

responsive moods. Nannie Mordaunt, on the contrary, looked the same, and felt the same, through the long days and short years of her life. Old Father Time would be merciful to the little pearl stringer, drawing only faint lines with his cunning hand, making her eyes more sweet and winning as their colour faded, and touching her hair with the softest snows.

Some thought such as this passed through Rose's mind as she turned her eyes on her friend. She wondered whether Nannie had ever wept the bitter tears of sorrow and remorse, had ever known the illusion and the reality of love, had ever dared a courageous deed.

"When I'm a man," announced Old Sol, in a loud voice, "I shall live in the place where the chestnuts grow."

"Why, they grow in England, Solly," said his mother.

"Then I don't think we 'preciate England," said Old Sol.

His companions laughed. Olly 'Ooper had taught him the word appreciate.

"I feel there is unconscious wisdom in Old Sol's remark," said Rose, glancing at Nannie. "There are so many things I do not 'preciate."

"For instance?" said Nannie.

"For instance—Mr. Challis."

She coloured a little, smiled, and carefully nicked some more of the chestnuts.

"I am glad you have found it out," observed Nannie.

"Oh, I found it out years ago!" Rose replied.