The Ladies of the Round Table.

It is towards the close of a winter's day and they sit grouped around a cheery wood-fire, with its ruddy [flame leaping] and glowing, throwing a flickering light upon their cheeks, and casting strange, fantastic, quivering shadows upon the

floor behind them. One holds an open book upon her lap, and half reads half recites to her compan-

"Far other was the song that once I heard. By this huge oak, sung nearly where we sit; For here we met, some ten or twelve of us, To chase a creature that was current then In these wild woods,—the hart with golden

It was the time when first the question rose About the founding of a Table Round, That was to be for love of God and men, And noble deeds, the flower of all the world, And each incited each to noble deeds."

"How glorious! What splendid fellows Arthur's knights must uave been!" And the mistress of Haughton Towers

the sparkling logs. "Yes, one can love men who died so long ago," sighs Adela Charlton. "I can't-I prefer them living," says

into the fire. ever emulate King Arthur's example, and

court of Ladies of the Round Tablemore appropriate," interposes Rosalind

Grahame. "I shall hope," continues Sybil, disrea future Tennyson may sing."

shall we take?"

A murmur of dissatisfaction greets this announcement, and Sybil resumes:-"Ladies of the Round Table! we are fections upon the opposite sex. Hence-forth we will devote our lives to the resperils of the honeyed accents of mendaci- whoous suitors. We will steal Cupid's arprecept and example, prove to our younger sisters that true happiness consists in abstention from male society. Haughton Towers shall one day be famous to the world as Cærleon-upon-Usk, and the da the deeds of those brave ladies who nobly Go on.

mortal verse to generations yet unborn.' Sybil Haughton, who makes this speech, is a wealthy girl with an eventful history. Haughton Towers, where she and her three friends are assembled, is a fine old grey stone mansion, built half-way up the side of a steep well-wooded hill, in the far north of England. At the bottom of the hill tumbles a turbulent river; behind the hill, swelling high and higher, rise a range of mountains, rich in fantastic outline, and frosted now with fresh-

to a broad stone terrace, whence there is a charming view over a picturesque valley, a valley rich in summer with verdant woods, but chill and grim this winter afternoon with naked rime-encrusted tree-branches.

The road by which the house is approached winds sinuously adown the hillbridge, the home of ivy, ferns, and lichens, and then is lost to sight in an oak copse, over which the blue smoke from the chimneys of the little village rises spirally in the still frosty air.

avowed her determination never to marry. Her three friends she has chosen as sympathetic with herself and with each Rosalind Grahame is the life and soul

of the gathering. She is one of those laughing, merry, lighted-hearted girls whose bright smiles make happiness confair men and the dark. of the gathering. She is one of those tagious. She has had her sorrows, but they have failed to pale her cheek or dim the lustre of her eyes.

and fun than of sad and silent serrows.

Haughton herself, may well look mourn- happiness depends." ful,-she a bride and a widow within half a day. rels with the world, their little disappointments, their little crosses to bear; but

clude three or four favored admirers. to give admission to servants bearing men.

constitution of their society, take their second dark man is, Adela." seats about the Round Table, and talk of Arthur and Sir Lancelot, of the latest acquainted with the cause of each other's the family.

their hair parted down the middle, with think he must be the other dark man." Queen Guinevere.

Guinevere," says Sybil gravely. that name when ____'

her life.

net, and brings from it a fantastically- you just now, says 'For here we met, some till I was about fifteen, a long-legged girl shaped casket, which also she unlocks, ten or twelve of us; and that was the mere in short frocks, with all my affections cenmonds, all unset, many uncut.

back into the velvet-lined box.

"You are in truth the Queen of Dia- suffered, and have lost?" monds," says Adela Charlton. "And what am I?" asks Rosalind, mation.

