

The Battalion's Rumour Club.

THIRTY-ONE days in and out of the line—mostly in—and 1st B.C. arrived at one of those open-air villages of Picardy. You know the sort I mean—open-air, both in and out of the house, with plenty of loop-holes made by Fritz's guns at long and short range; Southern exposure to the usual pump ("Kein wasser"), said exposure caused by disagreement between the kitchen wall and a whizz-bang.

That evening a few faggots were coaxed into a small fire, and the five men with the 1st B.C. badge on their collars, and the thirty-years' war-look on their resigned countenances, took their seats.

"I told you so," said McLean, the Canadian Scot. "We've invaded Turkey and General Allenby is be-



RENEWED ACTIVITY IN THE KIEL CANAL.
Washing Clothes for munition workers.

sieging Constantinople. Take my word for it, this war's going to finish."

"Where did you get that news?" asked Oldham, from B.C.

"A runner from one of the Companies told me, and he got it from the Orderly Officer."

"Well, that's good," broke in the Lancashire Canadian, scientifically exuding from his mouth about five cents' worth of Star Plug. "And you remember the barrage we heard last night! I saw two boys just down from the line when I was at the Cook House, and they said the Fourth went over yesterday and took 20,000 Heinies and 200 guns."

"Do you think we'll go into the line again?" asked Private Fairleigh, with the half-past-four-in-the-morning expression.

"To-morrow," answered Leyland, the Westerner.—"That is, the Q.-M. asked me to-day if I wanted a mess-tin cover, and when they ask those questions, it means, now 'we shan't be long.'"

"Oh, I don't know," muttered the Private in the left corner seat; "it looks like the end to me. The Yanks have taken Metz and Strassbourg, and they have five batteries of 100-mile guns firing into Berlin."

"What hole did you say you got that from?" asked Leyland.

"That's what I was told at the Y.M.C.A., and they get all the latest."

"Yes, and sometimes later than the latest."

It was McLean's voice, and without waiting for the come-back, he continued, "I promised not to tell anyone this, but I know you men won't say anything. We are going on King's Leave—ninety days."

"Come off—come off!" growled Smith. "That's a d—d lie."

"Well, I thought we were telling d—d lies," retorted McLean. And the meeting broke up, each of the five allied warriors walking away to a shake-down, to dream of a land in which there were no whizz-bangs; neither are there Sergeant-Majors, nor Brigadiers; and the rumour passeth not through many hands ere it reacheth the Private in the front line.

M.G.B.

Draft's Luck.

WHAT do you know about the luck of a man who comes to have a look at our Great War at this late date, and on his way to join the Battalion trips over a Hun booby-trap—potato-masher and trip-wire—and collects the cutest blighty that ever gladdened a stretcher-bearer's eye? Was he born lucky? We rather surmise so. And now he'll be able to go back home and distribute the bovine about the "awful holocaust of war," "a wounded hero from the white-hot heart of the furnace of battle."

And another poor devil drags a danger-encompassed body in and out of the trenches for a couple of years or more—and ^{ha} gets the wooden cross. Enough to make a fellow superstitious, ain't it?