

# SEQUEL TO "DEBT:"

A WORD TO CHRISTIANS.



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## SEQUEL TO "DEBT."

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"**I** HAVE read your little book on debt, and, to be frank with you, I think it's too severe; you don't make any difference between folks that have plenty to do with, and the like of me."

"Does God's Word make any difference?"

"No, I don't say it does; but you know fine there's a great difference between me and Mrs. Logan. What you said about her was true enough; I could tell you far worse things about her extravagance than you would think of, but it would do no good bringing them up now, and, besides, I don't feel quite right myself."

"What's wrong?"

"Well, you know the wages my man gets; there's Robert at farm service; I have only got eight shillings from him for three months; then Tom and Mary are at the school; and there's my old mother-in-law I've to keep and attend to. Now, it takes every penny just now to pay our way, and often it's not very easy."

"Yes, yes, I know all that well enough; with the small wage Andrew has, I often wonder how you manage so well; I hope you have not been running into debt?"

"No, sir, I am not owing anything just now; but I have been in debt since I was converted. But what I was going to say was this: it takes every penny to do just now; and if Andrew was laid up for a week or two, there would be nothing for it but take on where I could get it; we could not starve."

"Oh, Mrs. Currie; what about God? you don't seem to take Him into your calculations at all; can you trust the Lord with your soul, and not with your body?"

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"Ah, sir, it's easy for you to speak like that; but I'll tell you plainly how I was placed when Andrew was on short time. I don't like to be using the Lord's name about these things; but He only knows how I was tried at that time. Now, I'll tell you, for I want your advice, for I may be placed the same way again, and I would like to do what's right. Well, after he had been getting ten shillings a week for seven weeks, my mother-in-law was about dead for want; you know she needs something extra; and none of us were half fed. Well, I prayed about it night and morning; but no help came, so I had just to go to Mr. Dickson, and tell him how I was placed, and promised to pay up as soon as I could, so he gave me what I wanted till I was in a pound with him."

"Now, stop, Mrs. Currie, you could go and tell the unsaved grocer that you were ill off; but you could not let the assembly know of it; you know there is a collection every Lord's-day for saints in need. Do you think that was showing the world

that the Lord's children loved one another?"

"Well, sir, I did think on letting you know before I went to Mr. Dickson; but if you began to give to everybody that told you they were in need, it would ruin you."

"Quite true; I daresay there are those who, if they could get for the asking, would never seek to work a stroke; but any of us to whom God has given means are responsible to Him as to who we give help to. We must see that we do not go against 2 Thess. iii. 10, and keep up lazy folks who will not work; we are to be *good* stewards of God's gifts (1 Pet. iv. 10). But look at Elijah at Zarephath; if he had not told his need to *the one appointed of God* to keep him, he might have starved" (2 Kings xvii. 10, 11).

"Well, that's just what we would have come to if I had not gone to Dickson?"

"Never! I don't believe it. The Lord let you starve! Don't tell me that. I could tell you some cases where Christians were worse off than you, and would not

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go in debt, but looked to the Lord, and got their needs supplied in a way they never dreamed of. There's a man you know in D——; well, one night they had not a crust in the house; he did not go and take on, but went where every child should go, to his Father. While he was praying, some one opened the door and put down a bag of potatoes, and went off; he does not know to this day who did it; but he knew who to thank for them. Some would not be content with "only potatoes;" he was, and his family too; and he got something better afterwards. You are looking very sober; I suppose you think the Lord would not do as much for you. Look here, 'my God shall supply *all* your *need*' (Phil. iv. 19). Happy man of faith. Then, 'How shall He not with Him freely give us all things' (Rom. viii. 32). That's better than "taking on" at Dickson's. What a God we have; how it pleases Him when we with child-like confidence trust everything to Him. Now, I must go; but you read Matt. vi. 24 to end of chapter."

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"Yes, sir, I will read all these verses again. I believe I should not have gone to Mr. Dickson, but I did not see what else I could do; but, of course, God could have supplied all my need, if I had only faith to trust Him."

Of course He could, and would; but how sad when we lean on a broken reed, rather than on the living God."

"You told me Mrs. Logan was a covetous woman, and should be\* put out of the assembly. Would you have called me a covetous woman when I was in debt, and put me out for it?"

"Of course I can neither take in nor put out; that must be the action of the assembly; but I could not have said you were a covetous person; you were ill off, and could not help it; you went in debt for the necessaries of life; Mrs. Logan should never have been ill off; she went in debt for luxuries, just to gratify her lusts; a covetous woman; an idolater,

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\* Mrs. L—— has been put out. We trust she is a Christian. Pray for her restoration.

whose God was her belly. Although debt is unscriptural in any case, it cannot always be dealt with in the same way. Have faith in God, Mrs. Currie. He never gives you a command you cannot obey ; you may be sorely tried, but He knows how much you can stand, and will not try beyond what you are able to bear. Read the verses in Matt. vi. Good-bye."

