

sat down to her card-table and rose a considerable winner. Not receiving any winnings from the favourite, however, he judged it a proper moment to demand her kind offices for one of his dependents. Weeks passed, the office sought was given to somebody else, and the Duke was impelled when he was next in Lady Yarmouth's neighbourhood to send her a reminder in the form of a few words scribbled on the eight of diamonds. The fact of the card having been returned to him and presented by the wife of the sixth Duke to Lord Erroll would seem to point to the fact of the message being considered an impertinence, and it is extremely doubtful whether his Grace ever received his money or his friend the coveted boon.

THE SEVEN OF DIAMONDS.



There are several stories of cards being played on death-beds; but perhaps the best is that relating to a Mrs. Hotchkiss, of Leeds, who, like Charles II., had been "an unconscious a-dying" — no less than eleven years, in fact — and who, when her end came, was

paralyzed in all but her faculties. During these eleven years she had been accustomed to play *écarté* in bed. When the end came in 1795 very suddenly she was about to play the seven of diamonds. Seeing that all was over, the attendants tried to detach the card from her hand, but it was held in the grip of death. It was proposed to cut it away, when her son interfered and said that inasmuch as it was her ruling passion, even unto death, the emblem should be buried with her. And it was. On this story being told to George Selwyn, he observed, "Ah, then, when the last trump sounds, Mrs. Hotchkiss will hold it!"

THE SIX OF DIAMONDS.



The association of card-playing and hymnody may strike many as preposterous, and yet the fact remains that the famous Toplady was an enthusiastic devotee of whist, and the first suggestion of his finest hymn was scribbled

on a playing-card—the six of diamonds. The card itself, long preserved in the family, but now in America, was inscribed across the middle with the words:—

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.
Mar. 12.

THE FIVE OF DIAMONDS.



The five of diamonds has earned immortality as the card on which Charles James Fox is traditionally stated to have staked no less a sum than ten thousand pounds one night at faro at Brooks's Club. An instance

has already been given of the extravagant play which raged at Brooks's, White's, and Crockford's in those days. Perhaps in this case, as Fox lost, the result was similar to that recorded on another occasion, when the brilliant young statesman's opponent remarked: "Oh, yes. I have just won a thousand guineas from Charles; but as the bailiffs are after him I have compounded for a supper at the club."

THE FOUR OF DIAMONDS.



One evening there was a great and merry party at Charles Lamb's, at which whist was played until two in the morning—six rubbers; the most notable fact being that at the beginning of every rubber the four of diamonds

was turned up as trumps. Not only that, but the card was nearly always held in the other games by Lamb or his partner, Burney, "which was the cause of much merriment, Robinson declaring that the card had been magnetized by Lamb, which charge Lamb professed to receive with indignation. Everyone knew that diamonds were naturally attractive. But why the four?"

THE THREE OF DIAMONDS.

The story runs that when James II., desiring to show his liberal mind as regards physical science, in spite of his illiberal political opinions, invited Sir Isaac Newton and Halley, the president of the Royal Society, to the palace, the company sat down to a game of comet, the cards supplied being an astronomical pack. It was a delicate attention, no doubt, to the philosophers, but hardly atoned for the monarch's subsequent discourtesy, both to the society and to the University of Cambridge. The three of dia-