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THE PILLAR OF FIRE AND CLOUD.

IN writing to the church at Corinth, Paul says, 1st Epistle, x. 1: "I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud." Why was he so concerned that they should be acquainted with this object? Was it not because it was typical of Him with whom they had to do—the Saviour? That the reason of his concern involved this fact, would not have been very dubious apart from the following connexion. But that connexion is decisive. It expressly discusses Israel's typical relation to the gospel church—specifies other remarkable objects of the ancient dispensation as being types of Christ (3 and 4 v.)—and adduces several facts in the history of the Hebrews repeatedly, by affirming that they were typical (6 and 11 v. Greek.) We need nothing more satisfactory to justify our considering the cloud as adumbrating Him who was the "body" or substance of that economy which was "a shadow of good things to come."

But in which of his offices did it prefigure Him? In the office ascribed to Him in Matt. xi. 27; xxviii. 18; Eph. i. 22; Rev. v., and various other scriptures; that is, as the *administrator of providence*. This view is not explicitly exhibited in any text, but is thought to be abundantly established by the nature of the symbol itself, and by the exact

and edifying correspondence obviously perceptible between it and the description which the word affords of our Lord's providential government. The most important points of this analogy relate to the following heads:

I. The *appearances* which the pillar assumed.

Sometimes it was *bright*—it was a pillar of *fire*; sometimes it was *dark*—it was a pillar of *cloud*. But in either case the aspect which it assumed was *suitable* to Israel's case; for it was bright only at night when they needed its cheering light, and dark only by day when they required its refreshing shade, "He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light in the night."

Such too are the aspects which the Saviour's providential superintendence of Israel after the spirit wears.

It is often *bright*. It pours forth its soft splendour of indulgence and prosperity, nor permits a single shadow to obscure its radiant form. It succeeds our schemes, fulfils our expectation, and grants us all our reasonable desire. Its whole movements are so favorable that it is easy to perceive how they accord with our Lord's paternal love and wisdom; how they verify the gracious promises which he has given us, and how they all conduce to the accomplishment of the purposes of mercy which he as-