

**A FATHER OF SIX, AND  
AN OCCASIONAL  
HOLIDAY**

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A Father of Six, and an Occasional Holiday by I. N. Potapenko & W. Gaussen

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**I. N. POTAPENKO & W. GAUSSEN**

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A FATHER OF SIX.

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И. Н. ПОТАПЕНКО

A FATHER OF SIX

AND

AN OCCASIONAL HOLIDAY

*TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL.*

BY

W. GAUSSEN, B.A.



LONDON

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### A FATHER OF SIX.

"A H, martyr, long-suffering martyr that I am! God is gracious to others. Look at the deacon of Perekopski, for example; the Lord was pleased to call two of his children to Himself in one week. . . . Why, what is the matter with you? Tell me."

"Nati6nka, Nati6nka, the Lord have mercy on you! what are you saying? It is a sin even to think of such things, but to say them . . ."

Nati6nka was lying huddled up on a short, clumsy-looking sofa, upholstered with green cotton velvet with yellow spots. The well-warmed room in which this conversation was going on had a

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low, somewhat sloping ceiling, and little windows with uneven panes of greenish glass, giving the rays of light which penetrated them a melancholy greyish tint; the atmosphere was stifling and laden with smoke, but nevertheless, Natiónka kept shivering and drawing Father Anton's worn-out beaver cassock more closely around her. An indescribable turmoil was going on in the room, produced by six children, the eldest of whom was seven years old, and the youngest was trying to crawl along the threadbare carpet which covered the floor. The eldest child, Timoshka, was playing at being a priest, and was imitating the manners and intonation of the incumbent of the place, Father Pankrátii, while his brothers and sisters were sustaining the various parts of the lesser clergy and the parishioners. Somehow or other, the rôle of *tuitar*,<sup>1</sup> which was being

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<sup>1</sup> Clerk.

played by the four-year-old boy, Sasha, was unsuccessful, in consequence of which he received a severe box on the ear from the little five-year-old villain, Vaska. Sasha's elder sister, Marinka, a girl of six years old, with a pale face and thoughtful expression, interceded on his behalf. Marinka was in her turn attacked by Timoshka, and a general uproar ensued, and the various aggrieved parties went for consolation to the short sofa. Nati6nka, whose head was splitting and bones aching, had to get up every minute and administer justice and quell the disturbance. All this, of course, worried and almost distracted her.

Father Anton, in the meanwhile, remained seated at a small table, his back turned to his wife and family, leaning his body heavily over the table, on which his elbows were spread out, and was busily engaged writing up the parish register book. The arrival