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"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning."—Psalm cxxxvii. 5.

THE ESSENTIAL CHRIST

OMNIPRESENT IN CONSCIENCE

BY JOSEPH COOK.

I hold that a soul may attain final permanence of character without a knowledge of the historic Christ. If that is true, the assertion that God never allows souls to attain final permanence of character without a knowledge of the historic Christ must drop to the ground. What does God do? He allows men who do despite to the Holy Spirit to drop into dissimilarity of feeling with God. I believe that in the last age of the universe the kingdom of redemption shall be as an ocean of light, and that the kingdom of the lost shall be only a speck of darkness in the midst of it. Let us be in earnest. Let us be clear. Let us follow what is indisputably true. Is or is not the gate that leads to similarity of feeling with God narrow? Is not the way that leads from a life of sin and guilt strait? Save yourselves from the present untoward generation. Even so was the generation in which our Lord appeared. I have seen around this globe characters attaining to final permanence, crystallizing into the love of what God loves and the hate of what God hates, without the knowledge of the historic Christ. How can I justify this? Because of a wide Christology. God is one; and, if God be in the conscience, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all in the conscience, and that is what I call the essential Christ; and Christology is not broad enough unless you take in this: Now, when a soul in paganism experiences re-

generation in dealing with the Holy Ghost, the still, small voice gives it peace. That soul knows nothing of the atonement, although the arms of God are underneath it. It is preposterous, it is unfair, it is unchristian to say that salvation of this sort is magic; it is salvation through regeneration, and this is the sound doctrine of the establishment in England; and to this doctrine the English pet heresies of conditional immortality are opposed; and with this doctrine I would oppose the spread of the American heresy of future probation. All scholarly commentators maintain that there is a sense in which we have a right to assert that the Son is the Holy Spirit. It is significant that our Lord was often called the Spirit, and the Spirit of God, by the early Christian writers. Cyprian and Irenæus said: "He is the Holy Spirit." Ignatius said: "Christ is the Spirit."

So teach our own Scriptures, in a passage to which the Revised Version restores its original overawing force: "The Lord is the Spirit. We all with unveiled face, reflecting, as a mirror, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." (II Cor., iii, 17, 18).

Lange, writing on the same words, affirms that, "We find here such an identification of Christ and the Holy Spirit that the Lord, to whom the heart turns, is in no practical respect different from the Holy Spirit received in communion. Christ is virtually the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is His Spirit."

Whatever has been done by the Holy