

of their apparitions, converse with the spirits and all the mummery connected with it; but still they appeal to their ancient traditions for the truth of revelations made to their forefathers and miraculous cures which they performed by a certain sympathy. With regard to their own practice, they readily admit that their intercourse with the spiritual world is merely a pretense to deceive the simple, and that their frightful gesticulations are necessary to sustain their credit and give weight to their prescriptions. Still there are many, even among those who have renounced these impostures with heathenism, who aver that they have frequently been thrown into supernatural trances, and that in this state a succession of images appeared before them, which they took for revelations, but afterward the whole scene appeared like a dream. The larger portion of these diviners are, however, bare-faced imposters, who pretend to have the power of bringing on and driving away disease, enchanting arrows, exorcising spirits, bestowing blessings, and performing a whole catalogue of similar feats. The dread excited by these imagined powers of good and evil procures them a formidable name and an ample reward for their services. These sorcerers mutter a charm over a sick man and blow upon him that he may recover, or they fetch him, they say, a healthy soul and breathe it into him, or they confine themselves to a simple prediction of life or death. For this latter purpose they tie a bandage around the head, by which they raise it up and let it fall; if it feels light the patient will recover; if it is heavy the patient will die. In the same manner they inquire the fate of a hunter who has stayed unusually long at sea; they bind the head of the nearest relation and lift it by a stick; a tub of water is placed underneath, and there they pretend to behold the absentee either upset in his kayak or paddling in his proper position. They will also conjure up the soul of a man whom they wish to injure, to appear before them in the dark, and wound it with a spear, after which their enemy must consume away by a slow disease. The company present will pretend to recognize the man by his voice. The prescriptions of the angekoks relate either to certain amulets or else to a course of diet, which includes the healthy as well as the sick. Woman in child-bed have particularly much to observe; they dare not eat in the open air; no one else must drink at their water-tub, or take a light from their lamp, nor must they themselves boil anything over it for a long time. Their meals must consist of what their own husbands have caught; the fish must be eaten before the meat, and the bones are not to be thrown out of the house. The husband must abstain for several weeks from all pursuits except the necessary fishing. The ostensible reason of these restrictions is to prevent the death of the child, though it is plain that they were originally invented for the preservation of the feeble mother.

Abstinence from food and labour of certain kinds is also enjoined to young maidens who have had the misfortune to be affected by the beams of the sun or moon, or the shadow of a bird flying overhead. Those who neglect these precautions are liable to some misfortune, perhaps even the loss of their lives; besides, the "Torngak" of the air might be provoked on her account to raise stormy weather. A man never sells a seal on the day it is caught, and they always keep back the head or some other part, even if it is only a few bristles from the beard, lest he should forfeit his luck. Their amulets and pendants are so various that one conjurer laughs at another's. They consist of an old piece of wood, a stone, a bone, or the beak and claws of a bird hung round the neck, or a leather cord tied round the forehead, breast or arms. These potent charms are preservatives against spectres, diseases and death; they confer prosperity, and they especially prevent the children from losing their souls in