

breath of life; and man became a living soul."

"Naked as from the earth we came,  
And enter'd life at first;  
Naked we to the earth return,  
And mix with kindred dust."

Then the Apostle reminds us of the *uncertainty of its tenure*! "The earthly house of this tabernacle." A tabernacle or tent is a temporary dwelling, erected for shelter, when the stay is expected to be so short that a more substantial edifice would be too costly. A roof without a foundation, a few posts, a few cords, a few strips of canvas, it is quickly set up, quickly taken down again, easily torn or destroyed. The companion of travellers and soldiers, it speaks of a journey that may suddenly terminate, of a battle that must constantly be fought. Such is life to the Christian. Marching forward each day from the cradle to the grave, leaving old scenes, old companions, behind him, he has to fight at each step he advances. Sweeping back the hosts of hell, "fighting the good fight," he looks for the day when, the warfare finished, the tent shall be finally struck, and he shall pass into the "building of God, eternal in the heavens." "Yea, I think it meet, so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

*This house is decaying.* The term "dissolve" means properly to disunite the parts of anything. As applied to a building, it denotes throwing down or destroying. When used, as here, in reference to the body, it signifies the dissolution of the body in the grave. The human frame gradually grows old, decomposes, and returns to earth. Seeing that the body is so perfect, why is it so frail? Doubtless it