

THE IDEA OF THE CHURCH.

The latter theory we believe to be Biblical and Evangelical—that which is set forth in the Divine Word, and which embodies the spirit and life of the Evangel of Jesus Christ. It may also be called the Reformed, because it was that idea of the Church which the Reformation vindicated and embodied, in opposition to the conception and doctrine of the unreformed Church.

The Broad Church view is not a distinct theory. It must either sink to a barren humanitarianism, so far as it tends to identify the Church with the world ; or, escaping that tendency, it will continue to oscillate vaguely and indefinitely between the only two possible positive systems, according as its chief emphasis is laid upon the ethical and intellectual, or upon the external, institutional, and political side of Christianity.

THE ESSE AND THE BENE ESSE.

The sacerdotal theory of the Church makes its *esse*, its essential being, to lie in that which constitutes its visibility ; the evangelical in that which constitutes its invisibility. All admit and maintain that there is but one Church, out of which there is no salvation. Both also admit that to this one Church belong, at least in some sense, both visibility and invisibility. These are both attributes of the one Church, not two Churches. All the Protestant confessions maintain that the Church has visibility—that it manifests its unseen fellowship by means of visible ordinances. And, on the other hand, even Roman Catholic theologians admit that, in some sense at least, the Church possesses or contains within it what is invisible and spiritual.

But herein lies the vital and distinctive difference between the two. The evangelical doctrine of the Church makes what is visible in the Church the consequent and result of the invisible—the outcome of the unseen life. The sacerdotal theory reverses this order, and makes what is visible, the external order and organization of the Church,