"The Queen of Hearts," answers Adela in print. A book's a book, although

worthy of the appellation. the designation of Queen of Clubs."

asks. And a delighted chorus answers in and luxurious seats for the repose of the the affirmative.

ton spreads the pack of cards face down- ful life. wards upon the table, first selecting the four queens and distributing them in or der to her companions, reserving her Majesty of Spades for herself. Then she calls upon Sybil to return her card to the pack, which she re-shuffles, and spreads a second time before her, this

There is a far-away, dreamy look in her and my mother died, and my father said, eyes, as if she were in truth a seer into futurity; and she speaks in a musical monotone, as they do who answer ques-

time with their faces exposed after a fash-

tions under the influence of mesmeric "Sybil Haughton," she says, "your early years were strange ones. You loved lays down the book and gazes wistfully at but were separated from him you loved; you were under the influence of a fair woman; your life was crossed by a man

> "Speak of the future," interrupts take of all. My entire existence has been Sybil. "I cannot bear to have the past a chapter of accidents. ecalled. Then Adela studies the cards anew, and

"A message comes from over the sea; it is near at hand; it brings joy and happiness; evil vanishes and good remains; and your heart's desires are realized." A gleam of joy lights Sybil's face for a moment; but then she shakes her head with a sad smile.

"Your fortune-tellers prophesy smooth things," she says wearily; "but you should beware of foretelling impossibili-"I speak what the cards tell me," rejoins Adela, as she takes up the pack, replacing the Queen of Diamonds by the

"Estelle Arundell," she resumes, there is, far away, a soldier who loves you truly. His heart is yours, and though he is so distant, he is still linked to you by bonds which cannot be severed. Even now he is drawing nearer and nearer." save in terms of the deepest respect in Sir Humphrey's presence. w he is drawing nearer and nearer."

"Dear Arthur!" murmurs Estelle, and she turns aside her head. "And now," cries Rosalind, laughing, "now it is my turn, O soothsayer, I begrowing old: we are all over twenty, and have experienced the sorrows and disappointments entailed by bestowing our affections upon the consistence. Hence

cue of all girls whom we may find listening to the vows of perfidious man, and to others, it is hard to determine your life the saving of the too confiding from the aright," she says. "I see a fair man fair to his memory to state that it was

"A fair man!" interrupts Rosalind. else Jack. "His destiny is crossed by a dark man. "Oh, then the fair man is Edgar, and the dark-oh, that must be Laurence.

"There is another dark man, who is ealous of the first." "That's Fred. I can't bear him. don't know, though,-he's awfully handsome. Tell me some more about him."

"The cards are silent," "But you only told me what I know already. "I cannot read your future, it is too inextricably confused. You are surounded by good fortune; yet, in every

nstance there is a bar to your happiness. You love and are beloved. "Yes, yes, I know, but by whom?" But Adela only shakes her head as she gathers the cards together.

"Your own-now for your own!" cries "I cannot tell my own fortune," Adela Charlton answers gravely. Then the others clamour that she

hould at least make the attempt, and slowly and reluctantly she spreads the cards before her for the fourth time, but side, and crosses the river by an old stone she has not laid down the last when, with a nervous movement, she sweeps them together into a heap. "I dare not," she cries, "For a year] have schooled myself to hope against

> painted pasteboard to confirm my fears I She hastily brushes a tear from her cheek, and does not complete her sent-

"And do you really believe the cards "No-yes. How can I say?"

"How superstitious you are!" exclaims Rosalind, who had been wonderfully quiet

"Superstitious! Yes; I have reason to be. Those who have had such experiences as mine cannot fail to attach credence to the supernatural."

says slowly, "for I could not bear ridicule; grey locks; yet his face was scarcely a eyed, but the dimples at the corners of to believe that which is past my power of lips which never parted in a smile. I reher pretty mouth tell rather of roguery explanation, but spare me your laughter, member wondering whether any woman for, as you will learn, upon the truth of could ever have pressed her lips to his in The mistress of the Towers, Sybil that which I am about to relate, my whole love.

poses Sybil. "We are four friends, sisters in misfortune "And lady companions of the tea-table,"

interrupts Rosalind. "We have been drawn towards each vain, and opiniated, believing in nothing other by a community of sorrow," con- more than himself, he had lived in but and Sybil, stern and decided, announces tinues the Queen of Diamonds, with a re- one hope, and that I destroyed at my as the first condition that all male society proving glance at her rival Majesty of birth. is to be religiously eschewed, each one Hearts, "and though we are aware that it This desire of passing the baronetcy to makes a silent reservation in favor of an is the fate of each to be separated (hope- a son of his own was, after all, but an exabsent somebody, Rosalind especially, lessly so far as I am individually concern- pression of spite. The next heir was who, not having yet quite determined on ed) from those we might have loved, I be- Douglas, a distant cousin, poor, handsome her future, makes her exception to in. lieve some reeling of delicacy has pre- proud-spirited, whose father had managed vented any of us from questioning the to offend mine the only time they ever The last gleam of watery light fades other as to the story of her misery. We met, hence Sir Humphrey's desire for a from the winter sky, and the door opens all have cause to agree in condemning direct heir. The death of the man with

