

my life for thine. Stay ; believe Christ hath sent me.' Hearing this, he at first stopped with downcast looks. Then threw away his arms ; then trembling, lamented bitterly, and embracing the old man as he came up, attempted to plead for himself with his lamentations, as much as he was able ; as if baptized a second time with his own tears, and only concealing his right hand. But the apostle pledging himself, and solemnly assuring him, that he had found pardon for him in his prayers at the hands of Christ, praying, on his bended knees, and kissing his right hand as cleansed from all iniquity, conducted him back again to the church. Then supplicating with frequent prayers, contending with constant fastings, and softening down his mind with various consolatory declarations, he did not leave him as it is said, until he had restored him to the church. Affording a powerful example of true repentance, and a great evidence of a regeneration, a trophy of a visible resurrection."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The order of the Gospels.

THESE extracts from Clement may here suffice, both for the sake of the history and the benefit of the readers. Let us now also show the undisputed writings of the same apostle. And of these his gospel, so well known in the churches throughout the world, must first of all be acknowledged as genuine. That it is, however, with good reason, placed the fourth in order by the ancients, may be made evident in the following manner. Those inspired and truly pious men, the apostles of our Saviour, as they were most pure in their life, and adorned with every kind of virtue in their minds, but common in their language, relying upon the divine and wonderful energy granted them, they neither knew how, nor attempted to propound the doctrines of their master, with the art and refinement of composition. But employing only the demonstration of the divine Spirit, working with them, and the wonder-working power of Christ, displayed through

them, they proclaimed the knowledge of the kingdom of heaven throughout the world. They bestowed but little care upon the study of style, and this they did, because they were aided by a co-operation greater than that of men. Paul, indeed, who was the most able of all in the preparations of style, and who was most powerful in sentiments, committed nothing more to writing than a few very short epistles. And this too, although he had innumerable mysterious matters that he might have communicated, as he had attained even to the view of the third heavens, had been taken up to the very paradise of God, and had been honoured to hear the unutterable words there. The other followers of our Lord were also not ignorant of such things, as the twelve apostles, and the seventy, together with many others; yet of all the disciples, Matthew and John are the only ones that have left us recorded comments, and even they, tradition says, undertook it from necessity. Matthew also having first proclaimed the gospel in Hebrew, when on the point of going also to other nations, committed it to writing in his native tongue, and thus supplied the want of his presence to them, by his writings. But after Mark and Luke had already published their gospels, they say, that John, who during all this time was proclaiming the gospel without writing, at length proceeded to write it on the following occasion. The three gospels previously written, having been distributed among all, and also handed to him, they say that he admitted them, giving his testimony to their truth; but that there was only wanting in the narrative the account of the things done by Christ, among the first of his deeds, and at the commencement of the gospel. And this was the truth. For it is evident that the other three evangelists only wrote the deeds of our Lord for one year after the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and intimated this in the very beginning of their history. For after the fasting of forty days, and the consequent temptation, Matthew indeed specifies the time of his history, in these words: "But hearing that John was delivered up, he returned from Judea into Galilee." Mark in like manner writes: "But after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee?" And Luke, before he commenced the deeds of Jesus, in much the same way designates the

