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“In the very nature of things all evolution must proceed at first by a slow unfolding; for each new principle that evolves its powers has to make its way out of an involution in Inconscience and Ignorance. It has a difficult task in pulling itself out of the involution, out of the hold of the obscurity of the original medium, against the pull and strains, the instinctive opposition and obstruction of the Inconscience and the hampering mixture and blind obstinate retardations of the Ignorance. Nature affirms at first a vague urge and tendency which is a sign of the push of the occult, subliminal, submerged reality towards the surface; there are then small half-suppressed hints of the thing that is to be, imperfect beginnings, crude elements, rudimentary appearances, small, insignificant, hardly recognisable quanta. Afterwards there are small or large formations; a more characteristic and recognisable quality begins to show itself, first partially, here and there or in a low intensity, then more vivid, more formative; finally, there is the decisive emergence, a reversal of the consciousness, the beginning of the possibility of its radical change: but still much has to be done in every direction, a long and difficult growth towards perfection lies before the evolutionary endeavour. The thing done has not only to be confirmed, secured against relapse and the downward gravitation, against failure and extinction, but opened out into all the fields of its possibilities, its totality of entire self-achievement, its utmost height, subtlety, riches, wideness; it has to become dominant, all-embracing, comprehensive. This is everywhere the process of Nature and to ignore it is to miss the intention
Questions and Answers

"in her works and get lost in the maze of her procedure."

This seems to be a very exact description of individual development. It is exactly like that. And so you lose patience or lose courage, for you feel that you are not advancing. But when you engage in the development of the body — material, physical development — when you want the physical body to do sadhana, it is exactly like that. You begin by trying out all kinds of things without precision or exactitude, without knowing which end to begin with, and you feel you are groping, searching, going round and round and going nowhere. And then, gradually, one thing comes up and then another, and it is only very much later that something like a programme begins to be worked out. And this description Sri Aurobindo gives at the end, when the goal of evolution emerges and becomes perceptible, how much care must be taken for it not to be engulfed once again in the primal Inconscience!

And that is why the work seems... interminable. And yet this is the only way it can be done. The road to be covered between the usual state of the body, the almost total inconscience to which we are accustomed because we are “like that”, and the perfect awakening of consciousness, the response of all the cells, all the organs, all the functionings... between the two there seem to be centuries of labour. However, if one has learnt to open, to aspire, give oneself up, and if one can make use of these same movements in the body, teach the cells to do the same thing, then things go much faster. But much faster does not mean fast; it is still a long and slow work. And each time that an element which has not entered the movement of transformation wakes up to enter it, one feels that everything must be started again — all that one believed had been done must be done once more. But it is not true, it is not the same thing that one does again, it is something similar in a new element which was either forgotten or else left aside because it was not ready, and which, now that
it is ready, awakens and wants to take its place. There are many elements like that....

The body seems to you to be something very simple, doesn’t it? It is a body, it is “my” body, and after all it has a single form — but it is not like that! There are hundreds of combined entities unaware of each other, all harmonised by something deeper which they do not know, and having a perception of unity only because they are not conscious of the multiplicity of the elements and their divergence.

In fact, this multiplicity and divergence are the cause of most disorders and even illnesses. Something is going well, you have caught the guiding thread, you are following your path, you think you are going to get a result, and then, suddenly, there! — something happens quite unexpectedly, you did not know it was there: it wakes up and insists on joining the march. But it creates a terrible disorder and you must begin everything over again.

The sadhana of all the inner beings, inner domains, has been done by many people, has been explained at length, systematised by some, the stages and paths have been traced out and you go from one stage to another, knowing that it has to be like that; but as soon as you go down into the body, it is like a virgin forest.... And everything is to be done, everything is to be worked out, everything is to be built up. So you must arm yourself with great patience, great patience, and not think that you are good for nothing because it takes so much time. You must never be despondent, never tell yourself, “Oh! This is not for me!” Everyone can do it, if he puts into it the time, the courage, the endurance and the perseverance that are demanded. But all this is needed. And above all, above all, never lose heart, be ready to begin the same thing again ten times, twenty times, a hundred times — until it is really done.

And one often feels that unless everything is done, unless the work is finished, well, it is as if one had done nothing.

349