

THE "FOUNTAIN" AND THE "OIL."

"In one of my early journeys in South Africa we came to a heathen village on the banks of the Orange River. We had travelled far, and were hungry, thirsty, and tired. For fear of lions, we thought it best to go into the village and tarry for the night, rather than go on our journey; but the people seeing us, roughly bade us to stop at a distance. We asked for water, but they would give us none. I offered the three or four buttons still left on my jacket for a little milk; this also was refused, and we had the prospect of another hungry night at a distance from the water, though within sight of the river. Our lot looked hard, especially when, in addition to these rebuffs, the manners of the villagers aroused our suspicions.

"When the twilight came on, a woman drew near from the height beyond which the village lay. She carried on her head a bundle of wood, and had a vessel of milk in her hand. Without speaking, she handed us the milk, laid down the wood, and went away. Soon she came back with a cooking-vessel on her head, a leg of mutton in one hand, and water in the other. She then kindled a fire and put on the meat. We asked her again and again who she was. She said not a word until we begged to know why she showed this unlooked-for kindness towards strangers. A tear stole down her black cheek as she answered, 'I love Him whose servant you are, and surely it is my duty to give you a cup of cold water in His name. My heart is full, therefore I cannot speak the joy I feel to see you in this out-of-the-world place.'

"On learning a little of her history, and finding she was a Christian, a solitary light burning in a dark place, I asked her how she kept up the life of God in her soul without Christian society. She drew from her bosom a copy of a Dutch New Testament, which she received from a missionary while at his school many years since, before her relations took her away to this distant region.

"'This,' she said, 'is the *fountain* whence I drink; this is the *oil* which makes my lamp burn.' I looked on the precious volume, and you may conceive how we felt when we met with this disciple, and mingled together our sympathies and prayers at the throne of our heavenly Father."

This story was told by a great and good missionary, the Rev. Robert Moffat. How it should cheer and encourage all who are engaged in sending the gospel to the heathen,