

The Christmas Ship.

The sailing of the United States collier Jason from New York harbor on the 14th, laden with Christmas presents for the war orphans of Europe from the children of America, marks a long stride toward international goodfellowship. Conceived by a newspaper editor, possibly with no more expectation than a little advertising of his own paper, the idea caught the public imagination, and the whole country turned to with a will to give it reality. If there were a lingering doubt as to the popularity of Mr. Keeley's suggestion, after noting the interest displayed by the President, by the foreign governments, by the Cabinet officials, by the Army, by the railroad officials, by the public schools, and by every one who could get in touch with the movement, it would be removed by the fact that two hundred and twelve newspapers scattered throughout the country lent their aid in making the venture a success. For newspapers, however ready they are to laud public enterprises, are chary about booming other papers. The very fact that these papers took up and pushed to success the Chicago Herald's idea marks its universal appeal.



Sentiment? Yes, it is sentiment; a mere flash of the imagination. Yet it grips the heart, and brings us a little nearer to the goal of universal brotherhood. Nor is the gratitude of the unfortunate people of Europe the chief effect of the voyage of the Christmas ship. The greatest good will come to ourselves. It will interrupt for the moment our self-consciousness, our fear of business losses, and our elation over commercial profits. There is not a family in this country that is not a little kindlier because of the sailing of that ship. And though the Jason should never make port, though she should accidentally strike a mine and carry her precious cargo to the bottom of the sea, still it will have proven to be the richest investment we have made. A few more Christmas ships, and there will be less need of warships. s. c.



Socialists and Militarism.

In the November issue of the International Socialist Review, the failure of European Socialists to prove their boasted ability to prevent war, is explained in a proper spirit by Harry Uswald. He claims that the fatal mistake of the Socialists lay in their approval of military preparations for national defense. This, he shows, neutralized all their opposition to aggressive warfare, and he proves it by pointing to the reasons for war given

by each belligerent. He quotes the Austrian bureaucracy as saying: "The Servians, aided by Russia, are undermining our nation." To which the Servians are quoted in answer: "Austria was seeking to destroy the nation." The Russian government is made to say that Austria was bent on dealing it a crushing blow. The country was in danger. The people must rise in self-defense. He quotes the Germans: "Our homes are threatened. Our trade is menaced. Our civilization is endangered. We will be butchered by the Russian barbarians. To arms! Let us defend the fatherland." The Belgians referred to the invasion of their country. The French he quotes: "Germany is marching upon us. Our cities will be crushed. Our people will be slaughtered. Autocracy will rule. To arms! In self-defense!" And the English he represents as saying: "We will be overwhelmed by a military despotism. This is not a war in which we are the aggressors. It is a war in which we must protect our very homes. We must fight in self-defense." In response to such calls, he shows, the Socialists of each country were swept along. They had cut the ground from under their own feet. It was only necessary to give some color of defense to an aggressive war to show that they were bound to take part. And he offers this undeniable comment:

If we are to judge according to nationalistic prejudices, and, for the moment, accept the views advanced by our German comrades, then the English, French, Belgian and Russian Socialists must be horribly wrong; and must be engaged in a criminal and unholy war against the best that human civilization has yet produced.

If the declarations of the English, French, Belgian and Russian comrades are true, then the Socialists of Germany and Austria are, in a great measure, responsible for the most terrible butchery ever recorded in human history!



As to what should have been done, Mr. Uswald holds that the Socialists should have disregarded the appeals of their governments and refused to fight. As he says: "A passive revolt would have been sufficient to paralyze the military machine and prevent war." The government, even if it tried to terrorize the workers into fighting through court martials and executions, would not kill more than a small part of the number already destroyed in battle. And he further points out that a determination to take such a stand in future wars, whether for offense or defense, will keep governments from going to war. He does not confine his argument to Europe. He applies it here to our own militarists who are trying to raise the Japanese scare. Should American Socialists let it be known that they have profited by the ex-