ST. JOHN.   
 XVII.   
   
 that they might eat the passover. 29h Pilate then went out   
 unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against   
 this man? 82They answered and said unto him, If he   
 were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him   
   
   
 up unto thee. 814 Then said Pilate unto them, ¥ Take ye   
 Aim, and judge him according to your law. The Jews   
   
 therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any   
   
 h sender, So Pilate. i yender, Pilate therefore said.   
 X render, Take him yourselves.   
   
 prising, that the Jews in the early morning wanting to their proofs, they want to   
 should have been afraid of rendering them- supply by an appeal to their authority ”   
 selves unclean for the Passover,—siuce the 81.] This answer is best regarded   
 Passover could not be kept till i as an ironical reproach founded on their   
 on the next day, and the uncleanness which apparently proud assertion in ver. 30—   
 they dreaded did not, by the law, last till and amounting to this: ‘If you suppose I   
 the next day. For this reason, the passage am to have such implicit confidence in your   
 in John labours under no small exegetic judgment concerning this prisoner as to   
 difficulties, which we cannot altogether take his guilt on your word, take him and   
 solve, from want of accurate knowledge of put him to death (for so “judge ye Him”   
 the customs of the time. Possibly the law must be understood,—see below) according   
 concerning Levitical defilements and purifi- to your law;’ reminding them that the   
 eations had in that age been made more same Roman power which had reserved   
 stringent or otherwise modified ; possibly, capital cases for his jurisdiction, also ex-   
 they called some other meal, besides the pected proper cognizance to be taken of   
 actual Passover, by its name. This last we them, and not that he should be the mere   
 certainly, with our present knowledge of executioner of the Sanhedrim. It is   
 Hebrew antiquities, must assume: for the not lawful for us to put any man to death]   
 law respecting nncleanness will not allow From the time when Archelaus was de-   
 us to interpret this passage of the proper posed (4.D. 6 or 7), and Judea became a   
 Passover on the evening of the 14th of Roman province, it would follow by the   
 Nisan, nor indeed of any evening meal at Roman law that the Jews lost the power   
 all.” The whole depends on this: can of life and death. Josephus tells ns,   
 the words, eat the Passover, mean any that it was not lawful to hold a court   
 thing else besides eating the paschal lamb of judgment in capital cases, without the   
 in the strict sense? This is a question consent of the Procurator. Some have   
 which in our day we have no power of thought that this power was reserved to   
 answering. See the matter further dis- them in religions matters, as of blasphemy   
 cussed in the notes to my Greek Test. and sacrilege; but no proof has been   
 See note on ch. xix. 14. The tendency of adduced of this; the passages commonly   
 what is there said is, to us, not to be alleged in Josephus, and Acts vii. 58, not   
 rash in assuming a discrepancy between applying (see note on Acts). The Talmud   
 the Evangelists, where computatiqns of relates that this had taken place forty   
 time may have been so vague and various. years (or more) before the destruction   
 29.) Though Pilate, having granted of Jerusalem. Biscoe, on the Acts,   
 the service of the band of soldiers to the argues at great length that the Jews   
 Sanhedrim, must have been aware of the had this power; and that the words   
 cireamstauces under which Jesus was here merely mean that they could not   
 brought before him, he demanded a formal put to death on the Sabbath, which, ac-   
 aceusation on which legally to proceed: cording to the usual custom of execnting   
 “dissimulating his own information on the the next day after judgment, would now   
 subject.” 30.] ‘hey do not mention have been the case. But this treatment   
 the charge of blasphemy bronght against of the words is unjustifiable. Can we   
 Him by the Sanhedrim, for fear of the suppose for a moment that this can have   
 entire rejection of their cause, by (allio, been meant, when there is not a word in   
 Acts xviti. 16. The Procurators in such the text to imply it? We may hope that   
 cases had a discretionary power. On what the day for such forced interpretations   
 they did say, Grot. observes, “ What was is fast passing away. Friedlieb gives