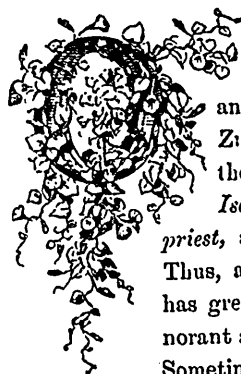


A ZULU WITCH-DOCTOR.



YOUR picture is the likeness of a very important person among the Zulus, called by some of the most important tribes *Isanusu*. He is *doctor*, *priest*, and *diviner*, all in one. Thus, as you may suppose, he has great power amongst an ignorant and superstitious people.

Sometimes the *isanusi* reaches such dignity as to add to all his other powers that of a rain-maker. But for this, he needs to be especially shrewd, and particularly lucky; for if, in time of long drought, the rain should not come at last when he foretells it, his life is in danger. In the other parts of his mysterious profession, however, he does not run so much risk. Even if one of his sick patients does not get better, after taking the proper remedies, it is easy to say that he is bewitched. Then the doctor becomes a priest, and sets to work also to divine who it is that has cast the sufferer under a spell. Frequently this ends by his accusing some suspected person, who, being forthwith tortured horribly and put to death, can tell no tales; and the terrible *isanusi* is more dreaded and believed in than ever.

It will interest you to hear how a man rises to this high position; and we can tell you by the help of one of the Wesleyan Missionaries, the Rev. W. C. Holden. After a man has purposed to become a witch-doctor, he so fixes all his thoughts on the matter, that, at last, "His mind becomes frenzied: he dreams about all sorts of wild and unnatural things, but especially the spirits of departed chiefs. He now begins to talk about his marvellous visions among his friends and neighbours, until he is utterly carried away, goes into fits, and begins all sorts of gesticulations, running, jumping, shrieking, plunging into water, and performing many wonderful feats, until those around him say he is mad; and he speaks and acts as one under the influence of supernatural agency. Having gone thus far, he catches live snakes,

and hangs them about his neck, and places other marvellous things about his person. He then takes a goat and goes to a *isanusi*, and giving it to him, asks to be taught the secrets of the profession. After staying here some time, he obtains a number of medicines, mostly strong-smelling roots. After this, he takes a cow, and proceeds to a still more celebrated *isanusi*, and obtains further instructions and more medicines; these he hangs about his body, and places in his house. By this time, he has proceeded so far as to begin his mysterious incantations. Having gone through these outward preparations, he experiences an inward change, real or imaginary, called *wkutwasa*, which means 'change of the moon.' Henceforth he is considered a new man, and converses with spiritual beings."

These men have sometimes gained such power as to enable them to make many victims at a time. The most awful extent of misery and destruction, however, which any of these men ever caused was in the fatal year, 1857. Set on to the work, it is supposed, by certain chiefs, who wished to provoke a war with the white colonists, a great priest and prophet, named Umhlakaza, told the people that he had heard from another world that they were to destroy all their cattle and corn, and that, on a certain day, the whole should rise again with great increase, and their enemies should be destroyed before them for ever. Many tribes believed the message, and, over a large space of country, the corn was destroyed, and the cattle slain in such vast numbers that the traders could hardly buy all the skins. The most fearful distress followed. The people were left without food, and came flocking into the colony to beg. British charity did not fail; for large sums of money were sent to feed the poor starving Zulus, who had been thus deluded. Nevertheless, though so much was done for them, it is supposed that from fifty to seventy thousand perished by want!

As the people learn the Gospel of God's love, they rise above the power of their old deceivers, whose dark trade will yet be altogether destroyed, as it has been in some places already,