

**THE REIGN OF TERROR: A COLLECTION
OF AUTHENTIC NARRATIVES OF THE
HORRORS
COMMITTED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY
GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE UNDER
MARAT AND ROBESPIERRE, VOL. I**

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The reign of terror: a collection of authentic narratives of the horrors committed by the revolutionary government of France under Marat and Robespierre, Vol. I by Various

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VARIOUS

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Marie Therese Louise de Savoye Carignan

PRINCESSE de LAMBALLE.

Née à Turin en 1740 et mariée à Paris le 2. Sep. 1772

THE
REIGN OF TERROR

A
COLLECTION

OF

AUTHENTIC NARRATIVES

OF THE

HORRORS COMMITTED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY
GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE

UNDER

MARAT AND ROBESPIERRE

WRITTEN BY EYE-WITNESSES OF THE SCENES

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

INTERSPERSED WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF PROMINENT
CHARACTERS

AND

CURIOUS ANECDOTES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF A PERIOD WITHOUT ITS PARALLEL IN HISTORY

VOL. I



WITH TWO FRONTISPICES: BEING PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAITS OF THE
PRINCESSE DE LAMBALLE AND M. DE BEAUMARCHAIS

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P R E F A C E

THE period from the 31st of May, 1792, to the 9th *Thermidor*, 27th of July, 1794, when Robespierre and Marat usurped more than sovereign power, was very aptly designated THE REIGN OF TERROR. At that period, virtue and nobility were certain titles to proscription or the guillotine; debtors paid their debts by denouncing their creditors; criminals punished by the law denounced their prosecutors and judges; those who had not places denounced those who had; heirs denounced those whose fortunes would descend to them; husbands found it a commodious way of getting rid of their wives; and children denounced their parents. One crime and one crime only is wanting in this dark catalogue;—no parent denounced his child.

Partial details of the horrors committed have frequently been laid before the public; but this is the only work in which is completely embodied that mass of crime which stands without a parallel in the annals of the world.

Who has not heard of the massacres in the prisons of the 2nd and 3rd of September, where upwards of twelve thousand innocent victims, for the most part persons of the highest respectability, were inhumanly butchered by order of the committees which were then at the head of affairs? Yet these horrors were, if possible, surpassed in the provinces, where the natives rivalled in zeal the *sans-culottes* of Paris.

The relations here published are, with the exception of one or two, authenticated by the names of the authors who were themselves designated for the axe, and only escaped by miracles; they were themselves eye and ear witnesses of the scenes they describe. By turns terrific and affecting, they possess all the charms of romance with all the interest of history. Who can read without admiration the account of Mademoiselle Cazotte rushing to save her aged father's life when the assassin's pike was already at his breast? Who cannot but admire the vir-

tuous Loizerolles,* who, when his son, who had been condemned to the guillotine, was called to come and be bound for the scaffold, answered in his name, and suffered in his stead?—thus giving him a second time existence. Who can read without horror the details of M. de Sombreuil, saved by the heroic devotion of his virgin daughter from the massacres of September?—and at what a price! The ruffians exacted from her, as the price of her father's liberty, that she should drink a cup of human blood, reeking hot from the wounds of a newly murdered victim. The fate of the Princesse de Lamballe was accompanied with atrocities which the mind can hardly conceive, and which the pen refuses to trace. †

During these horrors, the virtuous Abbé Sicard, who, as an author has eloquently expressed it, gave "ears to the deaf and a tongue to the dumb," did not escape denunciation. He was a priest, and no merits could atone for such a crime in the eyes of those who denied the existence of a God, and declared themselves the personal enemies of Jesus Christ. A succession of miracles saved this worthy man from the assassin's pike and revolutionary axe; for had he gone to prison in the vehicle destined for him, he would have been murdered. A series of events, apparently fortuitous, but marking the special finger of Providence, concurred to his being saved.

Such were the atrocities committed, that the moment the period of horrors was passed, the public sought with avidity details of the scene, even then scarcely credible. The interesting narrative of St. Meard, intitled his *Agony of Thirty-Eight Hours* (which we have given), was published by him immediately after his escape, and two hundred thousand copies sold in a few days.

The present edition is founded on the English edition of 1826; some compressions of tedious or uninteresting matter have been made; and an account of the Republican Marriages, "The Wholesale Drownings at Nantes", has been added. The whole has been prepared for the press by Mr. Percy Pinkerton and Mr. J. H. Ashworth.

* Charles X., on his coronation, granted pensions to Messrs. Loizerolles and St. Meard, as well as several other victims of the Reign of Terror.

† *Vide Appendix, Note A.*

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