

Aberdeen Journal 9th August 1815.

Henry Dun

Lost in April last, in his passage from Burlington
to St. John's, Henry Dun Esq., formerly surgeon
in 23 Reg. Foot and second son of Mr. Dun
Shawpark, Selkirk.

The Rev. Dr. Lawson.

TO
The Parents, the Sister, and the Brothers,
and other Relatives and Friends,

OF
HENRY DUN, Esq. M. D.
Surgeon in His Britannic Majesty's Service,
THIS

SERMON,

Delivered on occasion of his Death,
AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, PORTSMOUTH,
New Hampshire,
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
On Sunday, May 28, 1815.

Is most respectfully dedicated and presented

BY ONE,
Who had the most perfect regard for the
Deceased,
Who sincerely sympathises with them in the
loss of
One of the most skilful of Physicians,
One of the best of Relatives,
Of one of the worthiest and most amiable of
MEN ;

And who fervently prays,
That God would sanctify to them the afflictive
bereavement they have sustained.

By **CHARLES BURROUGHS,**
Rector of said Church.

SELKIRK :
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PSALM XXXIX. VERSE 4.

Lord, make me to know my end.

FROM the church and from the world we are constantly receiving admonitions respecting the shortness and uncertainty of life. Moralists and divines are ever exhibiting our mortality in the most striking position, and are ever endeavouring to make us sensible of our frailty. The profligate and witty, as well as the grave and exemplary, can moralise upon every casualty, can tell us that life is but a vapour, and can remind us that though to-day is our birth-day, to-morrow may be our funeral. These truths are not only sounded in our ears, but they are frequently brought home to our business and bosoms. Every man is compelled to realize them in the course of his life. Every one, who lives, must be prepared to shed the tears of sorrow over the remains of some dear and valuable friend. Perhaps he will be obliged to follow to the land of rest, those, who were interesting for their youth and virtues, who were dear to him by affinity,



but dearer still by their numerous excellencies. In such cases, most powerful and indeed most awful is the impression, we receive of the vanity of human enjoyments and the instability of human life. Yet notwithstanding these admonitions, how few of us convert them to our moral improvement! How few of us are so wise, as to consider our latter end?—The world goes on, as it has done, averse from seriousness and solemnity, but zealous and ardent in every secular concern. Frivolous youth, presumptuous manhood, avaricious age will still doat upon the pleasures of life. These circumstances only serve to shew that however frequently they have been admonished of their latter end, enough has not been done. A voice must constantly sound in their ears “You are mortal.” A warning voice is yet to be uttered, which shall pierce the heart, which shall awaken them from the security of sin; which shall arouse them from the arms of pleasure, in which they have fallen asleep, which shall recall them from the brink of perdition to the path of immortal glory.

Indeed my brethren, you can never be too much reminded of death, for the consid-

ration of it is the only thing that can give innocence and cheerfulness to our lives, or tranquility to the hour of death. Besides we are constantly prone to forget it. The best too often neglect to be serious, and suffer themselves to be seduced into levity and sin. The enchantments of the world too often stand between us and the grave, bewilder our contemplations and hide from us the view of immortality. Greatly then do we need a monitor to warn us against those enchantments, to check our love of pleasure, and to kindle holy thoughts. Such monitor we should treat with kindness, and hear with attention; considering them as messengers, commissioned by God, to invite us to qualify ourselves for heaven. An invitation of this kind has lately been sent to us, and it is hoped that some one at least will regard it. There may possibly be among us some thoughtless individual—some child of mirth and pleasantry, who has seen many a funeral, and heard many a lecture on mortality; who has never yet looked with any concern towards the grave; into whose mind the idea of death has frequently entered, but, receiving little examination or regard, has passed away without leaving one

