

OF A CERTAIN MATRON, WHO DEPLORED
HER SON'S CONVERSION, BUT AFTER-
WARDS BEING HERSELF CONVERTED,
GAVE THANKS TO GOD.

There was a certain matron, rich and worldly, who had an only son whom she loved tenderly, for he was adorned with the gifts of youth and knowledge, and comely manners; who, being inspired by the heavenly spirit, chose rather to serve God in humility, than to enjoy and make merchandise of his paternal goods in this world. Wherefore he withdrew himself from the sight of his friends, and sought a monastery of regulars, to converse with the Lord more in secret, and in greater perfection, by casting aside all this world's hindrances. Which resolution his widowed mother sought diligently, by prayers and lamentations, to make him recall, but all to no purpose.

She went, therefore, away to her own house, cast down with heavy grief, when there fell out in her city an unhappy accident, whereby the son of a certain rich man was struck by another traitorously, so that he died, to their much sorrow. On hearing of this, this matron casting in her mind the circumstances of the case, and turning to her own heart, being taught by others' peril she tempered her own grief, and argued with herself, saying: How well it has come to pass, that thou canst not hear this of thine own son, nor fear for him from another? Does he not serve God in his monastery in safety, who might

have perished at thy side in the world.

Wherefore, from that day, turning towards the goodness of God, she gave great thanks, nor any more mourned for her son as one lost; but rejoiced above measure for his conversion, and loved especially the friars regular, whom she oftentimes received into her house. And this she herself told me at her own table.

The Novice. Gladly do I listen to what you say, and I hope it may do much good to me and many others. It is indeed to be deplored that many parents so inordinately love their children, as rather to bring them up for the world, than for God; that they covet rather to puff them up by riches and honours, than to make them strong in virtue and good conversation.

Alas! that they have no thought of how suddenly death separates children from parents, and that no man, how rich or noble soever he may be, can deliver himself, or any of his friends, from the law of death; and yet we must all appear before the tribunal of strict judgment, each to account for how he has spent his life, and receive, according to his several deserts, the irrevocable sentence,—either eternal glory, or everlasting punishment.

THAT IT IS BETTER TO OBEY GOD,
THAN OUR FRIENDS.

THE SENIOR. Thou hast judged well for thy salvation; for he that hath resolved to serve God, ought to obey