

**THE VILLAGE PRIEST:
AND OTHER STORIES
FROM THE RUSSIAN**

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The village priest: and other stories from the Russian by E. Militsyna & Mikhail Evgrafovich Saltykov

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E. MILITSYNA & MIKHAIL EVGRAFOVICH SALTYKOV

**THE VILLAGE PRIEST:
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THE VILLAGE PRIEST
AND OTHER STORIES FROM THE
RUSSIAN OF MILITSINA & SALTIKOV

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
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INTRODUCTION

OF the two authors selected by Mrs. Tollemache for translation, Saltikov has attained to the rank of a classic, at least in his own country, while Elena Dmietrievna Militsina is a living writer who has obtained some popularity in Russia, but is practically unknown to English readers. She has written for the leading monthly the *Russkoe Bogatsvo* and other journals, sometimes under the pseudonym of E. Kargina. The first volume of her short stories was published in Petrograd in 1910. In the course of the half-century which elapsed between Saltikov's first appearance in print and Miss Militsina's early contributions to fiction, social conditions in Russia underwent significant and far-reaching changes,

but the unity of outlook and the kindred sympathies shared by these two writers of successive generations show that the aspirations uttered in 1847 were still unfulfilled in the first decades of the twentieth century. But little biographical information is available relating to Elena Militsina, but it is easy to trace the leading events in the life of Saltikov, better known by his pseudonym of Schedrine.

Mikhail Evgrafovich Saltikov, whose parents were landowners of Tartar extraction, was born on the 15th January 1826, in the Government of Tver. His childhood was spent in the country, in the wide quiet fields, far from the noise of great cities or the sleepy monotony of the Russian provincial town. At the age of seven lessons began. His first master, according to the custom of those days, was one of his father's serfs, named Paul. After a year under his tutelage young Saltikov's education was undertaken by an elder sister and her school friend, Mdlle. Vasilevskaya, who had entered the family

as governess. In addition to the teaching of these two girls he studied Latin and Scripture with the priest of a neighbouring village, and a student of Moscow University was invited to spend the summer holidays on the estate to prepare the boy for the entrance examination of the Moscow Institute, which he passed with flying colours. This Institute had the special privilege of sending its best pupils every year to the Tsarskoselsky lycée, where they were educated at the expense of the State. Here the boy worked with diligence for two years, at the end of which period he was selected for the coveted promotion.

The span of boyhood in Russia is short. On passing to the lycée Saltikov entered on a training that differed from that of the preparatory school in many respects. The discipline was more strict, and the authorities, anxious to instil into the students under their care ideas that were in opposition to the progressive spirit of the times, were averse from giving them