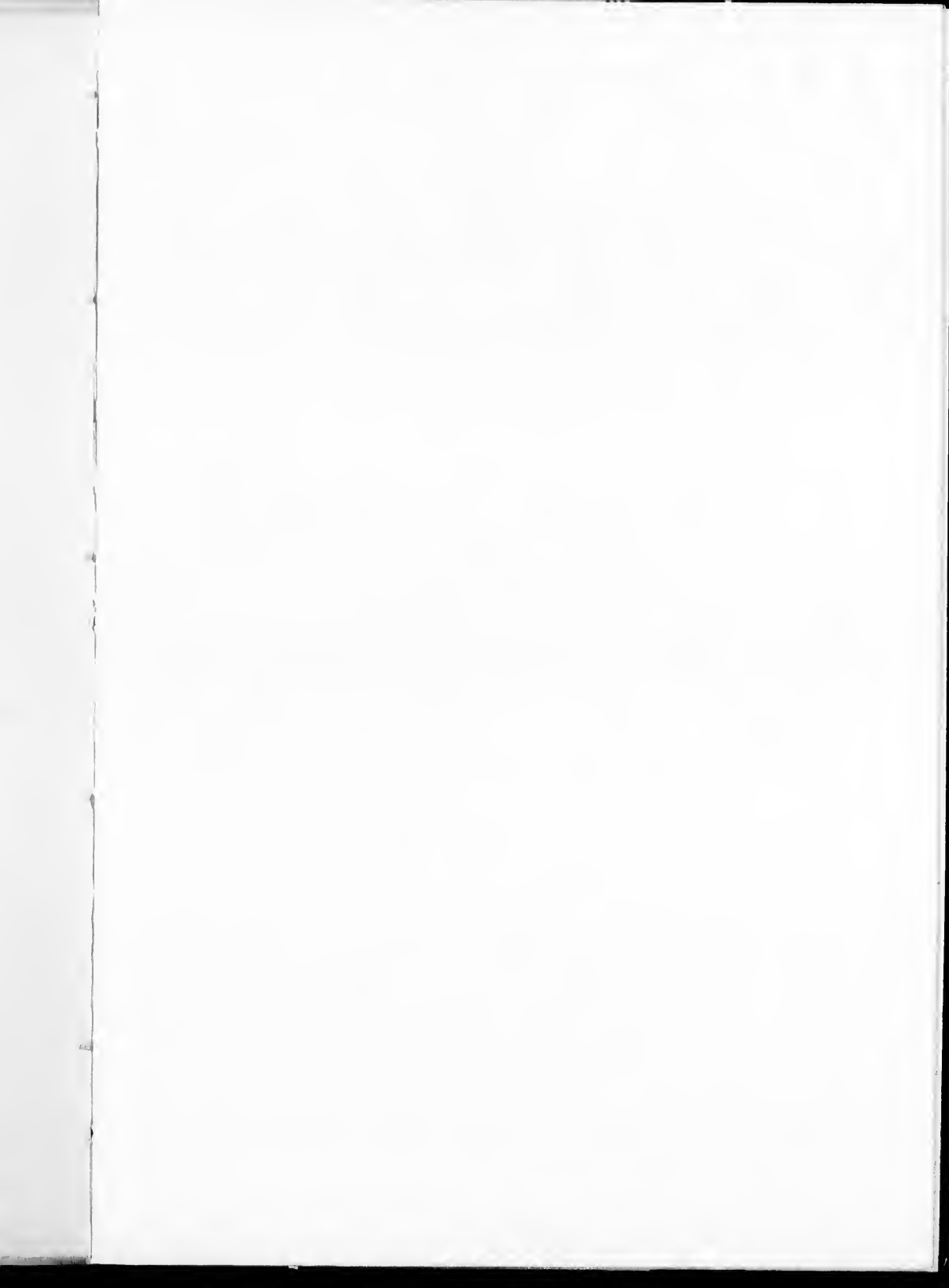
perance, and the reckless laws which foster and maintain its power as, for instance, in this very city. I do not say that there are not other evils equally bad in act and relatively in power; but experience of life both here and elsewhere has taught me that drunkenness is a root or germ evil; that many of its competitors in iniquity grow out of it, and that, if its influence could be curbed, the manhood and womanhood and childhood of our civic life would certainly be all the better for the curbing.

