

READER'S QUESTIONS

How Are the 'Dead' Clothed?

QUESTION: *How do the so-called dead appear as to outer apparel? How are they clad? Does their thought mold the ethereal matter into garments or anything they desire to form? One would judge so from what is said in the Cosmo about the Desire World. Does the desire body take the shape of the dense body immediately after the silver cord is severed?*

ANSWER: Yes, it is possible for the so-called dead to form by their thoughts any article of clothing they desire. They usually think of themselves as being clothed in the conventional garb of the country in which they lived prior to their passing into the Desire World and therefore they appear so clothed without any particular effort of thought, but when they desire to obtain something new, or an unusual article of clothing, naturally they have to use their will power to bring that thing into existence; and such an article of clothing will last as long as the person thinks of himself as being in that apparel.

But this amenability of the desire stuff to the molding power of thought is also used in other directions. Generally speaking, when a person leaves the present world in consequence of an accident, he thinks of himself as being disfigured by that accident in a certain manner, perhaps minus a leg or arm or with a hole in the head. This would not inconvenience him at all; he can move about there of course just as easily without arms or legs; but it just shows the tendency of their thought to shape their desire body.

At the beginning of the war when such great numbers passed over into the Desire World with lesions of the most horrible nature, the Elder

Brothers and their pupils taught these people that by merely holding the thought that they were sound of limb and body they would at once be healed of their disfiguring lesions. This of course they immediately did. Now all newcomers, when they are able to understand matters over there, are at once healed of their wounds and amputations in that manner, so that to look at them nobody would think that they had passed over in consequence of an accident in the physical world.

At the same time, however, this knowledge became so general that the people who have passed over since have availed themselves of this property of the desire stuff to be molded by thought in such a manner that they want to change their bodily appearance, so that perhaps those who are very corpulent want to appear more slim and, vice versa, those who are very thin want to appear as if they had more flesh. This change or transformation is not permanently successful, however, on account of the archetype, for it appears that the extra flesh put on a thin person or the quantity taken off one who is corpulent does not stay on or off permanently, but after a while the man who was originally thin becomes more slender and returns to his original stature while the person who tries to take off flesh finds himself putting it on by degrees, and then has to go through the process anew.

It is the same with people who attempt to mold their features and change them to an appearance that suits them better than their original one. However, changes affecting the features are less permanent, probably because the facial expression, there as here, is an indication of the nature of the soul. Therefore whatever is sham is quickly dispersed by the habitual thought of the person.

With regard to the second part of your question, we may say that during physical life the desire body is shaped more or less like an ovoid cloud surrounding the dense body and as soon as the person gains consciousness in the Desire World and begins to think of himself as having the shape of the dense body, then the desire body begins to assume that form. This transformation is facilitated by the fact that the soul body composed of the two upper ethers, the light ether and the reflecting ether, is still with the man, the Ego.

To put it more clearly and bring in a helpful comparison, we may remember that at the time when the Ego is coming down to rebirth the two lower ethers gathered around the seed-atom of the vital body are molded into a matrix by the Lords of Destiny—the Recording Angels and their agents—and this matrix is placed in the womb of the mother where the physical particles are embedded in it so that they gradually form the body of the child, which is then born.

At that time the child has no soul body. Whatever there may be of the two upper ethers is not assimilated until later in life and is built upon by deeds that are good and true. When this vehicle has reached a certain density, it is possible for the person to function in it as an Invisible Helper, and during soul flights the desire body molds itself readily into this prepared matrix. When he returns to the dense body the effort of will whereby he enters it automatically dissolves the intimate con-



Engraving, 1564, Peter Breugel the Elder (c. 1530-1569), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Fall of the Magician

Elementals in thrall to the magician Hermogenes have been freed by St. James ("the Greater"). Similar beings delight in terrifying egos who, released by death, are newly entered into the Desire World. Hermogenes (2 Tim. 1:16) opposed Paul's Christian ministry and sought to expose St. James as a fraud but found himself powerless against James' holy powers and repented of his black arts.

nection between the desire body and the soul body. Later on, when the life in the physical world has been finished and the two lower ethers discarded with the dense body, the luminous soul body, or golden wedding garment, still remains with the higher vehicles, and into this matrix the desire body is molded at its birth into the invisible world.

So as the body of the child was made in conformity to the matrix of the two lower ethers before coming to physical birth, similarly the birth into the invisible world which follows death in the physical world is attended by an impregnation of the matrix formed of the two higher ethers with desire stuff to form the vehicle that may be used in that world.

But the so-called dead are not the only ones who have the power thus to mold desire stuff into any shape they please. This property is also shared by all the other denizens of that realm, even down to the elementals, and they very often use this faculty of transformation to frighten or mislead the new-

comer, as many a neophyte has found out to his consternation when he first enters the Desire World. For these little imps are quick to know when a person is a stranger and not conversant with the nature of things there and they seem to take a special delight in annoying newcomers by transforming themselves into the most grotesque and terrifying monsters. Then they may feign a ferocious attack on him and it seems to give them the keenest delight in the world if they are able to chase him into a corner and make him cringe with fear while they stand gnashing their teeth as if ready to devour him.

But the moment the neophyte learns that in reality there is nothing that can hurt him, that in his finer vehicles he is immune from all danger of being torn to pieces or devoured, and that a quiet laugh at the harmless creatures and a stern command to take themselves off is all that is needed to cause them to turn their attention elsewhere, they soon learn to leave him alone. He learns to force them to do his will, for in that world all creatures

who have not been individualized are compelled to do the bidding of higher intelligences, and man is among them.

Thus a man may take an elemental and form it into any shape he desires and use it to do his bidding. The beings thus created with his life and will power and given a certain mission to do will faithfully obey his orders, and according to the intensity which he puts into that work the thing will last for a longer or a shorter time. In this manner many so-called spooks have been created and given a mission lasting for centuries after the person who originally started the spell has gone into the higher Heaven World. That is probably the origin of the white lady who warns the Hohenzollerns of impending death. She and kindred apparitions which have given rise to so much speculation have been created by the superlative intensity of human desire launched into the Desire World under particularly painful or distressing circumstances, which wrought the required magic spell unbeknownst to the person himself. □

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