lamps and afternoon tea; and then the "Yes; horrid things!" cries Rosalind; difference in his feelings. for he extended four ladies, for the first time since the "but I wish you could tell me who the his animosity to the son whom he had

"And it is only right that we should be never pass into that beggarly branch of lips to narrate the history, which no one ed one of the younger daughters of a

loves of moustaches, and quite too awfully "What do you say, Estelle?" asks looking, and healthy with open air and beautiful gloves and boots? Speak, Sibyl. "You will not be the only one to exercise, ruddy and strong; in fact, a kind remain silent?"

you care to hear a tale, of which the scene and swim, and in tree-climbing there was "No," cries Estelle, "you are Queen of is laid in a society with which you have not my equal in the parish. All the Bales Leather Belting, oak tanned, from liamonds. I remember they gave you little to sinches wide. all my earlier years were passed, I will re- "The Haughton Towers girl" and her

Sybil's suggestion is adopted by accla-"'Tis pleasant sure to see one's name you're to go to him at once."

Queen of Diamonds, as hostess, agrees to

reflected again and again from silvery "Shall I tell you your fortunes?" she wintry landscape, and with soft cushions 1200 HARD BAKE MILK PANS auditors; the Queen of Diamonds, in a low

The Queen of Diamonds.

CHAPTER I.

I began life wrong, for I ought to have ion and arrangement of which she has the been born a boy; and ever since that fatal morning when I came into the world pointing to me, "Take it away!" there has never been a month in my life, and they number over a quarter of a thousand in which I have not felt myself to be an error. In my childhood I invariably said the wrong thing, did the wrong thing; and later in life the wrong man fell in love with me, as a matter of course-or pretended he did, which made him wronger than ever, -and I married the wrong man, which was the biggest mis-

> As long back as I can remember-and sometimes I feel very very old-when I was romping and scampering about the park, did any stranger ask my name, the answer was invariably, "The Haughton Towers girl," instead of Miss Sybil Haughton, or Sir Humphrey Haughton's daughter, as it should have been. There was a sort of feeling in the parish that I had no business in the world at all, and that, so to speak, I had usurped the rights of my brother, who never existed, and was a

oours' and friends. My father had set his heart upon having an heir. He only married late in life and that I believe entirely with the idea dated back to some border ancestor, who had been a little of the knight, and a good deal more of the freeheater deal more of the freebooter and cattlelifter, of whom it was rank heresy to speak

My mother died, as I have mentioned, when I was born; and perhaps partly on that account, but certainly chiefly by reain my father's eyes. The earlies lesson I learnt was to shrink away, run, hide, at his approach. Nurses terrify children

I believe he hated me, but it is only with a passive hate. On those rare occasions when we met he would pass me with rows and break his bow, and, alike by "Is that Edgar? It must be Edgar—or a scowl, or at most a sneering remark at my dishevelled hair or disordered dress,

> recall who taught me to ride or to row, the knowledge must have come to me intuitively, but I did both well,—and a sufficiency of food were all I needed, and they were always at my command. As for dress, in my early years it was the hardest burden I had to bear. New frocks, silk sashes, and befeathered hats did not coincide with a taste for treeclimbing; and as I liked the exercise and hated the finery, the consequence was that little Sally at the lodge gate in her Sunday attire looked far more like a lady than

the ragged, dishevelled, untidy "Haughton Towers girl." that I was a mistake

hope, and were these silly shapes of which I, the daughter of the house, was a

I mocked the fine lady visitors with their grand ways and haughty manners, and laughed at the folly of women bediacan speak the truth?" asks Sybil with ening themselves in the glories of satin and lace to dine at Haughton Towers; but it was bitterness rather than merriment that prompted me to do so. knew that I was nothing, a mere girl, an encumbrance on whose existence my father's guests never bestowed a thought and at the same time I was aware that had I been a boy, heir to the title and estates, should have been petted, pampered, and

spoilt to my heart's content. I can see Sir Humphrey now, as he ooked sitting at the head of his table

