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Note and Comment.

A happy New Year.

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Another twelve months have passed, and the militiamen of Canada can look back upon the record of the departed year with some satisfaction. True, all the grievances of the force have not been removed, all the weak spots strengthened. The old gas pipes have not been withdrawn from the force and handed over to the tender mercies of the thrifty plumber, the Bisley team did not capture the Kolopore cup, the annual camps of the rural corps were conducted on just about the same lines, and there are still absurd appointments in the permanent force made through personal favor.

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Still, much has taken place to give satisfaction to those actuated by a desire to put the force on a respectable foot-

ing, and the outlook generally for the force is distinctly better than it was a year ago. Militiamen understand the general officer commanding better now than they did a twelfth month ago and feel that they have at their head an officer intensely interested in the welfare of the militia and determined to do his best to put it on a sound footing, in spite of politicians and other obstructions. Although the old Snider still holds its place as the recognised arm of the force, the general has at last induced the Government to take up the question of the re-armament of the infantry seriously, and the first shipment of the new arm, the Martini-Metford, should soon arrive in the country, if in fact, it is not here already. The Government has even provided a surprise in this shape of a few modern pieces of ordnance for the fortifications of Quebec, which General Herbert succeeded in obtaining on loan from the Imperial Government.

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Nothing has been done in the direction of reorganizing the rural militia but its time will come probably, as soon as things in connection with the staff and the permanent corps have been straightened out. Although some recent appointments to one of the permanent corps were a source of disappointment as indicating that the force has not yet been emancipated from the baneful influences of political favouritism, it is to be hoped that the very vigorous protest which this incident drew forth will have a salutary effect. The allotment of the vacant commission in the Regiment of Royal Canadian Artillery will, we confidently hope, show that the system of appointments by favour has been abolished once and for all.

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Last week we referred to the efforts which were being made to secure this

appointment for a recently arrived Englishman. Great influence is still being exerted in his behalf, but it is stated on good authority that the question has already been decided so far as he is concerned; and influence is not to count. If true, 's a victory for which, under the circumstances, we can hardly be too thankful

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Talking of favouritism in the allotment of commissions in the permanent militia corps recalls to mind the fact that the sister service, the Northwest Mounted Police, suffers to just as great a degree from the same evil. There is a case in point just now. There is a vacancy, and the applicant who appears to have the best chance of obtaining the commission is a comparatively recent arrival in Canada, a man with no special qualification for the duty, with no Canadian military training and with no claim on the country. All that he has is the influence, and he appears to have enough of that to secure the preference over scores of better qualified men, including graduates of the Royal Military College, Kingston, and men who have done good service for Canada as officers of the active militia. At any rate we shall watch the Official Gazette closely and if the appointment is made we may have some more to say about it. There is just one thing we may be pardoned for pointing out. This gentleman must be at least forty years old, while the regulations of the Mounted Police state distinctly that the age limit for admission is to be thirty-five. Of course some people may consider that a trifle, and the advocates of political appointments do not stop at trifles; but the fact is interesting to remember nevertheless.

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The re-organization of the headquarters staff was one of the interesting events of the year for militiamen; The