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## HEALING CEREMONY IN UNKNOWN PANAMA

### A CHOCO INDIAN BOY ABOUT TO BE TREATED BY A MEDICINE MAN.

Among these primitive people sickness is believed to be the work of evil spirits and innumerable fantastic rituals have been devised to combat invisible foes. This young boy, after being carried from his home, is placed upon banana leaves spread upon the ground. Then a tent-like structure, decorated with symbolic designs, is placed over his body and nearby a crudely-carven wooden fetish, or image of a native god. The medicine man, wearing a headdress of plaited bast, directs the warfare against the demons of disease. For a long period women dance monotonously around the invalid, singing to the accompaniment of the reed pipe and accordion played by men. Finally, when the medicine man judges that the evil spirits have been driven out, the healing ceremony is concluded. Oftentimes, like certain forms of quackery in civilised lands, these primitive methods succeed. In case of severe illness, however, the evil spirits generally carry off the unlucky patient to the dreaded land of death.