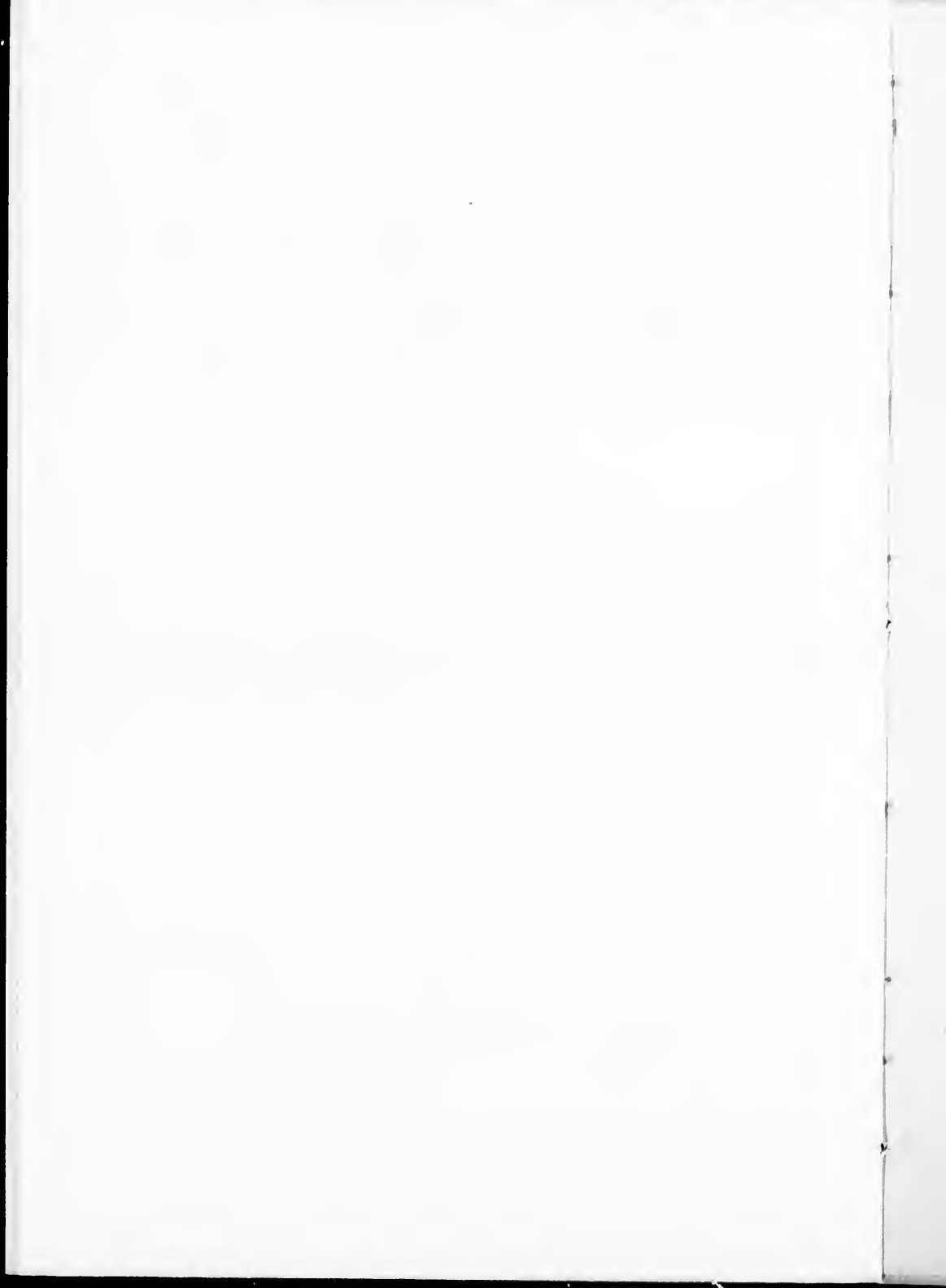
As far as I am concerned, I positively burn with a savage kind of indignation when I think how, spite of every effort made on the side of "right," that awful trade which grows wealthy by "wrong-doing" is petted and fostered by our rulers; that again and again its members can meet together, and boast of victories all along the line of its blighting and deadly life. If one thing could be said in its favor; if one solitary moral plea could be advanced as a reason why it should be supported and propped up by those in power, it would be different; but it is an engine of sheer destruction, without one moral argument in its favor—a permanent pestilence, a rooted and growing cancer, blighting or sapping the young life of generation after generation, as it steps in to fill up the ranks of the self-murdered dead that this awful traffic throughout the world might bury, not in graves—but in pits.

