

unapproachable tree meant what he spoke to an inferior being.

"You are the most beautiful of our number," spoke out the modest Violet from among her shading leaves.

"You are, you are," interrupted the forward Jasmine, effectually preventing the Violet from uttering another word; for she was shy, and rarely nerved herself to the effort of speech.

"From this day forth," said the Rose, "I will consider my queenly title as lowered in

your favour. You shall be the floral empress. See," she went on, turning her fragrant head to the other flowers, "does not our sister bear upon her all the insignia of royalty? Behold, she carries her flowers crownwise around her stem. Hail, Empress; hail, Lily Imperial!"

"Hail, hail," exclaimed all the other plants.

"Hail," gravely repeated the Olives.

All was joy and gladness, no shade of jealousy or strife broke on their peace. As



for the Lily, she raised her head yet more proudly heavenwards, expanded her silvery bells more fully, and merely deigned to acknowledge her comrades' compliments by a condescending nod of her central crested leaves.

Late in the afternoon of that day on which the flowers had chosen the silver white lily their empress, our Lord entered the garden. He was weary and sad, and had sought this quiet solitude to commune with His Father,

and seek refreshment for His soul, to renew the daily battle with sin and unbelief. It was long before He paid His wonted attention to the flowers around.

Meantime a whole stream of thoughts coursed through the Lily's head. She was the most beautiful of all the garden's flowers; her sisters had publicly proclaimed her so to-day; she felt very proud and glad. *How* proud and glad, *how* much her vanity was flattered, she would hardly have cared to own. But