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in the intensity of the world’s aspiration to become once more what it is.

And that is why — partly, fragmentarily — there is an evolution.

An eternally perfect universe, eternally manifesting the eternal perfection, would lack the joy of progress.

6 March 1963

88 – This world was built by Death that he might live. Wilt thou abolish death? Then life too will perish. Thou canst not abolish death, but thou mayst transform it into a greater living.

89 – This world was built by Cruelty that she might love. Wilt thou abolish cruelty? Then love too will perish. Thou canst not abolish cruelty, but thou mayst transfigure it into its opposite, into a fierce Love and Delightfulness.

90 – This world was built by Ignorance and Error that they might know. Wilt thou abolish ignorance and error? Then knowledge too will perish. Thou canst not abolish ignorance and error, but thou mayst transmute them into the utter and effulgent exceeding of reason.

91 – If Life alone were and not death, there could be no immortality; if love were alone and not cruelty, joy would be only a tepid and ephemeral rapture; if reason were alone and not ignorance, our highest attainment would not exceed a limited rationality and worldly wisdom.

92 – Death transformed becomes Life that is Immortality; Cruelty transfigured becomes Love that is intolerable
ecstasy; Ignorance transmuted becomes Light that leaps beyond wisdom and knowledge.

It is the same idea, that is, opposition and contraries are a stimulus to progress. Because to say that without cruelty Love would be tepid... The principle of Love as it exists beyond the Manifested and the Non-Manifested has nothing to do with either tepidness or cruelty. Only, Sri Aurobindo’s idea would seem to be that opposites are the quickest and most effective means of shaping Matter so that it can intensify its manifestation.

As an experience, this is absolutely certain, in the sense that, first of all, when one comes into contact with eternal Love, the supreme Love, one immediately has — how to put it? — a perception, a sensation — it is not an understanding, it is something very concrete: even the most illumined material consciousness, however much it has been moulded and prepared, is incapable of manifesting That. The first thing one feels is this kind of incapacity. Then comes an experience: something which manifests a form of — one cannot call it exactly “cruelty”, because it is not cruelty as we know it — but within the totality of circumstances, a vibration appears and, with a certain intensity, refuses love as it is manifested here. It is precisely this: something in the material world which refuses the manifestation of love as it exists at present. I am not speaking of the ordinary world, I am speaking of the present consciousness at its highest. It is an experience, I am speaking of something that has happened. So the part of the consciousness which has been struck by this opposition makes a direct appeal to the origin of Love, with an intensity which it would not have without the experience of this refusal. Limits are broken and a flood pours down which could not have manifested before; and something is expressed which was not expressed before.

When one sees this, there is obviously a similar experience from the point of view of what we call life and death. It is this kind of constant “brooding” or presence of Death and the
possibility of death, as it is said in Savitri: we have a constant companion throughout the journey from cradle to grave; we are constantly accompanied by this threat or presence of Death. Well, along with this, in the cells, there is a call for a Power of Eternity, with an intensity which would not be there except for this constant threat. Then one understands, one begins to feel quite concretely that all these things are only ways of intensifying the manifestation, of making it progress, of making it more perfect. And if the means are crude, it is because the manifestation itself is very crude. And as it becomes more perfect and fit to manifest that which is eternally progressive, the very crude means will give way to subtler ones and the world will progress without any need for such brutal oppositions. This is simply because the world is still in its infancy and human consciousness is still entirely in its infancy.

This is a very concrete experience.

It follows that when the earth no longer needs to die in order to progress, there will be no more death. When the earth no longer needs to suffer in order to progress, there will be no more suffering. And when the earth no longer needs to hate in order to love, there will be no more hatred.

(Silence)

This is the quickest and most effective means to bring creation out of its inertia and lead it towards its fulfilment.

(Long silence)

There is a certain aspect of creation — which may be a very modern one — it is the need to escape from disorder and confusion, from disharmony and confusion: a confusion, a disorder which takes every possible form, which becomes struggle, useless effort, wastage. It depends on the domain you are in, but in the material world, in action, it means useless complications,
waste of energy and material, waste of time, incomprehension, misunderstanding, confusion, disorder. This is what used to be called crookedness in the Vedas — I do not know the equivalent of this word, it is something twisted, which instead of going straight to the mark makes sharp, unnecessary zigzags. This is one of the things that is most opposed to the harmony of a purely divine action which has a simplicity... that seems childlike. Direct — direct, instead of making absurd and completely useless circumvolutions. Well, it is obviously the same thing: disorder is a way of stimulating the need for the pure divine simplicity.

The body feels very strongly, very strongly that everything could be simple, so simple!

And so that the being — this kind of individual agglomerate — can be transformed, it needs precisely to become more simple, simple, simple. All these complications of Nature, which they are now beginning to understand and study, which are so intricate for the slightest thing — the smallest of our functions is the result of a system so complicated that it is almost unthinkable; certainly it would be impossible for human thought to plan and put together all these things — now science is discovering them, and one can see very clearly that if the functioning is to be divine, that is, if it is to escape this disorder and confusion, it must be simplified, simplified, simplified.

(Long silence)

That is to say, Nature, or rather Nature in her attempt at self-expression, was obliged to resort to an unbelievable and almost infinite complication in order to reproduce the primal Simplicity.

And we come back to the same thing. From this excess of complication arises the possibility of a simplicity which would not be empty but full — a full simplicity, a simplicity that contains everything; whereas without these complications, simplicity is empty.

Now they are making discoveries like that. In anatomy, for
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example, they are discovering surgical treatments which are unbelievably complicated! It is like their classification of the elements of Matter — what frightful complexity! And all this is for the purpose of... in an effort to express Unity, the one Simplicity — the divine state.

(Silence)

Perhaps it will go quickly.... But the question comes to this — an aspiration that is sufficient, intense and effective enough, to attract That which can transform complication into Simplicity, cruelty into Love, and so on.

And it is no use complaining and saying that it is a pity, because it is like that. Why is it like that?... Probably, when it is no longer like that, we shall know. We could put it another way: if we knew, it would no longer be like that.

So, to speculate: “It would have been better if it had not been like that, etc.” — all that is unpractical, it is no use at all, it is useless.

We must hurry up and do what is needed to put an end to it, that is all; it is the only practical thing.

For the body it is very interesting. But it is a mountain, a mountain of experiences that seem very small, but because of their multiplicity, they have their place.10

15 May 1963

93 – Pain is the touch of our Mother teaching us how to bear and grow in rapture. She has three stages of her schooling, endurance first, next equality of soul, last ecstasy.

10 When this talk was first published, Mother remarked, “The scientists will deny it, they will say that I am talking nonsense; but it is because I do not use their terms, it is just a matter of vocabulary.”