

THE MILL MYSTERY

BY ANNA KATHRINE ORRIS.

Even if womanly delicacy had not forbidden me to do so...

And so five minutes, ten minutes, went by, and, imperceptibly to myself, the softening influence which his sleeping countenance...

Great God! it is looking at me! With two wide open, stony eyes it is staring into my very soul like a spirit from the tomb...

"Dwight! Guy! If you do not want me to haunt you, swear you will never divulge what took place between you and Mr. Barrows at the mill."

"No," my cold lips essayed to utter, but an unmeaning murmur was all that left them. The reaction from hope and trust to a now really terrible fear had been too sudden and overwhelming.

But by the time I had reached the room to which I had been directed, I had regained in a measure my self-control. Guy Pollard at least should not see that I could be affected by anything which could happen in this house.

"Yes," returned I, scornfully prevaricating in a struggle I at least meant should be an honest one. "She called upon her own, and said that she would haunt them if ever they divulged what took place between them and Mr. Barrows at the mill."

"Ah!" he coldly laughed; "she does indeed rave." And while I admitted his self-control, I could not prevent myself from experiencing an increased dread of the nature that was so ready for all emergencies and so panopied against all shock.

instincts of my ladyhood; and pale and trembling to a degree I would not have credited to either of these two mysterious men...

"The oath! the oath! Dwigth, Guy, by my dying head!"

"Yes, mother," I heard one voice interpose; and by the solemn murmur that followed, I gathered that Guy had thought it best to humor her wishes.

Horrid, and unable to restrain the impulses that moved me, I sprang to my feet and rushed upon the scene. The picture that met my eyes glared at me now from the black background of the past. On the bed, that roused figure, awful with the shadows of death, raised, in spite of the constraining hands of her two sons, into an attitude expressive of the most intense repulsion, terror, and dread; and at the door, the fainting form of the pretty, dimpled, care-shunning daughter, who, struck to the heart by this poisoned dart from the hand that should have been lifted in blessing, stood swaying in dismay, her wide blue eyes fixed on the terrible face before her...

"Great God! it is looking at me! With two wide open, stony eyes it is staring into my very soul like a spirit from the tomb, awakening there a horror infinitely deeper than any I had felt before, though I knew it was but the signal of returning life to the sufferer, and that I ought to rouse myself and welcome it with untiring ministrations, instead of sitting there like a statue of fear in the presence of an impending fate."

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ing myself, or, rather, ourselves—for we children are but one in this matter—in a position which would make any after-explanations exceedingly difficult.

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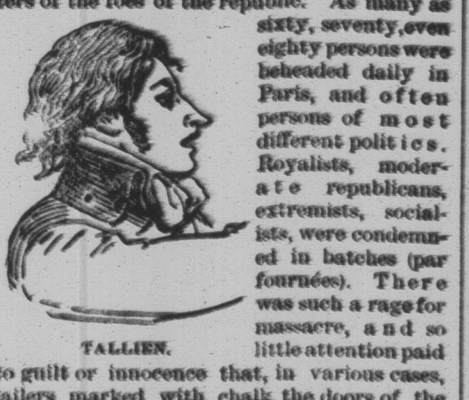
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BROUGHT TO A CLOSE.

Events Marking the Termination of the Reign of Terror.

At this time began the wholesale slaughter of the foot of the republic.



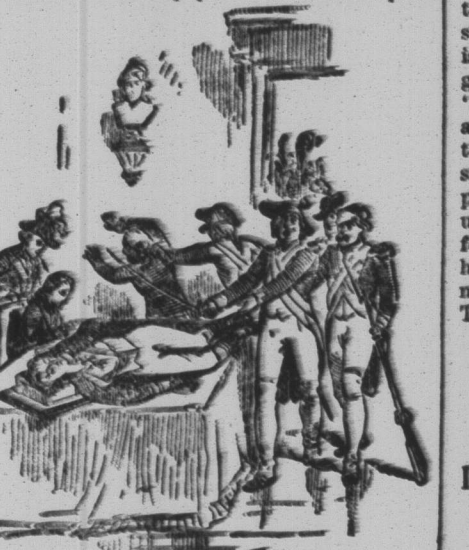
At this time began the wholesale slaughter of the foot of the republic. As many as sixty, seventy, even eighty persons were guillotined daily in Paris, and of these persons of most different political opinions...

