

not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." And Peter, who received his name from the firmness of his faith, says in his Epistle, "The presbyters who are among you, I exhort, who am also a presbyter, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly." These passages we have brought forward to show, that, with the ancients, presbyters were the same as bishops. But, that the roots of dissension might be plucked up, a usage gradually took place, that the chief care should devolve upon one. Therefore, as the presbyters know that it is by the custom of the church that they are to be subject to them who are placed over them; so let the bishops know that they are above presbyters rather by custom than by divine appointment, and that the church ought to be ruled in common." There can be no doubt, but Jerome speaks the language of the ancients on this matter. In conformity then with this view of this custom of the church, the M. E. Church has adopted a system of general superintendency, founded not on the divine right of an order, but on the human right of church appointment to an office, and in conformity with the practice of the early church, as given us by the fathers, and not inconsistent with the teachings of Scripture, but sanctioned by them. The only means of securing uniformity in the administration of the rules of the church, is by the employment of some general executive officer, who shall have the general oversight of the church. To meet this constitutional necessity, which not only existed anciently, but exists now, the M. E. Church has adopted the above superintendency in the form of what she understands to be a Scriptural Episcopacy. It is our opinion, that most of the opposition which has been shown to this mode of managing the affairs of the church, is owing to a misapprehension of the peculiarities of the office of bishop as it exists among us. In