

AFTER ALL

AH! after all our struggles and our prayers,
 'Tis only Love for which the future cares;
 Labor and Fame are steps along Love's way,
 And Art is but the garment that he wears.

ELSA BARKER.



A FABLE

THERE once lived a girl who was a great theorist. She had theories on housekeeping, diet, education, dress and love, which she took great delight in expounding to her family and friends.

Now, it so happened that, during a sojourn in a distant city, she met a very nice young man who became enamoured of her and whose affection she was inclined to return. But as she had a pet theory concerning engagements, she withheld a definite answer to his entreaties that she become his wife, and said:

"Although I love you, I cannot answer you in the affirmative until your affection for me has undergone a test. From what you have told me of yourself, you have associated but little with girls. How, then, can you be sure that your love for me will endure? Therefore leave me for one month, during which time no communication shall pass between us; associate with other girls as much as possible, and if at the end of that time your heart is still true to me I shall become yours for all time."

The young man protested and pleaded with all the ardor of love, but the theorist remained firm in her decision. Finally the lover bade her a reluctant adieu, and was off to keep the compact.

The weeks went by and the end of the month came. The theorist, who by this time, it must be confessed, had become exceedingly lonesome for the nice young man, attired herself in her most becoming frock and awaited with fluttering heart his coming.

A bounding step was heard on the porch. The theorist sprang to the door. A messenger-boy handed her a telegram. It read:

Test successful. Am engaged. Girl said yes at once. Has no theories.

MORAL—A bird in hand often flies out of the window.

BLANCHE GOODMAN.



FINE feathers make fine bills.

THE MAN ON HORSEBACK

By Elizabeth Duer

MAGGIE MCGINTY was knowledgeable.

Mrs. Flannagan said so, and she ought to know, for she had played stork with all Maggie's nine little brothers and sisters, bringing one after another under her shawl as regularly as the year came round, and never failing to scold as if she had had nothing to do with it.

"Sure, it's a shame to you, so it is, Mrs. McGinty, to be putting more care on that poor child's shoulders, and her only elivin years old!"

By the "poor child" she meant Maggie, who house-mothered at home, while her mother went out scrubbing by the day.

If *knowledgeable* means having the mental and moral equipment that best fits the human drudge to discharge its daily duties, then Maggie was knowledgeable; but she was not knowing. A more simple-minded person of eleven did not exist.

There was a male head to the McGinty family, an Irish giant six feet high, whose trade was that of a Long Island lobster-fisher, and whose inclinations were strongly bibacious. Both trade and inclination were apt to lead his feet away from home in the direction of Clam Bay—its waters and its saloons—and his absences were peculiarly agreeable to his family.

But one September morning that followed a night of convivial joy in Peter Daly's saloon and of crustacean disappointment in his lobster-pots, McGinty came home with a lurch that just hit the open door of his house, and made straight for the family savings-bank in the cracked teapot on the dresser shelf.

Mrs. McGinty, who for reasons best known to herself was not out scrubbing, attempted to remonstrate, and was promptly knocked down, while her better half made off with the spoils. The ten children looked on round-eyed with surprise, but from Maggie to the year-old baby there was not one who durst so much as scream.

Leveler heads than McGinty's have been turned by the sudden acquisition of ill-gotten wealth, and so his subsequent conduct need cause no surprise. He returned to "Pete's," where he treated the company several times over—and himself, by the same token—and went out in the cool of the afternoon to set his lobster-pots; but the waves of Clam Bay kept up such a jiggling that no light-hearted gentleman could maintain his balance in a boat, and McGinty fell overboard head foremost, and they never found so much as his boots, for he was drowned and his body swept out by the tide.

The news was told indiscreetly to Mrs. McGinty, who was taken with paroxysms of grief and called loudly for Mrs. Flannagan, and that goose of a woman, instead of trying to comfort her friend in this new trouble, only added to it by bringing another baby! She did it surreptitiously, too, while Maggie and the other children had just strolled down to the water's edge to watch the company from Pete's dredging the bay for McGinty's body.

When Maggie returned at supper-time and found "number eleven" asleep in the clothes basket, the surprise was in the nature of a shock. She told Mrs. Flannagan plainly that she knew her "momma didn't want