

of implacable Hatred; accordingly, those who embraced the Religion of Jesus, prepared to take up the Cross---to resign all earthly Prospects and Enjoyments---even Life itself, for the Testimony of their divine Master.

UNDER these oppressive Circumstances, Christianity must have been totally overwhelmed, had not the Hand of God been stretched out to support it; not only by the Miracles which he enabled the Apostles and other Believers to work daily, but also by the extraordinary Effusions of his Spirit which were poured out on the meek Followers of the Redeemer. During three tedious Centuries it struggled against all the Opposition it could receive from the united Efforts of the Powers of this World, leagued with those of Darkness, and combined to crush it. Against these it only opposed the Patience, Sufferings, and unblemished Conduct of its Professors: Nor can any Thing be a more irrefragable Proof of its divine Original, than that it surmounted those Difficulties---rose triumphant over them, till in the Beginning of the fourth Century, it ascended the imperial Throne of Rome†.

ST. PAUL in this Epistle pathetically represents the Sufferings to which Christians were exposed, especially the Preachers of the Gospel; and this partly with Design to counteract the insidious Endeavours of some false Teachers, who endeavoured to alienate the Corinthians from him, and the Truths of the Gospel. He also mentions the Support and divine Aid with which those Sufferings were tempered. “We are troubled on every Side,” says he, but not distressed; we are perplexed,  
“but

† CONSTANTINE the Great began to reign Ann. Dom. 306.