

us to the effect that a certain number of medical gentlemen conceived the idea of forming an association for mutual benefit—certainly a most laudable idea and one with which we are in entire sympathy. It is, however, with their methods, not their intention, that we decidedly differ. They have a right to form an association of as many or as few as they please, but what right have they to call it the *Kingston Medical Society* when some medical men who enjoy large and lucrative practices in the city are deliberately excluded—on authority we repeat this statement—from a participation in the mutual help for which the society was primarily organized, unless they make application for membership and are accepted by the ballots of men, in many instances younger than themselves both in years and in practice?

As to the second point raised by the *Æsculapian Society* that such sentiments are inimical to the best interests of the profession, we fail to see how the condemnation of professional jealousies can be antagonistic to the welfare of the profession unless it be that the members themselves are painfully aware of the truth of the accusation; in which case there is every justification for our views.

Every remark made in our original editorial is capable of substantiation, so that it seems to us that it is the *Æsculapian Society* whose sentiments have no foundation in fact, and not ours at all. Further, we fail to understand the motives which can have prompted the *Æsculapian Society* to send such a communication. Not even the remotest reference was made to it, and why does it deem it necessary to champion the cause of another?

We sincerely regret that the nature of the communication has forced us to continue the discussion in justification of our point of view.

A VALUABLE GIFT.

The firm of Bertram & Sons, Dundas, Ont., has presented to the engineering department of Queen's University a valuable drilling machine of 20-in. swing, and of the best and most modern pattern.

The fact that any piece of machinery bears the name of John Bertram & Sons as makers is a sufficient guarantee of its excellence in both design and workmanship.

Messrs. Bertram & Sons in their valuable gift have expressed in the most practicable way possible their appreciation of the work which Queen's is doing; and there can be no doubt that her future mechanical engineers will, when any piece of good machinery is required in places over which they have charge, remember the name and location of the firm which, in their student days, was kind and generous to their Alma Mater.

LITERATURE.

THE ATOMIC THEORY OF LUCRETIUS.

IN preparing this paper I have kept steadily before my mind the wisdom of being brief and direct. I might have selected some larger and more ambitious subject, but on the whole I think one having a more or less close connection with the course of reading in Classical Honours will be more likely to interest you more and may possibly be of some practical benefit to some at least. The theme I have selected is Lucretius and his exposition of the Atomic Theory.

In order to understand the poetry of Lucretius, it is well to know something of his environment, the circumstances that shaped his character and his place in the history of Latin literature. He, with his great contemporary Catullus, bridged over the gulf between the old Latin period, whose expiring notes were sounded by the Satirist Lucilius, and the Classical or Augustan period, whose leading representatives are Virgil, Horace, and Livy. He belongs to a transition period. Born in 99 B.C. and dying in 55 B.C. when Virgil was only 15 years old, and the first Trumvirate had only been recently formed, he breathes the spirit of old republican loyalty, which characterized the generation in which he was born. His spirit is that of the freeborn native of Italy, rather than that of the polished resident of the Capital. No Latin writer is so national in his temper. While drawing his speculative inspiration from Epicurus, and largely versed in Greek philosophy, he admires, and is influenced strongly by, the vigorous life of early Latin literature. He constantly uses the rude devices of early Latin literature, assonance and alliteration to give variety to his style. And while he at times complains of the inability of the Latin language to express the "obscure discoveries of the Greeks," he yet expresses a supreme contempt for those graces of language,

Quae belle tangere possunt

Auris, et lepido quae sunt fucata sonore.

As Sellar says, "He combines some of the rarest elements of the Greek and the Roman temperament, the Greek's ardor of speculation, the Roman's firm hold on reality. A poet of the age of Julius Cæsar, he is animated by the spirit of an early Greek inquirer. He unites the speculative passion of the dawn of ancient science with the minute observation of its meridian, and he applies the imaginative conceptions formed in the first application of abstract thought to the universe, to interpret the living beauty of the world."

Lucretius' poem received little recognition among succeeding writers, but there are clear traces in Virgil, at least, of the influence of his doctrines on