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everything is a manifestation of the Supreme, the Eternal, the Infinite, immutable in his total perfection and in his absolute reality. That is why, by conquering our mind and its ignorant and false perceptions we can, through all things, enter into contact with this Supreme Truth which is also the Supreme Beauty and the Supreme Love, beyond all our mental and vital notions of beauty and ugliness, the good and the bad.

Even when we say “Supreme Truth, Supreme Beauty, Supreme Love”, we should give to these words a meaning other than the one which is attributed to them by our intellect. It is to emphasise this fact that Sri Aurobindo writes, paradoxically, “the beauty of the hideous”.

14 November 1960

What is this other meaning?

I meant that we cannot conceive the Divine intellectually. It is only when we leave the mental world and enter into the spiritual world, and, instead of thinking things, we live them and become them, that we can truly understand them. But even then, when we want to express our experience we have only those words that express our mental experiences, and in spite of all our efforts these words are inapt to convey what we want to express.

That is why Sri Aurobindo so often uses paradoxes to lift the mind out of the rut of ordinary thinking and, behind the apparent absurdity of what is said, to make us see the light of what is felt and perceived.

26 November 1960

49 – To feel and love the God of beauty and good in the ugly and the evil, and still yearn in utter love to heal it of its ugliness and its evil, this is real virtue and morality.
How can one help to cure the evil and the ugliness that one sees everywhere? Through love? What is the power of love? How can an individual phenomenon of consciousness act on the rest of mankind?10

How can one help to cure evil and ugliness?... One may say that there is a kind of hierarchy of collaboration or action: there is a negative help and a positive help.

To begin with, there is a way that might be called negative, the way provided by Buddhism and kindred religions: not to see. First of all, to be in such a state of purity and beauty that you do not perceive ugliness and evil — it is like something that does not touch you because it does not exist in you.

That is the perfection of the negative method. It is quite elementary: never to notice evil, never to speak of the evil in others, not to perpetuate these vibrations by observation, by criticism, by insistence on what is bad. That is what the Buddha taught: each time you speak of an evil, you help to spread it.

This barely touches the problem.

Yet it should be a very general rule. But people who criticise have an answer for that; they say, “If you do not see the evil, you will never be able to cure it. If you leave someone in his ugliness, he will never get out of it.” This is not true, but that is how they justify their behaviour. So in this aphorism Sri Aurobindo forestalls these objections: it is not because of ignorance or unconsciousness or indifference that you do not see the evil — you are quite capable of seeing it, even of feeling it, but you refuse to help to spread it by giving it the force of your attention and the support of your consciousness. And for that you must yourself be above this perception and feeling; you must be able to see the evil or the ugliness without suffering from it, without being shocked or disturbed by it. You see it from a height where these things do not exist, but you have the conscious perception

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of it, you are not affected by it, you are free. This is the first step.

The second step is to be positively conscious of the supreme Good and supreme Beauty behind all things, which sustains all things and enables them to exist. When you see Him, you are able to perceive Him behind this mask and this distortion; even this ugliness, this wickedness, this evil is a disguise of Something which is essentially beautiful or good, luminous, pure.

Then comes the true collaboration, for when you have this vision, this perception, when you live in this consciousness, it also gives you the power to draw That down into the manifestation, to the earth, and to bring It into contact with what now distorts and disguises, so that little by little this distortion and this disguise are transformed by the influence of the Truth that is behind.

Here we are at the very summit of the scale of collaboration.

In this way it is not necessary to introduce the principle of love into the explanation. But if you want to know or understand the nature of the Force or the Power that enables or brings about this transformation — particularly where evil is concerned, but also with ugliness to a certain extent — you see that love is obviously the most potent and integral of all powers — integral in the sense that it applies in all cases. It is even more powerful than the power of purification which dissolves all bad will and which is, as it were, the master of the adverse forces, but which has not the direct power of transformation. The power of purification first dissolves in order to allow the transformation afterwards. It destroys one form in order to be able to create a better one, whereas love need not dissolve in order to transform; it possesses the direct power of transformation. Love is like a flame that changes what is hard into something malleable and even sublimates this malleable thing into a kind of purified vapour — it does not destroy, it transforms.

In its essence, in its origin, love is like a flame, a white flame which overcomes all resistances. You can experience this yourself: whatever the difficulty in your being, whatever
the burden of accumulated error, ignorance, incapacity and bad will, a single second of this pure, essential, supreme love dissolves it as in an all-powerful flame; a single moment and a whole past can disappear; a single instant in which you touch it in its essence and a whole burden is consumed.

And it is very easy to explain how a person who has this experience can spread it, can act on others; because to have the experience you must touch the one, supreme Essence of the whole manifestation, the Origin and the Essence, the Source and the Reality of all that is; and at once you enter the realm of Unity — there is no longer any separation of individuals, there is only one single vibration that can be repeated indefinitely in external form.11

If you rise high enough, you find yourself at the heart of all things. And what is manifest in this heart can manifest in all things. That is the great secret, the secret of the divine incarnation in an individual form, because in the normal course of things what manifests at the centre is realised in the external form only with the awakening and the response of the will in the individual form. Whereas if the central Will is represented constantly and permanently in an individual being, this individual being can serve as an intermediary between this Will and all beings, and will for them. Everything this individual being perceives and offers in his consciousness to the supreme Will is answered as if it came from each individual being. And if for any reason the individual elements have a more or less conscious and voluntary relation with that representative being, their relation increases the efficacy, the effectiveness of the representative individual; and thus the supreme Action can act in

11 Later the disciple asked Mother: “Is it one single vibration which can be repeated indefinitely or which is repeated indefinitely?” Mother answered: “I meant several things at the same time. This single vibration is static everywhere, but when one realises it consciously, one has the power of making it active wherever one directs it; that is to say, one doesn’t move anything, but the stress of the consciousness makes it active wherever one directs one’s consciousness.”
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Matter in a much more concrete and permanent manner. That is the reason for these descents of consciousness — which we may describe as “polarised”, for they always come to earth with a definite purpose and for a special realisation, with a mission — a mission which is decided upon, determined before the incarnation. These are the great stages of the supreme incarnations on earth.

And when the day comes for the manifestation of supreme love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of supreme love, that will truly be the hour of transformation. For nothing will be able to resist That.

But since it is all-powerful, some receptivity must be prepared on earth so that the effects are not shattering. Sri Aurobindo has explained this in one of his letters. Someone asked him, “Why does it not come immediately?” He answered something like this: if divine love were to manifest in its essence upon earth, it would be like a bombshell; because the earth is neither supple nor receptive enough to be able to widen itself to the dimensions of this love. It not only needs to open, but to widen itself and to become more supple — Matter is still too rigid. And even the substance of the physical consciousness — not only the most material Matter, but the substance of the physical consciousness — is too rigid.

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50 – To hate the sinner is the worst sin, for it is hating God; yet he who commits it glories in his superior virtue.

When we enter into a certain state of consciousness, we see clearly that we are capable of anything and that in fact there is not a single “sin” that is not potentially our sin. Is this impression correct? And yet we revolt against and feel an aversion for certain things: there is always something somewhere which we cannot accept. Why?

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