



BLESSED COLETTE.

IT is very often in the sanctuary, in the warmth of prayerfulness, rather than on battlefields or in deliberating assemblies, that the destinies of nations and societies are decided. Struggles, embittered by disputes or reddened with human blood, are not unfrequently, in the eyes of the world, the means that God uses to make known His will to man ; but, if we could scrutinize the mechanism of God's providence, we should find that it is at the foot of the altar, and moved by the prayers of His servants, that God formulates His decrees. When in His inexhaustible mercy He has motives for saving a nation, or a society. He raises up intercessors powerful in prayer, and word, and example.

During the fifteenth century the world had been fighting against the salutary influence of the great religious orders of Dominic and Francis. Corruption had taken a hard grasp on it : fervor had waxed cold ; the primitive rigor of monastic rule and observance, which had been adopted to make men stronger than their passions, had been mitigated to meet the wishes of men who were no longer fervent. At no time up to that was spiritual energy more needed. The Church was undergoing a crisis. Rival popes had dared to divide the allegiance of Catholics.

It was at this time when the Church needed powerful and disinterested defenders that God raised up saintly reformers.