

Early in the morning the Council was convened; the Good Friday now had come; there His death was decreed.

At once He was carried to the castle, where, during the tumultuous times of the great Festivals, the Roman Governor was always in residence.

But here arose the difficulty. The Council had decreed the death of Jesus for blasphemy, under the Jewish Law; now, none but the Roman authorities could inflict capital punishment; and Pilate was not willing to degrade the majesty of Roman Law by lending its sanction to carry out what he considered the dictates of local superstition.

Then the enemies of Jesus played upon Pilate's fears; they shifted the grounds of their accusation, and charged Jesus with treason.

"If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

And before the danger of that insinuation—a very real danger when Tiberius was Emperor,—before the danger of that insinuation, Pilate's courage gave way; and, with a feeble protest, he delivered Jesus to