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- 2 Quoted by D. E. Nineham, 'The Use of the Bible in Modern Theology', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 52, 1969, p.197.
- 3 Vol. 5, No. 2, May 1978.
- 4 *Is 'Holy Scripture' Christian?* (SCM, 1971), p.17.
- 5 Christopher Evans, loc. cit.
- 6 Op. cit., p.198.
- 7 In *What About the New Testament?*, Essays in honour of Christopher Evans, ed. by Morna Hooker and Colin Hickling (SCM, 1975), p.242.
- 8 A. S. Peake, *The Nature of Scripture* (Hodder & Stoughton, 3rd. edn., 1922), p.67-71.

## God's Action in the World

### 2 R. G. SWINBURNE

THIS topic is a vast one, and I was uncertain whether to give an outline sketch of the various issues in the field, or whether to concentrate on one narrow corner of the field. I have now basically opted for the former, but my choice carries the consequence that my paper does not go into many of the issues in the detailed depth which they require. I have, however, confined myself in one crucial respect. I discuss what we are saying when we claim that God acts, and also any immediate and substantial objections to claiming that he does, but I do not attempt to argue positively for the claim that he does. Space necessitates some limits. I apologize for the fact that some of what I shall say I have said before in my books *The Concept of Miracle* and *The Coherence of Theism*; and also for the fact that some of the things which I say towards the end of the paper are first thoughts on a matter which needs much more careful working out.

The traditional theological doctrine is that *all* that happens is due to the action of God. There is only one exception admitted by the majority of theologians, and that is the acts of free creatures such as human beings (and also devils and angels, if such there are and if they are free). If a man chooses to kill or steal, God is not fully responsible, most theologians say; and if they say that, they ought also to say that if a man chooses *not* to kill or steal, God is not fully responsible either, and many theologians have said that too. Of course God makes the free creatures, gives them their freedom, encourages their choices one way rather than another, and sees that their choices are executed (e.g., when a man pulls the trigger, God sees to it that the bullet leaves the gun and follows the route intended by the man); but he does not make those choices. With

that exception, all that happens is the result of God's action, and it is the foreseen result of that action – God does nothing unintentionally; all that he brings about is part of an intended whole.

However, most theologians in saying this do not wish to rule out (in normal cases) natural causation, that is, causation of the kind with which science deals. A theologian such as Aquinas in saying that God causes all things does not wish to deny such evident facts as that ignited gunpowder causes explosions, my dropping a plate causes it to break, and so on. But, says Aquinas, God causes the explosion by causing the gunpowder to cause the explosion; and God does that, Aquinas claims, by giving it the power to produce that effect when ignited, and sustaining that power in it.<sup>1</sup> The medieval picture of natural or scientific causation is somewhat different from the modern scientific one as analysed by Hume or modern philosophers of science such as Hempel.<sup>2</sup> For Aquinas, it is things, not events, which cause. It is the gunpowder, not its ignition, which causes the explosion. It does so through having the power to cause explosions. Being a natural object, and not a free agent, it has no option whether to cause the explosion – it must cause the explosion when ignited (in suitable conditions of temperature and pressure, etc.), but otherwise cannot. When it is to exercise its power is one of its liabilities; a thing's liabilities are what it must suffer (as opposed to what it does), e.g., a liability to break if dropped, and a liability to exercise its powers under certain circumstances (e.g., when ignited). Almost all that goes on in the world is a matter of things causing effects in virtue of their powers and liabilities. God, according to Aquinas, keeps things in being, gives them their powers and liabilities, and so is responsible for the natural causation which goes on. Of course he does not on the whole create things with their powers and liabilities in a random way. He creates kinds of things, e.g., different chemical substances such as gold and sulphur, each bit of which has the same powers and liabilities as each other bit, and he keeps them in being with those powers and liabilities.

The view of scientific causality developed from Hume gives a somewhat different picture of this relation. On this more modern view scientific causation is a relation between events – one event, not an object, causes another event. Event C causes event E if there is a law L from which it follows that C will be followed by E. Laws state how one kind of event is followed by another (e.g., an ignition of gunpowder by an explosion; something being liberated near the Earth by its moving towards it with velocity  $v=gt$ , iron being immersed in acid by its dissolving, etc.). If it follows from L and C that E will occur, then C causes E. L and C jointly explain E. Thus a body's being liberated 64ft above the Earth (C) and Galileo's law of fall that all bodies near the surface of the Earth have an acceleration towards it of  $32 \text{ ft/sec}^2$  (L) explain the body hitting the ground two seconds later (E). E follows deductively from L and C, as mathematics shows. I do not find this modern view of scientific explanation in terms of 'laws' an obvious

improvement on the old view in terms of 'powers'. Indeed in their recent book, *Casual Powers*,<sup>3</sup> R Harré and E. H. Madden have argued strongly in favour of the ancient one. But the idea of God as ultimately responsible for what happens can be grafted as easily on to the new one, as on to the old one. All that the theologian needs to claim is that it is God who keeps the laws of nature in operation. In so doing he is responsible for what exists and for how it interacts with other things.

