THE ANGLICAN CARPET

Once upon a time

I saw a stout Greek Orthodox priest

emerge from behind the iconostasis,

followed by acolytes swinging censers

like walking grandfather clocks.

The priest stumbled on the edge

of one rug, slipped on another,

going down

in slow motion, freezing

the acolytes who barely got a hand up

before he hit.

It struck me

that something like this

might have happened to William Paley

on his way to a natural theology (1802)

in which he reasoned that the design

so evident in this world

argued for the work of a creator.

Not much new about that, except that

Paley had a Cambridge degree, good maths

and showed that in a universe with four or more

spatial dimensions the mutual attraction

of masses for each other would no longer go as l/r2.

Circular orbits wouldn't be stable, nor

clocks work. It was better to stay

in this slippery 3D world and

take on the Creator standing up.