

in Russia. The old army rifles, now discarded, are tantalisingly numerous in the arsenals, and tantalisingly cheap, if only one could obtain permission to buy them. But even for a Russian officer such permission is by no means a matter of course—and only the War Minister may give it. Of course, a dealer cannot handle military arms—only sporting pieces and pistols; perhaps you may buy the shot-guns (smooth-bores) without permit: for pistols, written permission is required, and report must be made of the purchase. The *impromptu* is not encouraged in Russia.

Surely, surely, the Russian, soldier or civilian, will woefully lack initiative—surely he is but a weak competitor with, let us say, the American, if measured man for man in the strife of war or industry. A hard saying, it may be thought, when one's mind dwells upon the brilliant intellects which may be met in St. Petersburg, or the faithful, patient moujik who is seen all over the great Empire. A hard saying, it may seem, when one thinks also of the courteous, watchful, intelligent officers who administer the wide lands through which our journey takes us—who have created the substantial little white cities that guard the big black native towns. But they are too few—too few. And it remains, that if the *average* individual were strong in himself, then we should not see the cancelled columns of newspapers in hotel reading-rooms—for the man in the street would then be wise enough to read whatever the London, Paris, or New York papers chose to publish. We would not see the Jewish woman I chanced to meet in the Moscow police office, asking in vain