

the diminished importance of the terminal examinations, before he concludes, he devises a "feasible plan" whereby to mitigate *their* evils. If Nemesis does not belong to the "Root and Branch" persuasion, he is certainly very inconsistent.

I have carefully read the letter of Nemesis to find some arguments against the marking system, and to learn what he would put in its place if it were swept away. In the absence of anything of the kind, I am forced to the conclusion that the communication in question must be the outcome of that lowest form of iconoclasm which, acting on the assumption "whatever is, is wrong," blindly cries out against a good thing without an intelligent idea of what it decries, still less of a better thing to substitute for what it would destroy.

I have written at length, Messrs. Editors, and, I fear, have trespassed on your valuable space. If so, my only excuse will be my desire that a subject of such practical importance to all interested in collegiate education, should have some discussion now that Nemesis has opened the way by this attack on the marking system.

GRAD.

RICHMOND LETTER.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—In my last letter to you I endeavored to write somewhat of the attractions in and around Richmond. But not with scenery and places of historic connection does it's interest cease, for when the eye has wearied of wandering over landscapes and the imagination has tired of chasing visions from one scene to another, one can then indulge his tastes by resorting whence the celebrated colored orator and preacher, John Jasper, pours eloquently and defiantly forth his views as embodied in his famous lecture, "De sun do move and de earf am square."

Doubtless the name of this man is unfamiliar to many of you, but in the United States and even beyond the seas, Jasper enjoys unquestionable notoriety. It is chiefly on account of his "Sun Theory" that his name has been made known, although he is said to possess the elements of a true orator.

Being opposed to many things which would aid in elevating his race, particularly to the training of young men for the ministry, his position in the colored race is somewhat analogous to that class in the white race called *fogies*.

His theory of the sun moving about the earth and other crude astronomical views are based on

an extremely limited translation of the Scriptures. All attempts to enlighten him on the subject either through books or by argument, have proved futile, and he remains immovable as the hills.

To give you some idea of the man and his system of reasoning, you may accompany me to his church on a Sabbath afternoon when his sermon on the Sun is to be repeated, it may be at the expense of a party of students or persons wishing to hear him, and sometimes the members of the Legislature in session enliven their wits by a smack of Jasperean Logic.

From what you now know of the man you may expect to see and hear in his church what you would not in the other churches of this city.

As we enter, the "breddren" assembled are singing one of their old time *shouts*. Soon Jasper sweeps up the aisle with the air of the Grand Turk and is met at the desk by one who assists in removing his cloak, when he advances and bows, the singing at once ceasing. As a text he chooses "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name," Exod xv. He then rambles about in Old Testament History, speaking of everything but the sun, for about two hours, when he arrives at one of his strongholds,—the instance of the sun standing still at the command of Joshua. No quicker do the spirits of the sophomores rise in the announcement of an *indisposed professor* than did our weary souls when the speaker announced that he had arrived at the place we had been looking for. The whole force of his eloquence and logic is now brought to bear. A list of varying computations as to the relative distance of the earth from the sun is produced and attacked in the following manner: "Now, how du name of God dem dar men know how far de earf am from de sun I dun' know. Where de tape line come from to measure it an' what de man stand on after he gits up de fust hundred miles, I dun' know. How dem dar men can stand it to go up to de sun, I dun' know."

Of the sun moving he says, "A thing must be gwine or it can't stop; de sun must been gwine or de Lord neber tell it to stop. If a waggon is gwine out dar and stop, it must have been gwine or it neber stop."

His argument in favor of the earth being square is presented in the following manner: "Did you eber hear ob a round thing habin' corners? Now, filosofers say de earf am round, de Lord say from de four corners of de earf, darfor de earf am square."