Pensées

God has a personality but no character; He is as we say in our Eastern thought, Anantaguna, of an infinite variation of qualities without fixed limitation or rigid distinction and incompatibility. His superhuman cruelty melts into and harmonises with His ineffable pity; His fierce enmity is one mask of His intensest love. For, being alone existent, He is irresponsible and the harmonies He creates, are the figment of His own plastic will and governed by laws of aesthetics determined in His own unfettered but infallible fantasy. Out of His infinite personality He creates all these characters & their inevitable actions & destinies. So it is with every divine creator, — with Homer, Shakespeare, Valmiki, Kalidasa. It is perfectly true that each has his own style of language & creation, his own preferred system or harmony of the poetic Art, just as the creator of this universe has fashioned it in a particular style & rhythm & on certain preferred & fixed canons, differing from that of the other universes He may have built in His infinite Being. But within that style & harmony they are not bound by any fixed personality. It is rather the infinite they express though through their personality, than their personality through their works. The writers who are limited by their personality may be among the fine artists of literature; they cannot be among the greatest creators; for to the creator freedom & infinity are necessary attributes. It is the infinite alone that can create; the finite can only manufacture, reproduce or at the most bring out a fine art & craftsmanship. Among all the Elizabethan dramatists Shakespeare alone has produced living men; the rest are only admirable, trivial or monstrous sketches, caricatures or images of men. There is, however, one exception to this rule; every man can at his best moments cast out, create in some way or another — for in our Indian languages the word for creating is casting out, letting free out of one’s own being — one living
creature & character, — himself. Milton has produced several bold & beautiful or fine outlines or descriptions, but only one living being, the rebel Archangel Satan, and only so in the first four books of Paradise Lost does Satan really live. When Milton ceases to portray himself in his fallen state and thinks only of his plot & subject, Satan also ceases to live. But the great impersonal creators even in their slightest creations, cannot help creating life. Impersonal, I say, but I do not mean by impersonality the nirguna, devoid or pure of quality, but rather the unfixed & unlimited by quality, — an infinite & indefinable personality out of which is not manufactured or cunningly shaped but perfectly & inevitably arises under the compelling eye of an intuitive Will to be this created world of innumerable brilliantly-coloured variously outlined individual existences.