time saying, "Herod thus added, yet this wickedness above all he had committed, and that he shut up John in prison." For these reasons the apostle John, it is said, being entreated to undertake it, wrote the account of the time not recorded by the former evangelists, and the deeds done by our Saviour, which they have passed by, (for these were the events that occurred before the imprisonment of John,) and this very fact is intimated by him, when he says, "this beginning of miracles Jesus made;" and then proceeds to make mention of the Baptist, in the midst of our Lord's deeds, as John was at that time "baptising at Ænon near Salim." He plainly also shows this in the words: "John was not yet cast into prison." The apostle, therefore, in his gospel, gives the deeds of Jesus before the Baptist was cast into prison, but the other three evangelists mention the circumstances after that event. One who attends to these circumstances, can no longer entertain the opinion, that the gospels are at variance with each other, as the gospel of John comprehends the first events of Christ, but the others, the history that took place at the latter part of the time. It is probable, therefore, that for these reasons John has passed by in silence the genealogy of our Lord, because it was written by Matthew and Luke, but that he commenced with the doctrine of the divinity, as a part reserved for him, by the divine Spirit, as if for a superior. Let this suffice to be said respecting the gospel of John. The causes that induced Mark to write his, have already been stated. But Luke also in the commencement of his narrative, premises the cause which led him to write, showing that many others, having rashly undertaken to compose a narration of matters that he had already completely ascertained, in order to free us from the uncertain suppositions of others, in his own gospel, he delivered the certain account of those things, that he himself had fully received from his intimacy and stay with Paul, and also, his intercourse with the other apostles. But this may suffice respecting these. At a more proper time we shall endeavour also to state, by a reference to some of the ancient writers, what others have said respecting the sacred books. But besides the gospel of John, his first epistle is acknowledged without dispute, both by those of the

present day, and also by the ancients. The other two epistles, however, are disputed. The opinions respecting the revelation are still greatly divided. But we shall, in due time, give a judgment on this point, also from the testimony of the ancients.

CHAPTER XXV.

The sacred Scriptures acknowledged as genuine, and those that are not.

THIS appears also to be the proper place, to give a summary statement of the books of the New Testament already mentioned. And here, among the first, must be placed the holy quaternion of the gospels; these are followed by "The book of the Acts of the Apostles;" after this must be mentioned the epistles of Paul, which are followed by the acknowledged first Epistle of John, as also the first of Peter, to be admitted in like manner. After these, are to be placed, if proper, the Revelation of John, concerning which we shall offer the different opinions in due time. These, then, are acknowledged as genuine. Among the disputed books, although they are well known and approved by many, is reputed, that called the Epistle of James and Jude. Also the "Second Epistle of Peter," and those called "The Second and Third of John," whether they are of the evangelist or of some other of the same name. Among the spurious must be numbered, both the books called "The Acts of Paul," and that called "Pastor," and "The Revelation of Peter." Beside these, the books called "The Epistle of Barnabas," and what are called "The Institutions of the Apostles." Moreover, as I said before, if it should appear right, "The Revelation of John," which some, as before said, reject, but others rank among the genuine. But there are also some who number among these, the gospel according to the Hebrews, with which those of the Hebrews that have received Christ are particularly delighted. These may be said to be all concerning which there is any dispute. We have, however, necessarily subjoined here a catalogue

of these also, in order to distinguish those that are true, genuine, and well authenticated writings, from those others which are not only not imbodyed in the canon, but likewise disputed, notwithstanding that they are recognized by most ecclesiastical writers. Thus we may have it in our power to know both these books, and those that are adduced by the heretics under the name of the apostles, such, viz., as compose the gospels of Peter, Thomas, and Matthew, and others beside them, or such as contain the Acts of the Apostles, by Andrew, and John, and others, of which no one of those writers in the ecclesiastical succession has condescended to make any mention in his works; and indeed, the character of the style itself is very different from that of the apostles, and the sentiments, and the purport of those things that are advanced in them, deviating as far as possible from sound orthodoxy, evidently proves they are the fictions of heretical men; whence they are to be ranked not only among the spurious writings, but are to be rejected as altogether absurd and impious. Let us now proceed to the continuation of our history.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Menander the impostor.

MENANDER, who succeeded Simon Magus, exhibited himself in his conduct an instrument of diabolical wickedness, not inferior to the former. He also, was a Samaritan, and having made no less progress in his impostures than his master, revelled in still more arrogant pretensions to miracles; saying that he was in truth the Saviour, once sent from the invisible worlds for the salvation of men; teaching also, that no one could overcome even the very angels that formed the heavens in any other way, than by being first initiated into the magic discipline imparted by him, and by the baptism conferred by him for this purpose. Of which, those who were deemed worthy would obtain perpetual immortality in this very life, being no more subject to death, but continuing here the same, would be exempt from old age, and be