There is, we must note at this stage, a difference of kind between scientific explanation, however analysed, and what has been called 'personal explanation', both legitimate ways of explaining phenomena. The difference is most obvious if we give the modern account of scientific explanation. Personal explanation is the kind of explanation which we use in everyday life and in psychology in explaining the behaviour of people. Asked for an explanation of my taking the train yesterday (E), we find it in my intention to travel to Bristol. The event E is explained by an agent, myself (P) who brought E about with some intention J (to go to Bristol), i.e., in order to further a goal. Agents are not events, and neither are intentions. An intention is not something which a man formulates to himself in words before an event, but a goal which he aims to achieve by his actions. We have here a different pattern of 'explanation' from the scientific one,<sup>4</sup> and yet quite obviously a legitimate pattern. Clearly my acting with that intention does explain the occurrence of the event. Nevertheless an event may have more than one explanation, if the factors cited in one explanation explain the existence and operation of the factors cited in another. Thus the present position of Mars is explained by its position and velocity yesterday and by Kepler's laws. It is also explained by its position and velocity and those of the Sun and other planets last week and Newton's laws. Yet there is no conflict here. For Newton's laws, together with the positions and velocities of the Sun and other planets, explain the operation of Kepler's laws, and they also explain the position of Mars yesterday which in turn, together with Kepler's laws, explains its position today. So it may well be that the factors involved in personal explanation (agents having intentions), at any rate in part, have a scientific explanation (in terms of goings-on in the brain), or the factors involved in scientific explanation have a personal explanation; and so there may also be a scientific explanation of my being on the train, at any rate a partial one.

There have been theists who have claimed that science does not really discover causes, for God alone causes inanimate goings-on; all that science does is discover correlations between kinds of events – ignited gunpowder does not cause explosions, nor dropping plates cause them to break. Rather it is the case that when gunpowder is ignited, God reliably causes an explosion; when plates are dropped, God reliably breaks them. This doctrine, called occasionalism, is however rather implausible, and there is no need for the theist to adopt it. The obvious thing for the theist to say is, as Aquinas did, that scientific causality operates, but that God

makes it operate. The laws of nature or, to put it in the other way, the powers and liabilities of things, are due to God. In saying this, the theist is saying that there is a personal explanation (in terms of God acting with a certain intention, known or unknown) of the existence and operation of the factors involved in all scientific explanation.

It is characteristic of man's advance in understanding the world that, believing in the unity of the world, he seeks the underlying principles of its operation which operate in different fields. Newton sought principles of mechanics which determined what happened not merely on Earth, in mechanical interactions between bodies, but in the heavens, in the behaviour of planets and comets. Where previously scientists had held that different laws operated, Newton gave a general account of the laws of mechanics operative in all fields, from which the laws of planetary motion or the laws of collision were derivable special cases. The simplicity of the resulting one system over the previous diverse systems was evidence of its truth. Likewise Einstein sought physical principles which determined not merely the mechanical behaviour of things but their electromagnetic behaviour, and again the simplicity of having one system as opposed to two has been regarded as evidence of its truth. We see now that we use in explanation of phenomena explanations of two types – scientific and personal. It would be surprising and irrational if the search for simpler and more comprehensive explanations were to resist the natural impulse to cross the border between types of explanation. We should seek to explain the operation of personal causality in scientific terms, or vice versa. A lot of philosophical and scientific work is being devoted to the former programme, the programme of materialism. Many are seeking to explain the existence of persons with their conscious mental life, and their bringing about events by acting intentionally, in terms of brain-states and scientific laws.<sup>5</sup> This is a worthy programme, although I think that there are strong grounds for believing that it will not succeed. For similar reasons the reverse programme of explaining the existence of material objects and their conformity to scientific laws in terms of the action of person or persons seem equally worthy. It is the programme of the theist, who believes that all things are ultimately to be explained in terms of the action of God or other free agents whom he allows to act.