"I have a proposition to make," inter- stately urbanity of the old school,—that is, to ladies; to men his tongue was keen as a two-edged sword, he took a grim pleasure in satire, and had reduced the

whom he quarrelled made no manner of never seen, declaring that the title should

To thwart the supposed ambition of cousin Douglas, my father married when saved herself much unhappiness by dying

So much for my parentage. For myrough, brown, well shaped, perhaps good-

of typical milkmaid. "I don't think I care about being Queen "No," answers the Queen of Clubs. "If I could ride bare-backed, I could row the country magnates turned their heads Four is a ridiculous small number for bering old coaches in the shadowy lanes.

> qualified to join us; and as we can hardly I had been for a wild gallop over the those who, like herself, have loved, have ing directions to the groom, a servant came hurriedly to seek me. "Sir Humphrey's asking for you, Miss," he said, "he's in the library, and says

> > (To be continued.)

1881.

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cries Sybil.

her next neighbour, briskly, shaking a shapely little head, and tossing back the golden curls which cluster upon her forhead, as she looks roguishly across at Sybil Haughton, still gazing reflectively "Rosa, you are incorrigible," cries Sybil roused from her reverie; "and should I

"A society of K. C. B.s?" "Silence, mocker! Should I found a "Delicious!" exclaims Estelle Arundell, clapping her hands; "pray do."
"Ladies of the Tea Table would be

garding the interruption, "to gather round me a company whose noble deeds "Let us enrol ourselves at once," cries Estelle, with enthusiasm. "What yows "Eternal enmity to Love!"

enrolled their names as champions of female loneliness shall be chanted in im-

The windows of the mansion open on

The house is a delightful residence, and many there are who would gladly share such a home with its fair owner; but Sybil's sad experiences have given her a distaste for male society, and with the decision of her two and twenty years she has

It is otherwise with Adela Charlton. A great grief is still hanging over her, and though her nature is naturally gay, a dreaded evil weighs upon her spirits and checks her when she would fain echo

"A story! a story!" cries Estelle, clapping her hands. "Tell us all about it." called, with regular features, and a fine forehead decked with well-ordered iron-forehead decked

The other three have their little quarwhen they discuss the rules by which the Round Table sisterhood are to be bound,

scandal in the most highly-spiced society misfortunes. Our Queen of Spades has journal, and Sir Galahad, of the tashions, offered to tell us the story of her life and the weather, and the "Idylls of the love; and I, for my part, will open my well advanced in middle age. He select-"Queen Guinevere," says Rosalind yet has heard in its full detail, of the Scotch peer with an irreproachable pedi-Grahame," what commands has your blight which fell upon my life a twelve- gree and an empty purse, who probably Majesty for your waiting-maids? Are we month since." to scour the world and rescue damsels in "I think," cries Rosalind, "it would be at the expiration of the first year of her distress, not from fiery dragons or unprin- a comfort to me to talk about Edgar, and | wedded life. cipled magicians who hold them in dur- Jack, and Laurance. Yes, and even about ance vile, but from odious creatures with Fred-not that I care for him, but-but I self, in those days of childhood I was wild \$20 in one day.

Diamonds, I remember they gave you little or nothing in common, but in which country folk for twenty miles round knew Then she suddenly stops, calling to late to you the way in which I became pony Beppo, and all had a cheery "good mind that such a recollection is fraught qualified to join the Sisterhood of the day" and a pleasant smile for her; but with pain to her hostess, recalling as it Ladies of the Round Table." does the saddest, bitterest experience of "And yet a further idea," cries Sybil. another way as she galloped by their lum-Sybil rises and unlocks an oaken cabi- our society. Merlin, in the lines I read My free happy outdoor life continued

