

# The Home Study Quarterly

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## Forty Wrestlers

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D.

Once, during the early years of the Christian era, a Roman army was on winter service in northern Europe. A decree came from Rome bidding the commanders to assemble all their men and order them to do public homage to the emperor as a god. The soldiers were drawn up, and, at the word of command, they bowed the knee in worship to the Cæsar—all but forty men who were Christians.

A terrible punishment was inflicted upon these heroic followers of Christ. They were stripped of their armor and weapons, and were driven out to the middle of a large frozen lake, and there they were left to perish from cold and hunger.

But the centurion, to whose command these Christian soldiers belonged, was greatly disturbed. When night came he could not rest, and so had a fire kindled by the shore of the lake, and there he paced uneasily up and down. Over the ice there came to his ears the shout of the doomed men: "Forty wrestlers are we, wrestling for Christ, and we claim from Him the crown."

Hour after hour the shout went up, and the centurion listened. At last he saw one of the forty creeping away from the rest and making his way to the shore that he might worship Cæsar and thus save his life. That sight decided the centurion. He threw down his weapons, flung aside his armor, and went to join the brave martyrs. And so the shout still rent the wintry air: "Forty wrestlers are we, wrestling for Christ, and we claim from Him the crown," until, at last the voices were stilled by death.

Nothing calls for courage like following

Christ. It matters not what one's place may be in His service—it will take a hero to fill it.

## Keep on the Higher Level

By Rev. H. M. Paulin, B.A.

Frequently upon the lawn in front of my manse, I have seen a robin toying with a cat. The bird would flutter about upon the grass and chirp in a taunting sort of way, as though issuing a mocking challenge. It always managed to keep the cat excited, but to keep itself just out of harm's way, flying quickly when the cat was coming dangerously close. After this had gone on for some time, the robin would fly up into a tree to rest, and the cat would withdraw, feeling that its chance of capture was gone.

As long as the bird was upon the cat's level, it had to be on the alert if it would escape. There was no rest there, and no safety. But upon a higher level it was safe. The explanation lies in the formation of the cat's eye. The pupil is not round, like the pupil in the human eye, but is so shaped as to enable the cat to judge with almost perfect accuracy upon the level. So accurate is its measurement, that it will spring upon a mouse or rat, or other prey which moves upon the ground, and seldom fails to capture it. But in a vertical direction, its measurement is defective. It does not spring into the air with any certainty, and the bird knows that upon this higher level it is safe.

This is the only way to escape from the danger of a temptation. Staying upon the level of your temptation, one may be watchful, and escape it for a time, but the moment he ceases to be on guard, he is lost. Only on the higher level is there safety. It is the