

## TOPICS OF THE DAY

### THE MILITARY SITUATION

The bells were ringing in London the other day, so loudly and so joyfully that even Hindenburg and the Kaiser may have heard them, unless they have stopped their ears, in the same way as they have muzzled the German press, where British victories are concerned. Following so quickly the brilliant French advance on the Aisne, the news of the great British drive towards Cambrai did much to dispel the gloom caused by untoward developments elsewhere. For one thing it has confirmed our experts in their view that the war will be won, in a military sense, in Flanders and France. How far the Allied forces in these countries may be helped by increased pressure from the British navy, and by the growing economic exhaustion of Germany, time alone will show. But a decisive military victory on the Western front is evidently the great goal on which we must keep our eyes steadily fixed. The fact that in Northern Italy the redoubtable German war-machine has once more galvanized the Austrian corpse into life need not affect our ultimate prospects. In Venetia, as formerly at Verdun, the watch-word is, "They shall not pass!" And if the defensive lines hold firm, it may not be so easy for the Germans to get back across the Alps as it was for them to descend into the fertile plains of Italy. The prelude to the Italian disaster was the sowing the seed of disaffection and treachery by German agents in Italy itself. That is one of the Hun's favourite war-weapons. He tried it lately with ourselves, by circulating the suggestion that Dominion troops are being made to do more than their share of the fighting, whereupon the British War Office issued a detailed statement showing that since July 31st 84 per cent. of the men engaged in active operations were from the United Kingdom, and that these British troops had sustained 92 per cent. of the