

THE GUIDING PILLAR.

The exodus was only the beginning
 Of countless tender mercies by the way;
 God went before His people He had chosen,
 With fire by night and with a cloud by day.

He took it not away, that cloudy pillar,
 Altho' they oft provoked Him so to do,
 Ungrateful tho' they were for all His kindness,
 The pillar led them *all* their journey through.

It must have looked so *cool* and so *refreshing*—
 That *cloudy* pillar in the *heat of day*,
 And then at night, its shadows no more needed,
 Became a fire to light them on the way.

Just what they needed, wonderfully fitted
 To meet the varying wants of every hour;
 But oh, how little did they prize the token
 Of His unerring wisdom, love, and power!

God's dealings often crossed their inclinations—
 The pillar went too fast or went too slow;
 It stayed too long to suit their restless temper,
 Or when they wished to stay, it bid them go.

It kept them so uncertain of the future!
 It wrote "IF GOD PERMIT," on every plan;
 It seemed to mock the wisdom of the wisest,
 And make a child of every full-grown man.