God's action in conserving natural laws is in general predictable action. We can infer from how material bodies have behaved in the past to how they will behave in the future. If we believe that God is responsible for this behaviour, we believe that he is in general to be relied on in his conserving of natural laws. Jeremiah expressed God's reliability in this respect when he spoke of his 'covenant' of the day and the night, so that there be 'day and night in their season'<sup>6</sup>. It is a good thing for the human race that the world is in this way in general a predictable place, for, if it is, beings of limited power and knowledge can set about growing in power over the world and in knowledge of it. We can see this point by

means of the well-known philosophical distinction between a man's basic actions and his mediated actions.<sup>7</sup> A basic action is something which a man just does, does not do by doing anything else. Opening my mouth, moving my legs, saying 'ah', clenching my hands are basic actions. Whereas scoring a goal, or shooting a man, sawing a tree in half or writing a paper are things which I do by doing other things. I score a goal by kicking a ball in a certain direction; I shoot a man by pulling the trigger of a gun pointing in a certain direction; and so on. These actions are mediated actions. To perform a mediated action I have to know that a basic action of mine will have certain consequences. I have to know that if the ball is propelled in this direction it will land in the goal. I can only know that if there is general knowledge of the form 'if C happens, E will happen' to be obtained. And that can only be if things behave regularly. I can set myself to grow in power over the world by setting myself to grow in knowledge of its regularities, for thereby I shall be able to produce new effects by my basic actions – but I can do this only if there are regularities of which knowledge is to be had. Also if I am to acquire knowledge of the world beyond my immediate environment, this can only be had by inference from my immediate environment. From a footprint in the sand, I infer that a man was walking here. But I can only make this inference if there are regular connections between things – if footprints usually only occur where men have walked recently, and so on. So the general conformity of the world to an orderly pattern enables men to set about growing in control and knowledge of it; and so there was abundant reason for God to make an orderly world.

But an entirely regular world would not be one in which God had any living interaction with men. It would be a world in which all God's reactions to human actions and situations were programmed in advance. He would never respond to their sins as they committed them, their requests and acts of worship as they made them. And that would give our dealings with him a very impersonal quality. He could, of course, still have made the world so that different things happened to men according to the different free choices which they made. Thus he could have arranged it so that if a certain man started on a selfish path, he met a holy man who warned him of the consequences of his action. But it would have been built into the world in advance that this would happen; God would not have been responding to the man's choice of a selfish path as he made it. Again, petitionary prayer could not in a literal sense be answered. Suppose that my friend is ill from cancer, and I pray for his recovery. Then whether he recovers or not will depend on the causal laws which operate in the world. They may be such as to bring about his recovery or bring about his non-recovery quite independently of whether or not I pray. In that case the petitionary prayer would be pointless, for it can make no difference to what happens. Alternatively, the laws may be such that my praying (at any rate if frequent or intense enough) brings about his recovery, by some strange psychophysical mechanism. In that

case, of course, the petitionary prayer would certainly be worthwhile, but it would still not have the point which it seems to have and which theists down the ages have believed that it does have. For petitionary prayer is asking, and one asks in the hope that the person asked will intervene as a result of being moved by the request, to produce an effect which would not otherwise occur. And if prayer did not have its apparent point then in praying there would be no interaction with God. God would not do what he does in response to my concern. One would have no more real interaction with God than one does with a man who has written a learning programme, and then left students to carry on with it.

The Bible pictures God as at any rate sometimes doing what he does in response to what men do, where what men do is up to them. God was going to destroy Ninevah but, because men repented at the preaching of Jonah, he did not. And so on. For this reason most theists down the ages have believed that (at any rate sometimes) God acts in the world in an unpredictable way, acts directly as opposed to acting through conserving natural laws. To quote Aquinas again, 'God can work apart from the order implanted in things, by producing effects without proximate causes.'<sup>8</sup> His operation through natural laws has been called his ordinary causality; his operation, not through these, his extraordinary causality. If we suppose that natural laws are deterministic in form, God will exert his extraordinary causality either by acting in areas (if any there be) to which natural laws do not apply, or by violating<sup>9</sup> natural laws in the sense of bringing about what would not happen if natural laws continued to operate. If we suppose that natural laws are statistical, the picture becomes of course rather more complicated, but roughly – God's direct action will be a matter of bringing about an event when that event is not highly probable on natural laws. For the sake of simplicity of exposition, I shall work with the assumption that natural laws are deterministic in form; I do not think that it will vitiate the argument in any way. My assumption is the assumption of an extreme and probably false position, the one most uncomfortable for the theist. If the theist can find a place for the concept of God's direct action on my assumption, he can of course find a place for it much more easily on the assumption that natural laws are statistical and so that the causal nexus is much less tight.