The "Citizens' League," an admirably intentioned society, starting on the principle, "We ask only obedience to law," and working through the regularly constituted authorities,—provincial and municipal—is forced to ask

obedience to what in the Province of Quebec often appears to be solely under the control of the drink trade. Take the case of selling drink to boys—a patent act of criminality of the worst kind. A tentative clause was in force protecting boys; the drink-sellers saw that a most lucrative branch of business was threatened, and that they might often be placed in a position where prosecution could be easily enforced by the Citizens' League or others, and they worked to have it changed. The question before the Government was: "Will we protect the boys, or will we protect the drink-sellers?" Of course the boys are sacrificed, because it is perfectly plain that the Government is practically under the control of the drink-sellers. It is afraid of them; they constitute a powerful organization over the country; their influence in Provincial politics is deep and far-reaching, and their licenses aid in filling the provincial treasury. Hence the drink-traders know their power, and they use it. What is your boy to them? A thing to make money out of—a soul to be sacrificed! And if we sit tamely under their tyrannical domination, and submit without murmur to the acts of a Government that they lead and guide, the day may come when our girls may be sacrificed by Government and Trade as ruthlessly as our boys are sacrificed to-day.

Oh! Christian men and women, when you come to think of it, is it not shameful, this wholesale obstacle, making to right-doing—this holding-out of opportunities on the side of wrong, spite of the Church and the medical profession, and the warnings of judges on the Bench, and common sense, and often the dictates of common





decency. Spite of all these united forces on the side of good, we are just like dice in the hands of cunning gamblers; they fling us as they will, and they win the game.

Now, I have been led to make these remarks by an appeal which has been made to me in common with all the clergy of the city, to strive and rouse the public to save from sale the Athletic Club House, well known as the temperance rendezvous on the Mountain for our young men's clubs. This Club House was erected mainly as a place where young men could meet, apart from the domination and evil influence of the tavern-keeper; a rallying point for the snow-shoe, pedestrian and other clubs that aid in developing the physical strength of our young men, and in giving them that measure of rational enjoyment which so many of them richly deserve.

As far as the objects of the Club are concerned, they are all on the side of right-doing, and, as objects, have been successful. Six clubs, with a total membership of 1,515 young men, visit the Club House about sixteen times in each season; and three more city clubs, making a total of nine, have signified their intention to come into the movement this year.

But, the Club is now on the brink of extinction for want of funds, and is about to be brought to the hammer to meet a floating debt of \$8,000. You know, friends, that you cannot make money out of a reputable *café* at the same rate that you can make money out of a disreputable bar. The advantage here is

wholly on the side of wrong-doing, and, as this movement started largely against the tide, for want of original stock being subscribed, its sales, though large, aid but little in providing for its liabilities. What is needed is, that the balance of the stock be taken up and the membership increased. If this be done, the Club House is saved.

Now I base my appeal to you, to take this matter into consideration at once, on two grounds :—

1st. To help the young men of the city to keep on the side of right, to take obstacles out of their way. The young men of Montreal use this Club—they do not want to have it closed. They are content with it, and thankful for it. But you cannot expect them to support it, and when you realize that they are our own sons or our relations or friends or employees, surely we may well stand in the breach and help them.

2nd. I ask you to act promptly for I notice in the advertisement of the sale which takes place on the 14th, that, amongst others, "hotel-keepers" are warned "not to lose sight of this chance." You see the trade is so disgraceful that astute men shrink from using ordinary terms. You know and I know, and every one knows what that title "hotel-keeper" means. "Tavern-keepers" are warned "not to loose the chance," and if I know them aright, they do not need the warning. We, on the side of right, have trained our men to go there; the path to the door is worn by the lusty feet of our boys; what a splendid chance to get them on the side of wrong! The same house, the same rooms, and then the victory—

another glorious victory for drink! Another blighting blow to the rabid fanatics who claim they see evil in our glorious traffic!

Now, friends, just as some time ago the question was before the Government: "Will we protect our boys or will we strengthen the drink traffic?" so this question is before the right-thinking community of Montreal between to-day and the 14th of this month. Will you help to protect our young men, aid in keeping an obstacle to right-doing and an incentive to wrong-doing out of their way? O men of means, in so many ways, liberal and kind, stand for this once in the breach. Stand by your young men, and give this enterprise a fair start, and teach these wholesale depravers of youth the lesson that there is a limit to their power, when apart from weak-kneed governments, they are brought face to face with an aroused and right-thinking public.

You may ask how we can meet the difficulty. Well, take home the paper in your pew, read it, it speaks for itself. You have the choice of three methods of help so admirably graded and arranged that the poorest can lend a hand. Fill in what you can do, and fill it in quickly, and send it to its destination, and may God speed the good work and stay the evil through your means, and send you down to face the business of another week with the happy thought, strong before your minds, that you have done what you could to take at least one obstacle out of the rough and rugged road that the young life of this city is most shamefully forced to walk on, through the miserable bondage of a weak government to a dangerous and destructive trade.



