

### 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-

perience of their European comrades and will not be stampeded into war by false cries, they can make themselves an exceedingly effective force in blocking the militarist game.

S. D.



### British Blundering.

Critics, contrasting the high degree of German military efficiency with Great Britain's lumbering methods, are disposed to reflect upon British statesmanship. But is not this to totally misconceive the underlying principles of the two governments. An autocracy must from its very nature have unquestioned obedience. Since all authority rests in the head of the government, the subjects have no choice but to obey; and they do obey as long as the autocracy stands. Citizens in a democracy, however, knowing that authority comes from themselves, as expressed through a majority, are ever ready to question whatever they disapprove individually, and may yield obedience only when the majority is overwhelming. The British government temporized, for instance, with the defiant Ulstermen. Such action would be inconceivable to a German. This is because of his different point of view. The German looks to the State first. The individual is permitted such liberty as the Government thinks is compatible with the welfare of the State. The Englishman, on the contrary, looks to himself first, and gives to the State such allegiance as he thinks is compatible with his own welfare.



These diametrically opposed views result in very different kinds of government. The policy laid down by the German government is forthwith carried out willy nilly by the citizens. But the policy of the British government is debated by the people both before and after its adoption. This is why England has not had conscription, and why she has not had a large military establishment similar to that of Germany. The militarists have never been able to persuade the mass of the people that these things are necessary or desirable. When the war began England could send to the Continent only 200,000 men; if the war shall continue a year or more she will send 2,000,000 men. She might, indeed, before submitting to Germany, send twice or thrice that number. But, however fast, the number and the time will represent the mental state of the British populace. This has led some critics to say England blunders through. It leads them to say the same thing of this country; for we have a similar point of view.

England is preserved from sudden invasion by her fleet. Should a force be needed in addition—well, that can be attended to when the time comes. This country is preserved from sudden invasion by the oceans. Should troops ever come—well, we shall attend to that when they do come. Such a plan is condemned by the militarists as inefficient. But is it in reality? May it not be more costly to keep a nation in arms for forty years than to raise a volunteer army when it is needed? Militarists have tried to arouse public opinion by showing that the "next war" would be swift and certain. Yet it seems to drag along as it did in the good old days. Great Britain will lose a lot of ships, and she will sacrifice a lot of men; but it is not unlikely that it will be found when the war is over she has lost fewer ships and fewer men than Germany. And whether more or less, Englishmen will have the consciousness of knowing that the affair has from the first been in the individual citizen's hands.

S. C.



### Mexico Still in the Throes.

At last a date, the 23d of November, has been set for the withdrawal of the United States troops from Vera Cruz. They would have been withdrawn long before this had it not been for General Carranza's stupidity in refusing to give assurances that Mexicans serving the United States would not be molested, and that importers would not be compelled to pay a second time the customs dues. General Carranza has from the very beginning shown himself to be utterly impossible as president of such a country as Mexico. Although profiting by the aid of this country he has had nothing but rebuffs and insults for President Wilson. His incivility lacked only General Huerta's virility to be as objectionable. And he has only his own stupid obstinacy to thank for his present predicament. During the earlier days of the rebellion, when he had nothing to do but stroke his beard, talk grandiloquently, and let Villa do the fighting, he served as a figurehead. It was only the threats of Villa then that kept him within a semblance of sanity. When he was finally placed in a commanding position his genius for setting things awry knew no bounds.



But this is not our affair. The Mexicans must settle among themselves who is to be at the head of the government, and what he is to do. It is quite plain that the democratic element in this revolution is still alive. Both Villa and Zapata stand by their original declarations, and are as