

13th April, 1933.

Major Leonard Darwin,  
Cripps's Corner,  
Forest Row,  
Sussex.

Dear Major Darwin,

*definite*

I think you have answered Eddington rather than myself, about free will. What I mean will be clearer from a related point. On a purely deterministic scheme causation itself would be an illusion, all things being already assigned their appropriate places in space-time, it would be very arbitrary to take two items of the nexus and call one cause and the other effect. This would be so even if subsequent and antecedent in time were unambiguous terms, for as Eddington emphasises one might reverse these terms. Introduce arbitrary elements and causation takes quite a ~~different~~ meaning, that if A had happened otherwise (as it might at that instant quite well have done) then B would have been modified. Now I feel that the reality of causation originating in self is all we have a right intuitively to claim; put in this way one abstracts the essential element in the psychology of choice, from all its less relevant connections. I admit that one ought still to hesitate about saying "it is I that choose" because it is not clear that the I can be identified with any particular element of the activity with which we identify ourselves. But physical arbitrariness does seem to have the great merit of reinstating causation.

Yours sincerely,