If there were areas where natural laws do not apply – e.g., perhaps some aspects of the mental life – God's direct action would not involve any interference with natural laws. He could give a man the thought to help me without interfering in the natural order. But in general God's direct action will involve suspension or violation of natural laws. For God to be a living God with whom we interact there must be the possibility and, more, the occasional occurrence of such violations. Maybe normally God is not going to change things at our request, and he has already organized himself as to how to respond to human actions. Hence the prayer to God 'who knowest our necessities before we ask and

our ignorance in asking'. But nevertheless there must be such occasional violations.

If there are such occasional violations, then the non-occurrence of a violation on any one occasion despite a prayer for such will constitute an answer to prayer (the answer 'No'), since God does sometimes produce violations. But if there are never any violations, one more failure of such to occur hardly constitutes even an answer. If the income tax authority only replies to your written requests to change your tax assessment when it decides to change it, its failure to reply can be taken as its way of saying 'No'. But if it never replies, then its failure to reply is just ignoring you, not a rejection of your particular request.

The trouble, however, with the occasional violation is that, as Hume pointed out, we shall always have very good reason in retrospect for claiming that there was no violation. For consider our evidence for what happened on some past occasion. There are four kinds of evidence.<sup>10</sup> First, each man has his own apparent memory of what happened – I seem to remember seeing John yesterday. Secondly, we have the testimony of others as to what they seem to remember – several people claim to have seen John dead the day before yesterday. Thirdly, we have traces of the past, physical remains such as footprints, fingerprints, cigarette ash, carbon-14 which allow us, given knowledge of laws of nature, to retrodict what happened in the past. Knowing that cigarette ash is caused by smoking (or otherwise burning) cigarettes, and very rarely in any other way, we can retrodict from the presence of the ash that previously a cigarette was smoked (or otherwise burnt). Finally, we have our knowledge of the rest of the world (our background evidence about how things are), and in particular of how things behave on other occasions – and this acts as a corrective to discount some of the claims made on the basis of the first three kinds of evidence. If I report that I met a man ten feet tall, you will be suspicious of my report on the ground that men do not normally reach a height of ten feet. Or if someone reports an event which, if it occurred, would be a violation of a law of nature, this fact counts heavily against the report. Our claims as to what normally happens, and what are the laws of nature are, of course, based on our (apparent) observations on other occasions. Observing what happens on other occasions, we see that water stays water and does not normally turn into wine, that men do not levitate, and so on. We have very good ground for inferring that what happens in a regular way in certain circumstances on many occasions, will happen again when those circumstances are repeated. So when somebody claims that at a certain time and place water turned into wine, there is good evidence from what has happened on all other occasions that it did not. The witnesses must have misobserved in some way. Maybe they were all subject to mass hallucination, being too drunk to notice that what was really in the flagons was water. Or maybe the servants lied when they said that water was put into flagons, etc., etc.



One needs to observe very carefully many different aspects of a situation to check that there really was a violation. For example, when a levitation is reported, one needs to check that there were no secret strings or magnet responsible for the rising in the air – just as one needed to check that there was no tape recorder hidden in the clothes of the pregnant lady who claimed recently that the foetus in her womb was reciting the Koran. And it is too often possible that witnesses were careless in their observation of aspects of the situation. It is going to be very rare indeed that we have enough confident and reliable witnesses (or evidence of kinds one and three) to outweigh the heavy evidence of what normally happens. Although very rare, it will not, I have urged in *The Concept of Miracle*, be impossible to have such evidence. Indeed for some reported violations we may have just such evidence. Nevertheless the main point remains. Almost every violation of laws of nature, if such occur, is going to be unnoticed simply because of our evidential standards. Even if there is evidence of the first three kinds that a violation has occurred, it will almost always be outweighed by evidence of the fourth kind. And with regard to most events in the world, there will be no evidence of the first three kinds. For most things that happen there are no observers and there are no traces. Leaves fall, chairs stay still in unoccupied rooms, and the wind blows tiles off roofs without anyone seeing these things happen. And then, there will be every reason for supposing that where no one was looking what happened was what normally happens.