moral impression. He pursues industriously his business, he indulges himself in the pleasures of society, he is esteemed and respected, he is guilty of no crime, and yet he is so thoughtless, as not to consider his latter end. If there be such a one here, he is in a dangerous condition. He may have thought himself innocent; but by neglecting the most important consideration of his life, the uncertainty of his existence, the eternal destiny of his soul, he has forfeited the favour of heaven. He has preferred levity and folly to seriousness.—He is a lover of pleasure and not a lover of God. For such an oze then is this monitory language designed.—Oh that you would be wise and consider your latter end. Once, with earnestness direct your view to the grave.—Reflect upon it with that sincerity and seriousness, with which you will probably reflect upon it in your dying moments. Imagine yourself visited with a disease that is incurable, and stretched upon the couch, from which you shall rise no more. Hear the physician, informing you, that it is beyond the power of his art to preserve you another day. Hear the minister informing you, that your soul must in a few hours wing its flight to its al-

mighty source, and be punished or rewarded forever, according to the deeds, for which it has been distinguished. Hear his fervent prayers for your salvation, and his petition, that the blessed Jesus would wash your soul in his redeeming blood, cleanse you from your transgressions, and procure your pardon.—Imagine yourself breathing a last adieu to your beloved friends, and to this world, so fair. Observe the pangs and distress of those that surround you, and fancy yourself receiving on your dying lips the tears and kisses of your affectionate connexions. On such an occasion, ask what would probably be the reflections and suggestions of your mind: and let them make a deep impression, and have a practical influence on your lives.

The consideration of our latter end will convince us of the vanity of all worldly enjoyment and pursuits. Nothing can give satisfaction at this time but the recollection of acts of goodness, and the consciousness of having discharged our duty. Pleasure will be esteemed as dust, too transient, too trifling, too unsatisfactory to be worth our ambition. Life will be divested of all its glittering ornaments,

and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness. The glory of man will be found as the flower of the year, incapable of preventing disease or death. The destinations of rank and fortune will disappear, for death will produce a thorough equality among men. In the grave there shall be no difference between him who swayed the sceptre of royalty, and him who tilled the ground. Alike will they lie down in the earth, and alike will they moulder to dust. Riches will be deemed unsatisfactory in its nature and enjoyments. Wealth will be esteemed a snare, that will expose us to many temptations, that will make us either prodigals or misers, and prevent us from preparing for heaven. Fame will be found but "a fancied life in other's breath," which can neither dispel disease, extenuate our guilt, or commend us to God. Voluptuousness will be detested, for the most frantic voluptuary, knows, that the pleasures, on which he doats, cannot be lasting, and that he must in a few years, perhaps in a few moments, be called from his scenes of dissipation and mirth to appear at the tribunal of infinite justice.—To him, who seriously considers his latter end, these worldly pleasures can afford no more gra-

tification, than the rattle or straw, that diverted his infancy. Nothing will amuse him but religion; nothing will satisfy him, but eternity. Whoever would know, said an eminent moralist, 'how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, may in his mortal meditations weigh them together, and he will discover, that all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, or pants in the bosom of ambition, at once becomes dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority and praise, lose all their influence, when they are considered as riches, which to-morrow shall be bestowed on another; authority, which shall this night expire forever, and praise, which however merited, or however sincere, shall after a few moments be heard no more.'

The consideration of our latter end will teach us to bear with firmness the afflictions of life. The mariner, whose frail bark is almost shattered upon a tempestuous ocean, views a safe harbour, as a most exhilarating spectacle: so man, when tossed upon the strong ocean of life, is soothed with the prospect of "that peaceful silent shore, where tem-

pests never beat, nor billows roar." The remembrance, that we are mortal, should afford us comfort under every distress. If we are *want of* poor, let us not regard those riches, which are encompassed with temptations and which are attended by very little happiness, but be comforted with the assurance that we have a perfect and inexhaustible inheritance in heaven, which we are to possess at death. Are we in the humbler walks of life? Death will soon put us all upon a level. Have we lost any of our beloved friends? The consideration of our latter end will teach us that we cannot be separated long, that only a few days shall part us, that we shall meet again in heaven to part no more. There shall our tears be wiped away, and our sorrows shall cease: there shall the wicked cease from troubling, and there shall the weary find rest.

