

both within the walls of Rome and without. In these feuds the rest of the Nobility are obliged to take either one side or the other: so that all the discords and commotions that rise amongst the Barons are occasioned by the ambition of the Prelates.

His present Holiness Pope Leo X is exalted to the Pontificate at a time when the Church is exceeding powerful: and there is the greatest reason to hope, that as his Predecessors augmented its grandeur by their arms, he will make it still more august and respectable by his Virtue and the many excellent qualities he is possessed of.

E X A M E N. C H A P. X I.

WE meet with few instances in ancient times of Priests that have become Sovereigns. I think the Jews were the only people that we know any thing of, who had a succession of despotic High Priests: in all other nations, it seems as if their Priests did not concern themselves in any thing but their own functions. They offered up the sacrifices, they had established pensions, and some particular privileges: but they seldom took upon themselves to instruct, and never to govern the people: and the reason why there were no Religious wars amongst the ancients, I take to be this, that their Priests were neither suffered to inculcate any particular doctrines of their own: that might divide the people into Sects, nor had any authority which they could abuse. In the decline of the Roman Empire, all Europe fell into a state of anarchy and barbarism, and at last became divided into a thousand petty Sovereignities. Many Prelates set up for Princes, after the example of the Bishop of Rome; and it might have been expected, I should think, that people would live happily under such Governors: for elective Princes, whose dominions are very small (as those of Ecclesiastics generally are) seem to lye under a necessity of treating their Subjects in a gentle and tender manner, if not from Religious, at least from political motives. It is certain however, that no other States in the World have such swarms of beggars. There you have at one view a picture of all the miseries that are incident to mankind: there one may see numbers of poor creatures; not only such as are drawn thither by the charity or liberality of the Sovereign; not only of retainers and other such reptiles as haunt the houses of great men and creep after the train of Opulence; [but of half starved wretches utterly destitute of the necessaries of life and of all means of procuring them. One would be apt to think that the people in these