There may be a violation of natural laws occurring in the empty room next door at this moment, say a chair being moved, so that when you go into the room you will fall over and break your leg, so as to have a spell in bed in the course of which you will have time to reflect on the pattern of your life in such a way as to lead to a dramatic conversion of soul. Perhaps, too, your friend has prayed for such an event. But although what happened may indeed have been God's answer to those prayers, there is very unlikely to be any evidence to show that any violation of natural laws occurred. Nobody saw the chair move. People are unlikely even to think that they remembered, well after the event, exactly where chairs were. Even if one or two people think that they do remember, they will judge – and be rational to judge – that they 'must have been mistaken' (for after all, all our evidence from other occasions suggests that chairs do not move around on level surfaces spontaneously). Even suppose that the observers are highly confident and corroborate each other's testimony, all that shows is that somebody or something moved the chair. But then perhaps someone came into the room after the observers had left and disturbed the furniture. How likely, well after the event, are we to have evidence that nobody (not even a burglar) entered the room? And even if nobody came into the room, who knows what expansion and contraction of floorboards with change of temperature, etc., can on occasion achieve? The chances of our having substantial

evidence in the form of traces or witness reports that nature was or was not violated are very, very small indeed; and so we reasonably suppose that what happened is in accord with the natural laws which operate on other occasions. We could, however, very often be mistaken, and never know. There could be quite a lot of violations of natural laws occurring all the time, and nobody ever knows. The point is a basically Kantian one. Kant emphasized that we slot events into causal sequences; it is not so much that we discover that always events have causes, but that we only allow to have happened anything for which we can suppose there to have been a causal story as to how it happened. I do not wish to go nearly as far as Kant who claimed<sup>11</sup> that our standards are such that we could never count anything as an event lacking a cause of the scientific kind, but only wish to claim that our standards are such that it is extremely difficult for anything so to qualify.

However, I have overstated my case in a crucial respect, and must now partly retract what I have said. My fourth kind of evidence is our knowledge of the rest of the world, which provides grounds for saying what happened on the occasion in question. But in expounding this I assumed that that knowledge was simply a knowledge of the kind of regularities which held on other occasions described in a fairly physical kind of way, e.g., water remaining water, chairs on level surfaces staying where they are put unless some person moves them or some object bumps into them. But our reflection on the world may suggest deeper theories of its nature than such generalizations or even the physical laws about unobservables which are postulated to account for these (e.g., laws about atoms and fundamental particles). Reflection on the existence of the Universe, and the orderliness of nature, its providential character (e.g., that it provides opportunity for free agents to enjoy themselves and to grow spiritually and morally, and to help others to enjoy themselves and to grow spiritually and morally), and other particular features of the Universe may give reason to suppose that it was created and is sustained by God, a loving Creator. Whether these phenomena do support the claim that God exists is a matter of whether the traditional arguments for the existence of God have some force (considered not as deductive arguments in which the premisses entail the conclusion, but as inductive arguments in which they each provide some evidence for it). Other phenomena which support this conclusion might be the fact (if it were a fact) that those who sincerely follow the religious path find point in the things that happen to them, or that various people have claimed to have had deep religious experiences.

If our background knowledge suggested this, then it would indicate that the things which happen in the world are brought about by God. But then, by the argument which I gave earlier, God might be expected to act directly in the world from time to time. The background knowledge would suggest not merely such patterns of order as water staying water and not turning into wine, but a deeper pattern of order of things

conforming to God's providence. (Aquinas emphasized<sup>12</sup> that the things which God brings about, but not in the normal way, happen in conformity with the deeper order of his providence which dictates occasional exceptions to scientific regularities.) To the extent to which background knowledge suggests all that, we rightly take a lot more seriously evidence of the first three kinds suggesting that God has intervened. We ask a lot less in the way of careful testimony to substantiate a claim that the miraculous has occurred. A claim that someone rose from the dead, based on testimony of witnesses, which would rightly be discounted by someone who did not see other aspects of the world as providing some grounds for believing that there is a God, would be taken very seriously by someone who already had grounds for believing that there was a God who might be expected very occasionally to bring about that sort of thing (just as, to take an analogy, if you have knowledge that there is a burglar around, scratches on the paint are better evidence that your house has been broken into than they would be if you did not have the former knowledge). A convinced theist who considers the detailed historical evidence (of the first three kinds) will rationally see quite a number of violations in the world, where a convinced atheist who considers the same evidence will see none. Only when they have settled their fundamental disagreement will they be able to settle how to interpret certain particular historical phenomena. A half-convinced theist may see a plausible case for the odd violation. This is why it is no good thinking that rational theists and atheists can cooperately reach agreed historical conclusions as to what happens in the way of violations of natural laws, while remaining theists or a theists as the case maybe. In view of the need for the most careful observation to produce much of a case in the way of evidence of the first three kinds for or against a violation on a particular occasion, and the undoubted infrequency of such violations, many theists may rationally believe that there are violations from time (because God would be expected to produce such) without being able to say which events were violations. Just as the convinced materialist may rationally be convinced that there are no violations of natural laws, although he has never investigated the historical evidence on any particular occasion. Which belief is true can only be assessed on far wider considerations than particular detailed historical evidence – we need to evaluate the worth of all arguments for and against the existence of God.