Can anything more shockingly illustrate the savagery of the period? In Paris alone as many as seventeen hundred are said by authority to have been guillotined in two months. The men and women who fell the inevitable way of the Revolution, in all ways, throughout France have never been reckoned, and never can be. Apart from the six, many were killed in civil war, were shot and drowned by order, in the south of France, so that 25,000, not, presumably, be too large an estimate. At least 1,000 must have perished on the scaffold, and of these were so prominent, so illustrious as to make the number appear much larger.

It added to the horror that the common people of both sexes would follow the cart carrying the condemned to the scaffold, shouting at, defaming and insulting them with all the volubility and vehemence of the French populace. The better known, the more distinguished the victim, the fiercer the abuse. Poor Marie Antoinette could hardly be driven through the crowd that yelled itself hoarse in her denunciation. She would have been torn to pieces but for the guards. So it was with hundreds of others. The mob was always ferocious and would have murdered the unfortunates themselves could they have had their will, believing every one of the condemned to be a malignant aristocrat who had robbed, persecuted and abused them in every possible manner. To read the accounts of those days fills the mind with anguish. They seem unreal, the creation of morbid and gloomy imaginations. Could humanity ever have been so diabolical? The wildest anarchy raged; laws were constantly falling; every educated man and woman walked under the shadow of death. Paris and the other large cities of France appeared to be veritable hells, in which the proletariat played the part of demons and outmanned the demons of the aristocracy. This inhuman slaughter, this hideous despotism, for which Robespierre was held accountable, terrified beyond endurance the Parisians, wanted as they were to terrorize their instincts of self-preservation demanded a change, any change being regarded as a relief. Every one felt too much afraid of Robespierre to venture a suggestion for his deposal, and yet the whole city would have rejoiced at it. Such was the condition of the community that each man distrusted his neighbor. To incur the slightest suspicion was to be lost. People hid themselves at night, dreading to sleep at home, lest they should be awakened by a summons from the tribunal—the certain harbinger of death.

DOWN WITH THE TYRANT.

Danton's words to Robespierre, "I drag him after me," were winged with prophecy. From the moment that Danton fell, even those who had been his fiercest enemies, they might follow him at any hour. Their feelings were entirely vindicated. Week after week the guillotine was pressed to do the bloody work required of it. Would there be any end of the slaughter? Would it not go on until France had been depopulated? were the ques-



ROBESPIERRE WOUNDED.

tion that people asked themselves. St. Just and Couthon succeeded in everything their chief, whose bloodthirstiness appeared unquenched and unquenchable. Not only Paris, but the whole country, had visibly begun to react against the agonizing months and seasons of senseless massacre.

Tallien, though he had been one of the ultra-terrorists, perceived that Robespierre had lost confidence in him; that his head set unasily on his shoulders. The cause was, if cause were needed, that in his mission to Bordeaux in the autumn of 1793, for the purpose of rooting out all traces of the Girondins, he had, after redundant cruelty, grown suddenly humane. This is explained by his falling violently in love with a beautiful woman, still in her teens, Mme. de Fontenay, daughter of Comte Colonne, minister of Finance in Spain. Born in Saragossa, but a resident of Bordeaux—she had been divorced from her husband, member of the parliament there—she sympathized with the Revolution.

But the French republic, having taken offense at her conduct, had thrown her into prison, where Tallien found her, released and married her. Going to Bordeaux, she was greatly admired; her home became a center for the moderate republicans, and, later, of the brilliant society of the capital. She naturally detested and hated Robespierre, and, her husband's feelings being known, she was not slow to take advantage of the opportunity. She may be said, indeed, to have been one of the principal conspirators against the Terror, never permitting Tallien's courage to waver to help her. She was the first to suggest to Robespierre, who had run to believe him, that he should be arrested, and taken to the Tribunal. She was instrumental in causing his arrest.

ing him from the Jacobin club. Tallien, understanding his mortal peril, united the Girondins, Dantonians, all the factions hostile to the Terror, and brought about its termination. But to his wife more than to him is due the glory of the issue. It is signally fitting that a woman should have checked the flow of the sanguinary tyrant, as he was styled, even arose among the members of the committee of public safety. When he demanded its reorganization the national convention had, for the first time, the hardihood to refuse, which was his doom, since his innumerable enemies were at once aroused thereby. He had been anxious to crowd from the convention those whom he considered traitors and criminals, and its members were alarmed for their own safety. Unable to control the committee, he withdrew, and tried secretly to defeat them. During the last few weeks of his life he was almost a lay figure in the government. He appeared in the convention July 23, and began to read an elaborate, crafty speech in which appeals to conciliation were mingled with bitter accusations. He was interrupted by a tumult. Billiaud-Varenne accused him of treason, and abused him violently. Tallien drew a dagger and swore he would thrust it into his own breast if this Cromwell should triumph. The deadly duel had begun. It was no longer a question of agreement between the contending parties, but of extermination of one or the other.

