

the most interesting surviving remnant of that delusion.

Early members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will well remember the teachings and expectations of the Millerites; and many no doubt heard the founder himself expound his doctrine. It was in 1831 that his activity began, when after a close study of the prophecies in the Old Testament, he came to the conclusion that the end of the world was fixed to occur between the 21st of March, 1843, and the 21st of March, 1844. His logic must have been persuasive, for his success was great; and as a result of his labors and those of his leading associates, the delusion spread like wildfire, and thousands upon thousands of people in the north-eastern part of the United States firmly prepared themselves for the approaching day of wrath.

Of course the fateful year passed without any such catastrophe or change as William Miller's followers had been taught to expect. The world wagged on in its accustomed way, and year by year the disappointed and deluded sect lost members by apostasy, resignation and death, until it at last has passed almost out of recollection. One of the very last of the original band, as he was also one of the most important in the halcyon days of the movement, was the poor old Allen Pettibone whose self-murder has just occurred.

DESIGN IN NATURE.

Herbert Spencer's criticism of Darwin's theory of natural selection is interestingly discussed by a writer in a recent number of the *Independent*. It has been supposed by many that this theory would account for the variety of species without ascribing the creative process to a Supreme Intelligence.

Mr. Spencer points out the impossibility of obtaining advantageous variations in a highly organized being by chance, for instance in the case of animals like the cat, which are fitted for leaping. The difficult question for those who deny any purposive element at the bottom of organic evolution is, how to secure that complicated co-ordination of results involved in the development of any decidedly advantageous anatomical variations. For example, the anatomical variations by which an animal accustomed to regular movement over smooth ground is transformed into one adapted to the work of leaping over rough surfaces is not confined to changes in a single organ, but involves co-ordinate changes in almost every part of the system. The ability to leap like a kangaroo, or even like a cat, involves a striking development not only in the length and strength of the bones of the hind limbs, but in the articulations of the joints, and in the development of the muscles. A change must take place not only in one bone and one set of muscles, but in all the bones of the hinder extremities simultaneously. Not only must the long bones and their co-ordinate muscles by which the limbs are suddenly lengthened for a leap be properly modified, but the bones of the toes which sustain the reaction of the leap and their co-ordinate muscles must be

correspondingly modified. Otherwise there will be no fulcrum for the increased exertion to act upon. Thus, without counting the changes, which would be required in the "pelvis as well as in the nerves and blood vessels, there are, counting bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments, at least fifty different parts in each hind leg which have to be enlarged. Moreover, they have to be enlarged in unlike degrees. The muscles and tendons of the outer toes, for example, need not be added to so much as those of the medial toes." The chances that all these changes shall occur together spontaneously are as one in favor, to many millions against. Their actual concurrence brings most clearly to view a divinity at work shaping the development of animals as well as the lives of men.

But the argument does not close even here. An animal adapted in the hinder portions of his body for leaping high in the air must also be adapted for protection against the violence of the descent which is involved in every such ascent. The forelimbs must be changed as much as the hind ones are, but in a radically different manner. To learn the different character of these changes, one has but to "contrast the markedly bent hind limbs of a cat with its almost straight fore limbs, or contrast the silence of the upward spring on to the table with the thud which the fore paws make as it jumps off the table." To make the changes in the hind limbs advantageous there must be a simultaneous change in the fore limbs. When the number of these changes is taken into account, the probabilities against their arising fortuitously and in a progressive adjustment to the first, runs up into the billions; so that it is outside any rational recognition.

If the impossibility of nature being in its infinitude of forms, the result of chance is admitted, the only rational conclusion conceivable is that it is the work of an intelligence, encompassing the end from the beginning, and this modern philosophy, after previous hesitation and bewilderment, is rapidly demonstrating. Believers were once considered antiquated in their views; soon skeptics will be found only in the rear ranks in the general march of progress.

LIBRARIAN SPOFFORD'S NEMESIS.

Every intelligent visitor to the Capitol at Washington whose rounds of that glorious building included the congressional library (either in its present or past quarters), must have been struck with the admirable fitness and the splendid capacity of its chief, Librarian A. R. Spofford. For a great many years he has held the position, and he is far better known today than the great majority of congressmen whose term of office has been coincident with his. A thorough bookworm, and apparently having at his finger tips the contents of the vast stores of volumes under his direction, he is nevertheless a most amiable and approachable man, good-natured and accommodating in the highest degree.

These graces and qualifications, however, may not blind the observer to the fact, but rather serve to emphasize it, that according to recent

dispatches Mr. Spofford's own goodness of heart may have led to his undoing. Bookworms are not usually keen business men; and when they are particularly easy-tempered, they are peculiarly the victims of unscrupulous and tricky associates. The copyright department of the library is of itself a mammoth institution and its fees must aggregate a very large sum. In the detailed labor of keeping all these things straight, any chief must of necessity depend largely upon subordinates. In the present instance it is necessary to state that in addition to his own presumed inability to grapple with accounts, Mr. Spofford has been the unsuspecting victim of the spoils system in its worst form. The library has been deemed a suitable place for congressional favorites, who have been dumped in upon the aged chief, no doubt in many instances quite regardless of their fitness, in a way calculated to upset the best intentions of a far more aggressive and vigorous official. It is another glaring instance of the havoc wrought by that pernicious evil in our public departments. At any time an outrage and a crime, the spoils system is especially atrocious when it drags into disrepute and belittles the character of an honorable, lovable, able but gentle old man.

IMPORTANT TO MEXICAN COLONISTS.

For the benefit of those who either for business or pleasure contemplate a prolonged journey or permanent settlement in Old Mexico, the News gives information that the custom house at Las Palomas has been reopened. The point lies immediately south of Deming, New Mexico, where the railroad would be left by those proceeding into the neighboring republic in that vicinity. It was closed some time ago owing to various unpleasantnesses, and since then settlers desiring to cross the border have had to make a considerable detour in order to reach another office where their effects could be properly inspected and passed. Its reopening will be a great convenience to all such as may wish to identify themselves with our settlements in Chihuahua, and the fact should be generally made known.

PROTECT THE STAGE.

In the interest of the stage as well as morality in general, the scheme to present in dramatic form the horrible tragedy enacted in the Emmanuel Baptist church, San Francisco, should be protested against and frowned down. It is not impossible that such blood-curdling scenes would draw large audiences and consequently prove successful from a mere mercenary point of view. Many people are instinctively drawn towards the horrible as the bird towards the venomous fangs of the snake. People used to flock around the stakes where human beings were expiring in untold agonies; around the gallows and executioner's ax, no matter if they knew beforehand that they would swoon before all was over. That spirit