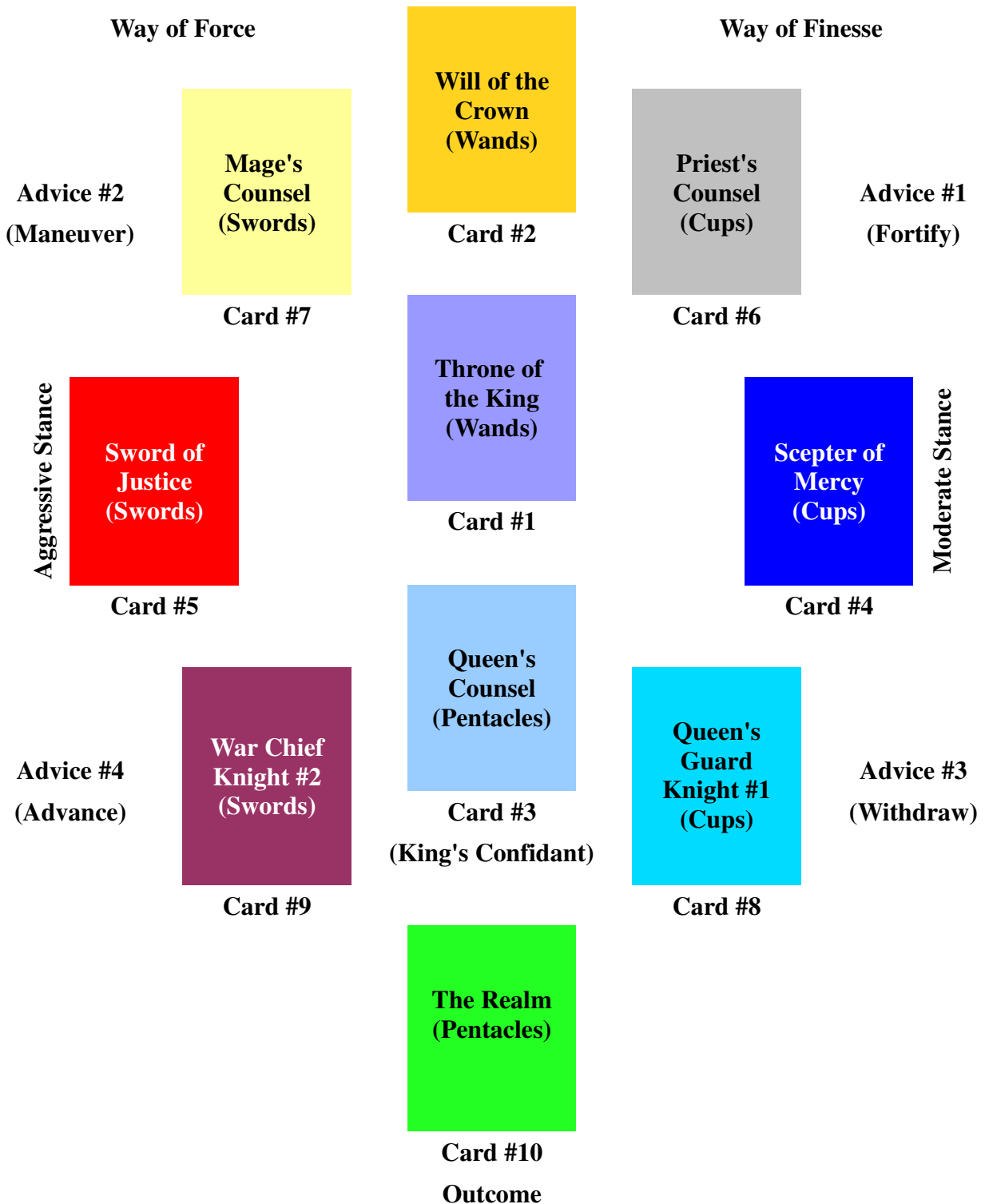


The “Palace of the King” Balance-of-Forces Spread



Card #1 – The Querent's Situation or Environment
Card #2 -What the Querent Wants
Card #3 – Who/What Aids the Querent (Who Has the King's Ear)
Card #4 – What to Give Ground On
Card #5 – What to Stand Fast On
Card #6 – The “Dove's” Position (Finesse as the Solution)
Card #7 - The “Hawk's” Position (Force as the Solution)
Card #8 – How to Withstand the Siege (Conservation of Energy and Resources)
Card #9– How to Mount the Assault (Expenditure of Energy and Resources)
Card #10 – What the Querent Gets

The “King and his Court” are metaphors for either taking strong, assertive action or proceeding more carefully, adopting a cautious “wait and see” attitude. The “active” side of the spread favors exerting personal power; the “passive” side expresses the need for prudence.

The central column shows what will happen if no external advice is taken.

The left side of the spread is the “hawkish” perspective: influence of the war-mongers; emphasis on force.

The right side of the spread is the “dovish” viewpoint: influence of the peace-makers; emphasis on finesse and diplomacy.

Note that the active, odd-numbered positions (except #1 and #3) occupy the “Force” train; their critical quality is “mobility;” the passive, even-numbered positions (except #2 and #10) fall in the “Finesse” train; their mode of operation seeks “stability.”

An identical card falling in any of these positions will strongly enhance the importance of that position in the spread and the potency of the card placed there: a King in the King's place, a Queen in the Queen's place, a Knight in either of the Knight places, the Magician in the Mage's Counsel, the Hierophant in the Priest's Counsel, the Knight of Wands (Air of Fire) in the Will of the Crown, the 10 of Pentacles in the 10th position, etc. A sympathetic but non-identical card in any of these positions will have a similar but less pronounced effect: the Sun or the Emperor in the King's place (figuratively, the royal mandate or “Divine Right of Kings”), Temperance in the Priest's Counsel, the Tower in the War Chief position, Strength in the Sword of Justice position (“might makes right”), etc. However, Trumps will assert their dominance regardless of any such enhancement.

The nominal Elemental Dignities for the central column are neutral and mutually supportive, befitting the relationship between the King and Queen. Those in the “matrix”surrounding the King are mixed (Wands between Swords and Cups), suggesting the often exclusive nature of competing advice. The Elemental Dignities for the Queen's position are also mixed, but weighted in favor of caution. As one would expect, the Elemental Dignities for the “Force” and “Finesse” triplets are in perfect harmony. The elemental correspondences of the actual cards that land in any of these positions will replace the “matrixed” ones, but may take on a subtle bias from the underlying influences, making their action either more or less agreeable to the recipients.

If the Elemental Dignities for the “Force” train are auspicious and the sequence of cards is well-favored, the advice is “Go for it!” If the “Finesse” train is in the ascendancy, the message is “Discretion is the better part of valor.” If neither of these paths is emphasized, the King, with his confidant on board, should follow his own counsel in the matter.