



# **Stories of the French Revolution**

Walter Montgomery

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## Stories of the French Revolution

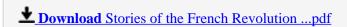
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About eight miles from Paris is the town of Versailles, which was but a poor little village when a great king took a fancy to it and built there a palace. His son was passionately fond of state and grandeur, and he resolved to add to the palace, room after room and gallery after gallery, until he had made it the most superb house in all the world. It is said the cost was so frightful that he never let anyone know what the sum total amounted to, but threw the accounts into the fire. This was Louis XIV., called by Frenchmen "Le grand Monarque." He reigned seventy-two years, having been a mere child when called to the throne. To this splendid palace and to an income of thirty millions a year, did his great-grandson, Louis XV., succeed. He, too, was a child of tender years when he entered on his vast inheritance. For a time the Duke of Orleans acted as regent; but when the little king was fourteen years of age he assumed the sceptre, and in two years more he married a Polish princess.

At one time Louis was very much beloved, and got the title of "Bien Aime;" but he afterward lost his people's affection, and by the time he died he was utterly despised, if not detested. Everything seemed to be going to rack and ruin. The French armies were defeated, their colonies fell into the hands of England, their navy suffered great losses, their commerce was all but ruined. Therefore the French people felt disgraced; and many of them believed all these evils were greatly owing to the idleness and bad management of their pleasure-loving and careless king.

At length, one year,—it was in the pleasant May-time,—Louis fell sick of smallpox. He was at once put to bed, and the doctors came to see him; but from the first they looked with grave anxiety on the ailing man. His three daughters—whom he had nicknamed Rag, Snip, and Pig—waited on him dutifully, though the terrible disease turned everybody sick who came near the bed. The stench was carried far into the palace; but there the princesses remained until the end came. They had a fourth sister, nicknamed Dud; but she was in a nunnery, and so could not wait upon her dying father...



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