Of course God could, if he so chose, produce an event which was *manifestly* a violation of a natural law. Very few events could so count. It would not be enough for God to make the Sun go backwards for half an hour. This would have to be seen by observers all over the world (otherwise it would be judged to be an illusion caused by local atmospheric conditions), sophisticated observers (otherwise the observers would be judged to be unreliable), when no massive bodies were deflecting Sun or Earth by gravitational force from their normal paths

(that could be shown only if other planets were seen not to be affected), and so on. But then why on Earth should God do such a thing? To prove his existence and his power to all men. The violation would only do that if it was evidently due to God's action. It might perhaps have the required effect if it occurred in answer to a prayer. But not just to one man's own private prayer – men pray privately for all sorts of different things to happen all the time; it could just be a small coincidence that that event happened when one man was praying for it. It would have to happen in answer to world-wide unprecedented public prayer – to be a sort of world-wide Mount Carmel experiment. But why on Earth should God bring about a violation of this overwhelmingly evidential kind? So that all might believe. But God is not interested in all believing for its own sake. What is the merit in believing what stares you in the face – there is no merit in my believing that here is a table; the great demonstration might make the belief that there is a God equally natural but equally unmeritorious. The sort of belief for which God looks is the belief which is the result of searching by men convinced of the importance of religion, a belief which a man holds and acts on because the evidence favours it more than rival beliefs, albeit only slightly, and on which nevertheless a man is prepared to risk his life because doing the right thing in this field is of such importance. On all this, see Hebrews 11. Great demonstrations would hinder, not help, the flourishing of such belief.

That being so, God is not interested in great demonstrations. He is interested merely in interacting, though not in being clearly seen to interact by all. But in such cases his activity will be generally unnoticed, except by those who already have some belief in his existence and operation. I conclude that the theist may believe that God normally acts in the world in conserving natural laws, but that occasionally he may respond to the human situation by acting directly. There are no immediately obvious difficulties in the theist maintaining this position. Whether it is correct depends on the evidential force of arguments for and against the existence of God.

### Notes

- 1 See St Thomas Aquinas *Summa Contra Gentiles* III.70 (translated under the title *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith* by Vernon J. Bourke, New York, 1958). 'How the Same Effect is from God and from a Natural Agent.'
- 2 See David Hume *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section VII. (In the edition edited by L. A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford, 1902, see p.77.) C. G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation* (New York, 1965), pp.348-51.
- 3 Oxford, 1975.
- 4 For detailed argument on the difference of kind between scientific and personal explanation see my *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford, 1977), pp.131-41.
- 5 See for example all the philosophical work on mind-brain identity theory, which has been done in recent years. For the earlier papers on this, see (ed.) C. V. Borst *The Mind-Brain Identity Theory* (London, 1970). For a more recent discussion and

defence of the theory, see J. W. Cornman, *Materialism and Sensations* (New Haven and London, 1971).

- 6 Jer.33:20. See also Jer.33:25.
- 7 Originally due to A. C. Danto. See his 'Basic Actions', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1965, 2, pp.141-8.
- 8 *Summa Contra Gentiles* (translated under the title *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith* by Vernon J. Bourke, New York 1956) 3.99.
- 9 For fuller analysis of the concept of a 'violation' of a law of nature, see my *The Concept of Miracle* (London, 1971), Ch. 3.
- 10 I here summarize the account of our knowledge of the past given in *The Concept of Miracle*, Ch. 4.
- 11 I. Kant *Critique of Pure Reason*. Second Analogy.
- 12 See, e.g., *op.cit.*, 3.99 and 100.

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