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*"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."—Psalm 137, 4-5.*

### TAKING ACCOUNT OF STOCK.

REV. MR. KENDIG'S SECOND SERMON ON  
YOUNG MEN.

#### "WHAT SAYEST THOU OF THYSELF."

The text was taken from John 1. 22. "What sayest thou of thyself?" The subject was "Taking account of stock." This was the question put by the captious Pharisees to John, and his answer evinces the rare virtues of frankness and courage. To resent an insult, or rush into battle under the inspiration of wrong or martial music, is a courage of which cowards are capable. To enter the prize ring or fight a duel requires just such courage as the bovine or bull dog is capable. But to see a wrong and expose it, a fashionable sin and withstand it, a personal weakness and overcome it, a conscious wrong and confess and abandon it, a temptation and resist it, requires a frankness and courage of which an intelligent moral being only is capable. Examine your own self-hood, and ascertain the quality and quantity of your stock in trade.

Are you willing to do this? Dare you take account of your own stock? There are two, with whom we should be on terms of most familiar intimacy—myself and God. Yet with no two are we less acquainted. Self is a necessary companion, and I should be frank and brave with myself. It is easy to take account of other's stock, to see them in all lights, and at all angles, except the true one, for this feeds malevolence, gratifies jeal-

ousy, and is the seasoning of two many conversations. God complains, "My people do not consider." We are afraid of solitude and solitary reflection. To be shut up with self would be to some of you the worst of hells. Brave in company, we are cowards when alone. How many years since you have taken account of stock—ten, fifteen or forty? Few will dare open the books, look over the stock, and make an honest invoice to-night. The nearer a man is to conscious bankruptcy, the greater the desire to cover up. It is the childish game of whistling to keep the courage up; to throw the cloak of respectable externalism over a heart filled with corruption will not purify it; any more than to hide a cancer will prevent its eating out the life. This game of hide-and seek you play with yourself is a most dangerous one. To study myself, take an account of stock, is the first step toward solvency and assured rightness. Let me introduce you to yourself, take an account of assets and liability, hold a council with your creditors, and see if you can meet the claims entailed upon you, by self-hood, human brotherhood, and the divine father above. Are you willing to know yourself?

Have you humility to confess your wrongs? If unwilling to hunt for a wrong in ourselves, still more unwilling are we to confess it. The sin of the garden did not die out with the garden, for many still use the fig-leaf apron. How often we hear, "I'll never confess; I'll die first!" Why? Because confession argues weakness, ignorance or wick-