

Vladivostok

October 9, 1916,

My dear Dad,

I have for several days been considering whether I would write a report, for my own good & the good of British Trade, on the chemical trade in Russia.

I came to this desk with the good intention of doing so & whilst rummaging through the drawers for a blank note I came across one of your old letters which expelled the good intention from my head ~~diving~~ diving to hell where it will probably be used for passing purposes. Anyhow I got in its place a better intention i.e. to write <sup>to</sup> you.

In doing this I might as well kill two birds with one stone by writing to you & at the same time give you some idea of the chemical trade in this country which will break some ground for me to work on when I write my report.



as you are probably aware  
our enemy the German has,  
through his system of education  
& specialization, taken by a  
big lead the foremost place  
in the electrical & chemical  
industries, compelling  
all countries to be absolutely  
dependant on him for practically  
all their chemical requirements.  
This has been obtained by enviable  
concentration, industry and  
specialization. By concentration  
I mean that they have concentrated  
the whole of their scientific forces  
for the purpose of becoming the  
predominant power in the  
World by preparing for the fight  
that they would have to under-  
take to occupy this position.  
~~Here~~ In doing this they have  
been compelled to give every  
encouragement to their  
chemists and as you are  
aware, in the preparing of  
munitions there are many  
bye products that are valuable  
for industrial purposes.  
Here the Germans scored



they flooded the market with their cheap dyes, drugs etc. working on a low profit & giving long credits. What they have done in Europe & the world in general you are aware of. but here I am only dealing with Russia.

In this country all chemists are licensed by the Government and only a certain number are allowed in each town. The Government allow Jewish Doctors & Chemists to reside in any part of Russia without any hindrance. Therefore Jews whose sons were fortunate enough to be amongst the small ~~majority~~ percentages of their faith allowed to enter colleges & Universities had them trained for the medical or chemical professions. All Jews speak Yiddish a second cousin to German and the majority speak good German. It has not been difficult therefore for the German Chemical



houses to obtain a  
~~sympathetic~~ sympathetic  
 influence over these  
 people and as the jew  
 controls about 75 percent  
 of the Chemist shops in  
 Russia, the Germans  
 held their success  
 assured from the very  
 beginning especially  
 when the Germans  
 studiously encouraged  
 trade and the British  
 vigorously held haughtily  
 aloof. The University  
 professors were all  
 been educated in Germany  
 & so the students have  
 always studied German  
 methods & terms.

German houses opened  
 branches in Russia  
 appointed agents throughout  
 the country and constantly  
 had Russian speaking  
 travellers visiting  
 their customers through-  
 out the country



The travellers became personally interested in the business welfare of the proprietor, dining with him + very likely having a night-out with him at one of the Cafe Chantants. Before leaving he would well grease some of the assistants + when the order was at last received small <sup>gratis</sup> samples ~~of~~ would be enclosed in the cases, in the case of soaps, perfumery + other fancy lines, for their customers and themselves.

The British Chemical houses severely left Russia alone, but at times a traveller representing special lines like Soap, perfumery etc. would rush through the country call on the British Consul, receive from him the names of the best firms, call on them



find they could not speak  
 English, rush round to  
 find a rotten interpreter,  
 rush back to the customer,  
 struggle with the aid of ~~an~~ <sup>the</sup>  
 inferior interpreter to  
 inform the likely buyer that  
 his firm made an excellent  
 article, quoted f.o.b steamer  
 somewhere in England,  
 deposit with order & balance  
 against documents  
 in England. The likely  
 buyer would glance at  
 the catalogue, asks what  
 in the hell is £ s. d., what is  
 the freight & charges to his  
 part of Russia & what in  
 the Lord's name is tons, cwt,  
 grs, lbs, oz, drs. Give me a  
 quotation in Roubles per good  
 Russian pound of goods  
 landed in my shop & the  
 business is yours.  
 But the English traveller  
 could never do this, his



7.

his greatest masterpiece  
would be £5:12:3¼ per  
cwt f.o.t. cars somewhere  
in the Dear old Billy hand.  
Mr Fritz Saukraut gave  
a comprehensible quotation  
to his customer right away  
& cleared out with the order  
to his practical Vaterland.

Now in these war days  
we hear what the English are  
going to do after the war  
with trade, but they have  
a hard job before them  
it will be something like  
the transformation of a  
plea bitten old sinner  
to a white winged soft  
voiced saint, or the  
conversion of a rank  
freetrader to the virtues  
of Protection.

Have the faith of a grain  
of mustard seed & say to  
a mountain, skoot & the



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Mountain looked at.  
Oh for such faith in  
the adaptability of the  
British manufacturer.  
The British manufacturer of  
heavy chemicals have  
more than held their  
own against the Germans  
for the simple reason  
they played him at  
his own game & have  
always beaten him.

How does 3 hear you  
say, beat it! so 3 will  
conclude this effusion  
at some later period.

We are all O.K.  
Winter is creeping on to  
us, but we are all O.K.  
& fit to meet it.

Love to all from all.

Yours,  
A.



PR82/8

From) Oswald Forsyth

& A. I. L. & Co.

Mr John Forsyth  
of Rosewall  
Ryde

Return to  
T. A. Jones  
Ecclestone  
Ryde