

most striking and terrible way. The queen had a very pious, faithful page, whom she employed in the distribution of her secret alms. A wicked fellow-page, jealous of the favors he enjoyed, resolved to injure him ; thereupon, he suggested to the king that the queen showed a fondness for the page. The unprincipled king easily gave credence to this calumny, so he resolved to do away with the young man. Accordingly, he and the vile calumniator plotted with a neighboring lime-burner, to throw the virtuous page alive into the lime-kiln. When the day appointed had come, Almighty God, who is always jealously watching over his cherished ones, interposed, and as a reward of his obedience and his fidelity in assisting daily at Holy Mass, he escaped the horrible death planned for him. Which death, with all its torments, was meted out to the wicked slanderer. The king justly surprised at the unlooked-for issue of his brutal plot, was filled with remorse, adored the secret judgments of God, and solemnly swore that he would never again listen to any evil insinuations against his virtuous consort.

The painful circumstance under which the saintly queen earned the title of admirable and intrepid conciliator, must now be related. Her son Alfonso, heir to the crown, had formed a conspiracy against his father ; placing himself at the head of a faction of malcontents, he hoped, with their aid, to gain possession of the capital and seize upon the crown. The king being informed of his son's designs, assembled an army, and marched against the rebel, determined to inflict a just punishment upon him for his unseemly conduct. During this time, Elizabeth redoubled her good works, fasts and alms, praying that God would put an end to those fatal dissensions. She sent repeated messages to her son, to warn him of the danger to which he was exposing himself by persisting in his rebellion. But despite these wise counsels and entreaties, the son persevered in his ambitious projects, laid waste the country, and spread ruin and sorrow throughout the kingdom.