

THE DIFFERENCE.

BY REV. DR. CAERMAN.

IN Rome, Sunday, May 20th, I attended two religious services; the earlier, in the world-renowned St. Peter's, the latter, 11 a.m., in the Wesleyan Chapel—church I would say—"of the Imperial, Apostolic, "Eternal City."

We crossed the Tiber, opposite the castle of St. Angelo, Hadrian's Tomb, from the northern section of the Italian capital, and proceeded by a short direct street to the vast cathedral. At the head of the street, calling a halt, stopping all traffic, and everything else for that matter, the front of the building is in full view across a spacious, stone-paved space or court, which is nearly enclosed upon the sides by probably the grandest amphitheatrical colonnade upon the earth. The whole scene is an architectural triumph, and gives the thought of structural sublimity,

of the two hundred and eighty-four columns, making the circuit about as you approach the cathedral itself.

Passing up the great stone staircases, terracing your way by ample platforms, you enter the vast portico whose length is the breadth of the cathedral, which is entered by five doors, and throughout its entire extent is rich in marbles, gilding and stuccoes. Equestrian statues of Constantine and Charlemagne are here among the innumerable kindred incitements to devotion. We enter the cathedral reverently, for the venerable and the aesthetic are upon us. Here we are in an imposing edifice, whose erection was the care and labor of several Popes and the best architects of the time, Michael Angelo among them, which covers about five acres of ground, was one hundred and seventy-six years in building, and cost over fifty million dollars. Nave and transept, dome and arch, pillar and column, monument,

has its windows labeled for peoples of many tongues. A large congregation in one of the chapels was listening to the Mass, not in a living tongue, the vernacular of any of the people, but in a dead language that has only the glory of antiquity. There was no instruction, no preaching of the Word according to the commandment. The vast multitudes were wandering and gazing about, and a worshipper seemed easily transformed into a wanderer. The sensations was potent, palpable; the spiritual seemed to have few and weak pulsations. In my own poor worship in that marvellous historic place, my soul cried out earnestly to God for the descent of the Holy Spirit, for the enlightenment of the mind with truth divine, for the overthrow of every wrong, and false, and evil system, and the speedy bringing in of the kingdom of light, righteousness and peace.

Now we go back over the Tiber to the



ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL, ROME.

though I confess myself disappointed at the external appearance of the edifice itself. It seemed to me proportionately low, and not majestic enough for the environments. Above it soars the Vatican, the Papal palace and museum, and sweeping out from the sides are the enormous colonnades already spoken of; quadruple rows of scores of gigantic marble columns in circuit and under entablature, affording long alleys of pavement amid the columns ranged in line as you approach the central entrance from either side. The entire scene, and not any one part thereof, must be encompassed in the view to produce the impression designed by the successive architects upon the mind. So looked upon, we have an impressive unity and quiet majesty. An Egyptian obelisk, one of several plundered by old Rome from older Egypt, stands in the centre of the court, and ninety-six colossal statues crown the entablature of the four rows

statue, painting and inscription, gilding and mosaic, marble pavement and vaulted ceiling elaborately designed and richly decorated, demonstrate that art has here laid her richest offering. There is abounding and illimitable glory to the Popes, the Princes, and Mary, the mother of the child Jesus. The imagination is overwhelmed and oppressed by the vastness and profusion.

While we were in St. Peter's, people were crowding up over the square and along the colonnades, and through the spacious vestibule by hundreds and by thousands. Into the cathedral they pressed, pilgrims and tourists, priests and people, worshippers and visitors. And who can or will deny that there were devout and acceptable worshippers? God is the judge of men, and looketh upon the heart. A few people were making the circuit of the chapels, crucifixes and altars. A few were at the confessional, which in its many nooks

meeting-place of the Wesleyans. Here, crowded in among the habitations and business places of the people on a busy thoroughfare, is a tasteful edifice and quiet place of worship. There is no piazza, no colonnade, no obelisk or fountain, no statues to scores of Popes, no sculpture, no scarlet, no mass chants, by priests, no trooping monks and nuns of countless orders, no gazing crowds in stupid wonder before the work of man and the triumph of his art. We found no pomp or parade, but the minister preaching and praying in the vernacular, and we found a congregation of about fifty people attentively listening to the Word. Look on this picture and then on that, and then think of the Christianity of Apostolic times before the Cæsars made it a political stepping-stone, and the Popes seized the temporal sceptre and the imperial purple. Think of the Christians of the Catacombs, and then of the pomp, pride and ceremony now