

TOPICS OF THE DAY

THE LENGTH OF THE WAR In a good cause, the great stand which Germany is making to-day would be worthy of admiration. She literally has the world against her—at least the Old World; for, apart from Canada, the New World hardly counts. On her western front, she is trying to keep two nations at bay; in addition to such help as she can give the Austrians against Italy, she has to cope with the situation in the Balkans and at Salonika; she is thrusting at Roumania both on the Transylvanian border and in Dobrudja; and she has to protect the whole of her eastern line from Russian attack. The effort is so vast that it is simply impossible that it can be indefinitely maintained. Apart from economic stress, and the possibility of internal troubles, Germany does not possess unlimited material on which she can draw in order to replace the wastage of war. The contrast is greatest here with Russia. But even Britain is now only approaching the full measure of her strength, which she can practically concentrate, in co-operation with her French allies, on the western front. There it is calculated that the Germans have two million men, about half of whom have been defeated and thrust back in the various operations undertaken since 1st July. If this process can be kept up, we shall begin to know the meaning of the word “attrition.” When you rub a thing down to nothing, nothing remains! And it is becoming increasingly difficult for Germany to use her interior lines, and to transfer troops from East to West. In any case, the longer the war, the more enduring will be the peace that is to follow it, and the more worthy of the efforts we have made. As Mr. Asquith said at the Guildhall, Britain desires peace, but only on one condition—that the sacrifices of the war shall not have been made in vain.