But the consideration of our latter end will not only teach us to appreciate rightly the good and evil of this perishable country, but will make us more earnest to seek a better, that is, an heavenly one. It will exhibit to our view the immortality of the saints and the joys of heaven, will make us indifferent to the things of this life, and willing to sacrifice our

most valuable earthly comforts, and to bear with pleasure the greatest evils, for the sake of obtaining everlasting happiness in heaven. The love of wealth or honor, and the desire of any temporal gratification, will not be able to get possession of a soul, where the love of God is most predominant, and where eternity is our object. That consideration which weans our affections from the world, will fix them upon heaven, will give them purity and sublimity, and direct them to God. The more we despise the pleasures of the world, and consider our latter end, the more rapid advances shall we make in holiness, and the more deserving shall we be of eternal glory.

The consideration of our latter end will make us better christians; for the more shall we feel the importance of considering how we must live. Were we to die to-morrow, few of us would pass this night in slumber or in mirth; but most of us, and I trust all of us, would be consulting and exercising the best means for obtaining our salvation. We should spend much of our time in prayer, in religious conversation, and intercourse with our Saviour. We should consult his gospel, and practise its precepts; inspect our lives, and

repent of our sins; purify our corrupt affections, cultivate holy thoughts and feelings, and strive earnestly to present our souls, a fit offering to the Almighty. Such is the influence of consideration in reforming our lives. Perhaps you may not live till to-morrow. This night your soul may be required of you; and then what may be its destiny? Learn then in season to be wise and to consider your end.

This consideration will render your death calm and happy. The more you think upon your dissolution, the more will you strip death of every thing that is alarming, and convert that king of terror into a familiar and agreeable guest. You will not be surprised, when he approaches, but will welcome him, as a faithful friend, who will release you from your state of pain and trial to give you the everlasting rewards of virtue. As we anticipate every thing necessary to be done at his appearance, we receive him with open arms, for our loins are girt and our lamps are trimmed and burning. We rejoice at his approach, for we are impatient for immortal glory and a knowledge of the abode and beatific presence of Deity.— Now can the christian look back with joy, and forward with hope. He sees the grave, open-

ing to receive his mortal remains, but beholds the sunshine of everlasting life beyond the abyss of death, irradiating the regions of eternity. He deposits in the tomb only the inferior part of himself, the seat of debility, of suffering and of disease; but the spirit, freed from this incumbrance, hails the hour of its deliverance, and passes into a state of imperishable glory.

Oh, that these thoughts might have the most solemn influence upon your minds, and warn you to prepare for that eternity, on whose verge you may now be standing. Should these admonitions be too feeble to reach you, FACTS, which speak a more powerful language, must touch your hearts. We all know that life is a vapour, but when we hear of its being instantly extinguished in the midst of its brightest splendour, we feel it deeply, and tremble at the feeble tenure, by which we hold existence. We have lately had a most melancholy instance of the uncertainty of life, and of the vanity of all human pursuits, we have seen the highest hopes destroyed, and the fairest prospects blasted, by an instantaneous and unforeseen calamity. We have seen death, snatching for his prey, one of the most noble

and interesting of men, who bore about him the strongest promise of many glorious and useful years. We have seen the fond hopes of parents, of friends, of the friends of science, of learning and of virtue, in one sad moment utterly ruined. Where then is the value of life, of health, of fame, of worldly honours? What baseless visions are human hopes and joys! Transient, delusive, and evanescent are they all!

