

HELPING YOU to KEEP POSTED

HOW far along the road to democracy has Germany progressed? asks D. Thomas Curt in Munsey's. The prominence given by our newspapers to Liebknecht and a few kindred spirits who are violently at odds with their government, and would try to right a wrong even to the material detriment of their own country, has led to a false idea that the Social Democratic party in Germany is an instrument to bring about a peace acceptable to the Allies. Such is not the case.

There are three hundred and ninety-seven deputies in the Reichstag. Of these only eighteen—less than five per cent.—are openly arrayed against the government. They constitute the minority group of the Social Democrats, and it is their speeches, together with an occasional outbreak of criticism from the majority group of the party, that make such pleasant reading for us.

From the revolutionary point of view, the Germans might be divided into three classes. To the first belong the leaders, the half-deified army officers and professors, and the great men of business. The second class contains the mass of the people. The third contains the eighteen more or less revolutionary extremists in the Reichstag and a small minority of the population, certainly not more than one-fifth, though the number is slowly increasing.

This last class has already endeavored to make its protests heard and felt, but a police system armed with revolver, sword, and machine gun, with espionage and "preventive arrest," has rendered all such attempts futile. It is obvious that there can be no hope of a revolution until the third class wins the support of the second class; but the latter despises the former and seeks to curry favour with the first class, from which it derives its ready-made ideas.

Should Germany not come to revolution because of pressure either from within or without, her evolution into democracy will probably be along the following lines:

First, reform of the three-class system of voting in Prussia.

Second, redistribution of the Reichstag districts, which, as constituted in 1871, sacrifice the populous industrial cities, with their large Social Democratic vote, to the reactionary agricultural districts.

Third, ministerial responsibility to the Reichstag.

The gist of the matter is that if the Allies remain firm on the principle laid down by President Wilson in his reply to the Pope—not to make peace with a government which is not of the German people—then the article giving the emperor sole power to conclude peace is knocked in the head. That means that the alteration of the imperial constitution will effectively begin; and if Germany is to be a democracy it must be so altered that even Bismarck would not recognize it.

Boche, for Instance—

WAR is rich in new speech—so rich that in France, learned members of the French Academy have already begun to recognize, collect, and try to analyze some of the new language that has sprung spontaneously from the lips of poilus and Tommies in the past three years.

Some of this new speech is clear to us stay-at-homes, says a writer in Everybody's. Of others we can appreciate the flavor only when their origin is explained. "Boche," for instance, is an abbreviation of "caboche," a hobnail, with a hard, rough, and square head. It was applied long ago, because of corresponding mental qualities, to the Germans as well as to all resembling them.

German Socialists and Peace

New Language at the Front

Y.M.C.A. in Siberia

City Brings Down Coal

Submarines and Castor Oil

The Future of Poland



CUTE Frenchwomen knew that if Santa Claus was to come last year they had to get up and clean the chimneys of Paris, or by heck! he never would do it.

Tommy's great word is "Blighty." "Blighty" to him means England, home, and all that's worth living for. When he has a wound serious enough to send him home, he calls it a "blighty one." The "Blighty" of the French soldier is Paris, which he affectionately and lovingly calls by a sort of pet name—"Panam."

Tommy is perhaps likely to think most of "Blighty" when the "big stuff" comes over. The "big stuff" means the various kinds of large German shells. The high explosive ones are "crumps," the big ones that give out a lot of black smoke, "Jack Johnsons" or "coal-

boxes." The poilus generally call the "big stuff" "marmites" or "stew-pots."

Life, however, is not all one "hick-boo"—as the men in the air-service and elsewhere call a rumpus, bombardment, or attack. It may even be considered "ushy"—"pretty soft," as we say—or comfortable, when you can "cadge," borrow, a "fag," that is, a cigarette, or "have a doss," sleep, in your "funk-hole" or dugout. To top off the comforts, you occasionally get a letter from "Lonely Stab," the girl who writes and sends parcels to Tommy. Companionship of any kind is more welcome than that of the "cooties," despite the affection apparently conveyed in this name given to the trench vermin.

The French soldier slang shows an even higher spirit of banter and playfulness. Poilu, that one word of national reverence, means simply brave, strong. The French soldier is also called "un bleu" from the light, gay, affectionate blue of his uniform.

Next to "Boche" the deepest term of reproach in French is to call another "un embusque," which means, literally, a soldier or civilian who has "ambushed" himself or taken some post free from hardship or danger. It is much more severe than our "slacker." All who are down there fighting for France are "les copains"—literally, the sharers of bread.

The American poilu is not going over unprovided with a lingo. He calls himself, by the way, a "doughboy" or "crusher," which is fairly American-sounding. Cavalrymen he calls "bow-legs"; a soldier who shares his shelter is his "bunkie"; the company barber is "butcher"; a soldier who works for an officer is a "dog robber"; the commanding officer is alluded to as "K. O."

It's all in the game—the game of "Kan the Kaiser"—which is the only American equivalent thus far of any of the French war slogans like "Ils ne passeront pas," or "On les aura," "We'll get them," "They shall not pass."

—Y.M.C.A. in Siberia

AFTER a year and a half as Y. M. C. A. Secretary in Siberian prison camps, Mr. George P. Conger returned to the United States, and tells of his experiences in a very readable article in Current History.

There have been as many as 50,000 prisoners in the district, he says. The proportion of Austrians to Germans is roughly four to one; there are fewer Turks than Germans. At first these prisoners, more than six thousand miles from the front, were allowed some liberty. At one camp, charmingly located on an arm of the Pacific, the prisoner officers had the privilege of sea-bathing; at other places they were allowed to come into the towns to make purchases. But the neighboring Chinese frontier was too alluring, and some of the men, who knew how easy it is to walk in a day or two from one European country to another, decided to try walking from one Asiatic country to another. They reckoned without the vast distances and the cold, and some starved or froze to death out in the wilderness. They reckoned also without the Russian Cossacks, and many of the escaping prisoners were recaptured. I have heard that some escaping prisoners were even eaten by the huge Amur tigers, which are larger, and if anything, fiercer, than those of Bengal. Altogether only a small proportion of prisoners ever reached China and the shelter of those German organizations which have since figured among the causes of China's entry into the war.

The effect of the attempts to escape was what might have been expected. The Russians built huge wooden stockades around the bar-