Robespierre mounts the tribune; but his feet, who had been working under ground, suddenly roar out, "Down with the tyrant!" and repeat the cry whenever he opens his mouth. He is stupefied. He has not dreamed of so great a revolt among men who, two days before, seemed to be at his feet. He is attacked on every side; even the unalloyed Mountaineers deserting him in his direful need. Finally, he addresses himself to the moderate republicans, calling them "Pure men," in contrast to "those brigands yonder," but they, too, are obstinate and denunciatory. Beside himself with rage, he screams at the top of his voice to Collet d'Herbois, who presides, "For the last time, periboid of assassins, I demand the right to speak," but he can say no more.

Robespierre on the scaffold. The blood of Danton choked you. And all around, the terrible clamors, "Down with the tyrant!" "Some one yells, 'The accusation!'" The whole assembly rises, and glowers at him. Resistance is futile. Despair settles down on him. His hour has struck. He, with St. Just and Couthon, is dragged off to the prison of Luxembourg.

The Commune organizes an insurrection; renews him; conducts him to the Hotel de Ville, where he refuses to sign an appeal to arms; but his party acts without him. The convention, learning of the rebellion, outlaw the accused and the members of the Commune. Hanriot, commander of the armed forces, joins the Robespierians and prepares to resist the troops of the convention. The Hotel de Ville is besieged in the night; the majority of the sections of Paris having gone over to them and gain an easy victory. The dictator, seeing that all is lost, shoots himself, not through the head, as intended, only breaking his lower jaw.

At 4 of the afternoon all Paris is excited, watching the tumbrils as they move to the Place de la Revolution; the guards pointing out the one in which the dictator lies, his jaw bound up his eyes closed, more dead than alive. His eyes open occasionally, showing intelligence and mortal terror. He is insulted as the cart goes by; a wild, haggard woman leaps on the wheel, and screams: "Go down to hell with the curses of all wives and mothers ringing in your ears, drowning the last whisper of hope!" The executioner snatches off the rag from the jaw. Robespierre sees the gleaming ax, and utters an unearthly groan, hideous to hear, never to be forgotten. In another moment Robespierre's head falls. Paris draws a long breath. The nation awakes from its hideous nightmare. The Reign of Terror is at an end.

THEIR END RECORDED. Last Days of Some Noted Leaders of the Revolution. CLOSE OF THE BLOODY YEAR 1794. Reaction from the Terror—Suicide of the Devoted Friend of Robespierre—Description of the Death of St. Just and Couthon. Justice to Fougere-Tiville.

By JUNIUS HENRI BROWNE. [Copyright, 1880, by American Press Association.] XI. Although the Reign of Terror terminated, as we have seen, with the decapitation of Robespierre, the incarnation of its truculent spirit, the Revolution continued nearly fifteen months longer, still bloody but vastly assuaged. Very few, if any, had dreamed that the downfall of the dictator would produce so desirable, so blessed a change in her erratic France. But he seems to have been the one man, despite denials of his inherent cruelty, of his inclination to homicide, who, through unalloyed circumstances or unscrupulous confederates, fed to satisfy the starving guillotine. Twenty or more of these suffered with him, among them Mayor Fleuriot, Augustin Robespierre, younger brother of the terrorist, Hanriot, Simon, St. Just, Couthon. These names seem to have been strongly attached to him, notwithstanding that he is reputed to have been without friends.

FAMOUS REVOLUTIONISTS. A more devoted friend than Lefebvre (Philippe) Robespierre could not be. He had indomitably attached himself to the fortunes of Robespierre, in whom his faith was unwavering. Not without eloquence and fine talents, he was absorbed in work, in carrying out the ideas of his chief. This, in truth, was his whole ambition. Not being conspicuous in the revolutionary procedure, he might readily have escaped the ruin of July. But when Robespierre was arrested he demanded to share his fate. Consigned to the prison of Luxembourg, he was rescued by Hanriot, commander of the troops of the Commune, and taken to the Tribunal.

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