and reversing it, scatters on the table a foundation of the Order. I propose to tred on my pony, and then it received a little heap of precious stones; mostly dia- open my house to all who are properly sudden check "Are these the very jewels?" cry the advertise in the Times for recruits, sup. moorland; I had been caught in the rain other three, as they pass their slender fin- pose we print our stories, in order that and my dress was draggled and wet; I gers amongst the glittering stones, their any heart-broken damsel reading them had essayed a short cut, and had lost my eyes sparkling as brightly as the gems. | may learn the necessary qualifications for hat and torn my skirt; my hair had fal-"Yes," says Sybil wearily; "it is a year enrolment in our society, and may know len over my shoulders, and altogether I since I have seen them." And presently where to bring her sorrows and her ach- was in the wildest disorder, when, as I was with a careless hand, she sweeps them ing heart, confident of the sympathy of dismounting in the stable yard, and giv-

quickly; and Rosie colors and looks there's nothing in it," quotes Rosalind laughing. "And I," interposes Estelle, "in a life | That very night is appointed for the of which you know nothing, went once by narration of the opening story; and the "Then, if Adela will consent to complete the pack as Queen of Spades, we shall have the four suits; and, as there were gather once more in Sybil's cosy boundoir, once two Kings of Brentford, there shall and with a bright fire dancing and sparkbe now four Queens of Haughton Towers," ling on the hearth, with brilliant lights

Adela takes a pack of cards from a glasses and from polished mirrors, with drawer, and shuffles them mechanically. | warm curtains, close drawn to shut out the The cups are removed, and Adela Charl- voice, commences the story of her event-

I was a mistake from the first.

fraud on my father, his tenants, neigh-

son of my unfortunate sex, I was hateful Adela smiles as she again bends her lead over the pack. with threatened visits from sweeps, policemen, and black bogeys: they frightened me with-my father.

my dishevelled hair or disordered dress, for, truth to tell, I made up for my unfortunate girlhood as far as was possible by imitating the probable habits of the boy I ought to have been; but so long as I did not obtrude myself upon his notice, I had everything in reason I required.

My wants were few: a pony to ride, a boat to scull upon the stream, which ran through the grounds—I can't in the least recall who taught me to ride or to row.

But even in those days of liberty I felt My father from time to time received company, and ensconced in the branches of a favourite yew-tree I was accustomed to watch the arrival of his guests, sometimes even venturing under cover of night to peer from the garden terrace in at the open windows, to gaze in wonder-ment at the ladies' toilettes, the glittering table, the plate, the lights, the fruit. the flowers, and all the elegancies to

In manner he was courteous with the half-hidden sneer to a fine art. Proud,

SPRING,

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to the public that he has always ated. P. O. Box 214 on hand and for sale a good and varied stock of SPRUCE, PINE, ADMINISTRATION NOTICE sisting of Dry Pine Plank, 11, 11, and planed; Dry Pine Boards, well seasoned, planed on one and both sides, and tongued and grooved. Also good Dry Laths and Cedar Shingles of every quality; together with a stock of Hemlock Logs,

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MERCHANTS near the upper St. John wili left my business in charge of my son, Charles S. find it especially advantageous to deal with them. All orders promptly filled, and satisfaction guaranteed REED & REED Outfits sent free to those who wish to engage in the most pleasant and profitable business known. Everything new. Capital not required. We will furnish you everything. \$10 a day and upwards is easily made without staying away from home over night. No risk whatever. Many new workers wanted at once. Many are making fortunes at the business. Ladies make

155 kegs Nails received in stock: 1-2 ton Brand- Just Received from the celebrated A. S. WHIT-ram's genuine White Lead: ING MANU ACTURING CO, Oshawa: 20 DOZ. Scythes, 8 doz. Sneaths, 2 gross genu-ine Star Stones, 15 doz. Hay Forks; doz. Manure Forks;

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Painting, Trimming and Repairing Carriages, etc. Card Cases, Thimbles, etc. MEERCHAUM PIPES, n Billlard, Yatching. T. D., Prince of Wales, and

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FOR SALE OR TO LET.

VALUABLE FREEHOLD LOTS IN FREDERICTON,

ECCS FOR HATCHING ROM all the varieties of poultry: Brahmas, Cochins, Hamburgs, Polish Leghorns, Plymouth Rocks, Roan Gauya, Pekin and Alesbury Ducks. Eggs carefully packed from our prize birds at \$1,50 per 13. Four or more settings at

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