The sad and mysterious destiny, which has suddenly removed from the world, the excellent stranger, who lately passed so much time in this town, has left upon the minds of all, who knew him, and of all, who ever heard the praise of his worth, the most solemn and gloomy impression. It would seem almost unnecessary to demand any other proof of the esteem, in which he was held, then what arises from the universal sorrow, which his death has occasioned. He was indeed a good man; and, while he was here, delighted in doing good.—We deem it a blessing, that we enjoyed his society—very rarely were ever so much benevolence and tenderness united in one man, as in him. His striking and noble figure excited our interest and commanded our

respect; his numerous and generous acts of kindness awakened our love; his sincere, unaffected and perfect politeness kindled our admiration. In his conversation, there was an intelligence, a vivacity and a fluency, that ever interested and charmed us. He lived not for himself, but seemed absorbed in the happiness of his fellow men. All, who saw him, were immediately struck with these prominent traits of excellence in his character.—Notongue has presumed to throw the slightest aspersion upon him. He was a man of the strictest principles, of the highest and most correct sense of honour, and of unexceptionable morals. Instead of cavilling or sneering at our country and its institutions, he always spoke of them with respect and praise. His good sense and prudence were too great, and his feelings too amiable, ever to suffer him to indulge in any severe political reflections against our government or our rulers. After he had left this town, he spoke of the people of this place, and of the attentions, he received here, with tears of gratitude. Indeed he was so generally delighted with the character of the people of this country, that he was desirous of taking up his residence among us. This was a most decisive proof of his regard, as his rank

in the army was very high and respectable as he was expecting promotion, and as he had distinguished and influential friends at home. With the greatest reluctance he parted from us. Our imaginations followed him on his journey, and we were anticipating the joyous news, when he should have again touched his native soil, and have enjoyed the embraces of kind relatives. But how different were the views of PROVIDENCE! In the midst of health, and fame, and joy, with the most exhilarating prospects in view,—a BREATH OF WIND closes his career of usefulness, of hope, and of life. Death met him, where he could have been least expected. It would have soothed us to have performed his funeral rites, to have paid his remains some respect; but even this Providence denied us.—Thanks be to those kind strangers, who followed the body of that excellent man to the grave, and who interred him with every respectful solemnity. How sad an instance is this of the instability of every thing human! My friends, pardon my enthusiasm, but this is all the respect, we can pay to the memory of our departed friend. It would be injustice to refuse this little tribute of kindness to a worthy and unfortunate stranger; to one, who often worshipped in this

house; to one, with whose friendship I was honored. Your kindness shall never be forgotten. At the day of judgment, he shall say, 'I was a stranger and you took me in!' we in our turn can reply,—'we were sick and you visited us!'—You have heard, my friends, how much he was esteemed; would you be esteemed as much, endeavour to copy the virtues in which he excelled; but particularly his sweetness of temper, goodness of heart and uprightness of life.

Be improved. This lesson teaches us much good. It was necessary for us to learn that our affections are not to be fixed here: and that spirit leaves not its frail tenement in vain, which carries with it our thoughts and affections to the abodes of God. These sad dispensations may seem mysterious, but we may nevertheless be assured, they are wise and good. It is not for us to penetrate into the counsels of Deity. Our duty is to tremble and adore. The more mysteriously God moves, the better opportunity we have of giving proof of our faith in his character and of our resignation to his will. Learn too what should be the subject of your concern. Though surrounded with wealth—though possessing

extensive learning and fame—though scenes of glory decorate your prospect of the future, the slightest accident may the next moment hurry you before your maker. Prepare then to meet your Judge. Cultivate that seriousness of heart, that religious knowledge and those habits of virtue, which shall confer on you greater happiness, than this world can bestow, and render you acceptable hereafter to that Saviour, who died for you. When you see too how sadly the fairest prospects are sometimes blasted, never suffer yourself to be too sanguine in your hopes. Look with calmness and moderation on the things of this life. Exercise your hopes upon things above; upon the favor of God and the joys of immortality. Wait a little longer and time shall come to an end, and all things shall be well. What is now mysterious shall then be made clear; what now seems strange and unjust, shall then bear the most conspicuous marks of wisdom: What now we experience as sorrows shall be converted into sources of joy; the friends, whose departure from us we now lament, shall then, through the merits of Jesus, be united with us in never ending felicity.

THE END.

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