Yesterday someone wrote to me asking: “After all, what is the Divine?” I answered. I told him that I was giving a reply to help him, but there could be a hundred which would all be good, one as good as another.

“The Divine is lived, but cannot be defined.”

And then I added: but as you put to me the question, I answer: “The Divine is the absolute of perfection, eternal source of all that exists, of whom we become conscious progressively, all the while being Himself from all eternity.”

Once someone told me also that it was for him something simply unthinkable. So I answered him: “No! That does not help you. You have only to think that the Divine is all (at the maximum, yes), all that we want to become in our highest, most luminous aspiration. All that we want to become, that is the Divine.” He was so happy, he told me: “Oh! That way it becomes easy!”

But when you look — as you look coming out of the mental activity and as you look at the experience which you have — and you say to yourself: “How to say this? How to explain this?”, then what is nearest, most accessible is this: into this “something” which we aspire to become, we put instinctively, spontaneously, all that we wish to be, all that we conceive of as most wonderful, all that is the object of an intense aspiration (intense and ignorant), all that. And with all that you come near to the “Something” and... Essentially, it is not by the thought that you have the contact; you have the contact through something identical in the being, which wakes up by the intensity of the aspiration. And then for oneself, as soon as this contact — this fusion — is obtained, even if only for a second, there is no longer any need to explain: it is something that imposes itself in an absolute way and that is outside and beyond all explanation.
But in order to reach there, each one puts into it whatever guides him most easily.

And when one has the experience, at the moment of this fusion, this joining, it becomes evident to the consciousness that only the identical can know the identical and that therefore it is the proof that It is there (Mother points to the centre of the heart). It is a proof that It is there. And it is by the intensity of aspiration that this awakens.

When I received the question, it was altogether as if the person was telling me, “Yes, yes, all that is very good, but after all what is this that is the Divine?” Then I read his letter; there came a silence, a total silence, of everything, and as though a single look, a single look gathering together everything and wanting to see.... I remained in this way, looking, till the words came; then I wrote: “Here is one answer; there could be a hundred, one as good as another.”

At the same time, when there was this look towards the “something” that needed definition, there was a great silence everywhere and a great aspiration (gesture as of a flame rising up), and all the forms which this aspiration took. It was very interesting... the story of the aspiration of earth... towards the wonderful Unknown which one wants to become.

And everyone — whoever was destined to make the joining — in his simplicity believes that the bridge he has followed is the only one. The result: religions, philosophies, dogmas, credos — battle.

Seen as a whole it is very interesting, very charming, with a Smile that looks out. Oh! this Smile... that looks out. This Smile, as though it were saying, “You make it so complicated and it could be so simple!”

To express it in a literary way, one might say: “Such complications for such a simple thing: to be oneself.”

(Silence)
Notes on the Way

And you, what do you think the Divine is?

*I do not know, it is a question I never put to myself.*

Neither do I! I have never put the question to myself. Because as soon as there was a need to know, there was spontaneously an answer. And an answer, not with words which one debates: an answer... something like that, a vibration. It is a thing almost constant now.

Naturally men create difficulties (I believe they must like them very much, because...) for everything, for the least thing there is always a world of difficulties. So one passes one’s time saying: “Quiet, quiet, quiet — be calm.” And the body itself lives in the midst of difficulties (it also seems to like them!), but all of a sudden the cells sing out their OM... spontaneously. And then it is as though a child’s joy in all these cells which say (*Mother, in a tone of wonder*): “Ah yes! One is able to do that? One has the right to do that!” It is touching.

And the effect is immediate: this great Vibration, peaceful, all powerful.

As for me, if I was not under the constant pressure of all the wills around, I would say: “Why do you want to know what the Divine is? What does it matter to you? You have only to become it.” But they do not understand a joke.

“I want to know what the Divine is.”

“But no, it is altogether useless.”

“Ah!”

They answer you with a scandalised look: “Ah! It isn’t interesting?”

“You have no need to know: you have to become it.”

For them, I mean the vast intellectual majority, they cannot conceive that one can do or be something without knowing what it is.

That also, one might say if one likes the joke: “It is only when one does not know that one is most divine.”
(Mother goes into contemplation.)

For those who like definitions, there is another way of answering to “What is the Divine?”... “A vastness, smiling and luminous.”
And it is there, is it not? It is there.

After a few days.

I have something to add to what we said the other day about the Divine. Someone asks me: “And what is God?” It is about a text of Sri Aurobindo. Here it is:

“Love leads us from the suffering of division into the bliss of perfect union, but without losing that joy of the act of union which is the soul’s greatest discovery and for which the life of the cosmos is a long preparation. Therefore to approach God by love is to prepare oneself for the greatest possible spiritual fulfilment.”\(^1\)

It is in the context of the last phrase that I am asked: “What is God?” Therefore I said (I took up the word “God”): “It is the name man has given to all that surpasses him and dominates him, all that he cannot know, but to which he submits.”

Instead of putting “to all that surpasses him”, one might put “to that which surpasses him”, because “all that” is debatable from the intellectual point of view. I mean there is a “something” — a something which is indefinable and inexplicable — and this something, man has always felt, dominates him. It transcends all possible understanding and it dominates him. And so the religions have given it a name; man has called him “God”; the English call him God; in another language he is called in another way, but finally it is that.

I do not give any definition purposely. Because the feeling of all my life has been that it is a word, and a word behind which

Notes on the Way

people have put many very undesirable things... this idea of God, for example, who wants to be unique, as they say: “God is unique.” But they feel it and they say it as Anatole France said it, I believe it is in the Révolte des Anges: “This God who wants to be the only one and all alone.” That is the thing which had made me completely atheist, if one might say so, in my childhood; I did not accept a being who declared himself to be unique and all-powerful, whoever he might be. Even if he was unique and all-powerful (Mother laughs), he must not have the right to proclaim it! It was like this in my mind. I could give a discourse upon it for a full hour, to say how in each religion they confronted it.

In any case, I gave what seemed to me the most objective definition. And like the other day, in “What is the Divine?”, I tried to give the impression of the Thing; here I wanted to fight against the use of the word, which for me is hollow, but dangerously hollow.

I remember a verse from Savitri which is very powerful and which says in a line all that wonderfully. It says: “The Nameless that saw God born.”

2 The bodiless Namelessness that saw God born
And tries to gain from the mortal's mind and soul
A deathless body and a divine name.

Savitri, Cent. Vol. 28, p. 40

68