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**REMARKABLE
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HERE is probably no animal, outside of the range of conventional domestic pets, which provokes so much curiosity among, or proves such a magnet of amusement to, the juvenile fraternity, either at the circus or Zoological Gardens, as the elephant. This ponderous and apparently clumsy, albeit, as a rule, perfectly harmless and docile creature is a never-ending source of delight to children. Especially is this the case with "Big Tom," the noble creature in the public Central Park of New York. He is an unusually tractable and playful animal, and consequently is a great favorite with the youngsters.



FILING DOWN THE TEETH.

But one day "Big Tom" suddenly changed his manner. He became vicious, and the keeper, apprehensive that he might hurt some of his young visitors, fastened him up out of the way. Contemporaneously, the elephant displayed a difficulty in walking. At first the keeper could not assign any reason for this unexpected development on the part of his charge, and forthwith subjected the animal to a minute diagnosis. But he could not discover any reason to which either the animal's bad temper or lameness could be attributed, since "Big Tom" appeared to be enjoying the best of health.

The keeper, however, observed that the animal was lame in his legs, and also that his toenails had grown to an unusual extent. It then occurred to the man that possibly the animal's crippled condition was due to the abnormal size of his toenails. If such were the case, then the pain "Big Tom" endured while walking would be excruciating, and would account for his display of bad temper. The keeper thereupon decided to cut and trim the creature's nails, as, even if the operation did not cure the lameness, it would at any rate do no harm. Had "Big Tom" been roaming about in his native jungle, plowing and plodding in the heavy, rough soil, the nails would have been kept down to their proper size, but as he was deprived of these natural means of chiropody, then the same result would have to be accomplished by artificial means.

But the task was not so easy as it appeared from a cursory glance. The keeper realized that the work would have to be carried out with consummate skill, if the result were to be attended with satisfactory success. To insure this end, a special set of tools were prepared. This peculiar chiropody outfit comprised a saw, chisel, sharp knife, coarse rasp, sandpaper and smooth polishers, all specially manufactured for the operation.



SAWING OFF THE TUSKS.

The elephant's legs were secured to the ground by means of chains to prevent movement, but otherwise "Big Tom" was left entirely free, since as the nails are of hard horn no pain would be experienced in the actual cutting, though as the flesh around the nails had become inflamed and tender,

It was feared that the creature might strongly emphasize its disapproval of the operation by dealing its keeper a powerful blow with its trunk. Despite this possibility, however, no interference was made with regard to the freedom of the animal's trunk. Subsequent events proved that all qualms on this point were groundless.

exercised that the tool did not slip and injure the leg of "Big Tom," in which event he would doubtless have reminded the operator of his clumsiness in a most forcible manner by means of his trunk. The filing process accomplished to the surgeon's satisfaction, he proceeded to complete his operation by smoothing and polishing the trimmed nails with the sandpaper.

When the task was completely achieved, the elephant was released from its fetters, and to the unbounded delight of his keeper, "Big Tom's" lameness had completely disappeared, and his quondam good temper had returned. Now, whenever "Big Tom" evinces the slightest trace of bad temper, his toenails are immediately trimmed. The operation always works like a charm. "Cutting the toenails is an infallible cure for an elephant's bad temper" is now the precept of "Big Tom's" keeper.

Another interesting and extraordinary animal surgical operation was recently undertaken in the arena of a well-known traveling circus before a few privileged spectators. The creature on this occasion was a hippopotamus, and the complaint was that some of his teeth had grown to such an abnormal length that it was only with considerable difficulty and pain that the brute could masticate his food. Few creatures are so valuable to the traveling showman as the hippopotamus. These animals are neither so plentiful nor so easily caught as the elephant, and as they seldom thrive in captivity they are, therefore, most highly prized by their fortunate proprietors.

The particular hippopotamus upon whom this unique dental operation was performed is an unusually fine specimen of its kind, and its welfare is accordingly zealously attended to by its owner. It is affectionately called "Babe," by no means an appropriate sobriquet, when it is remembered that he turns the scale at just under two tons; but the creature is as docile as a child, which favorable characteristic suggested the name to its owner.



HOW A SQUARE YARD OF NEW SKIN WAS GRAFTED ON.

"Babe" has an unusually finely developed set of teeth, numbering twenty-eight in all. Among these are two very prominent teeth, properly called tusks, growing out of the lower jaw. They start in a vertical direction, but bend in a backward, graceful curve. They are two of the most useful teeth to the hippopotamus, being requisitioned by the animal for tearing up the trees and bushes upon which it thrives, since it is purely a herbaceous animal.

Under normal conditions these tusks grow to about six inches in length. The rough work to which they are subjected by the creature when roaming through the forests in quest of food prevents them from growing to a very great length. But in the luxurious residence of the menagerie cage, and the preparation of dainty dishes of loaves, hay and branmash, the tusks have no hard chewing to do. Therefore, they grow to such a length that if not cut back they would pierce the upper jaw, prevent "Babe" from eating, and gradually starve him to death. Consequently, "Babe" has to submit to periodical overhauls of his teeth—the operation takes place on the average about once a year.

In the front of the mouth, also in the lower jaw, are two other prominent teeth, projecting straight forward. These are not used for biting, but for digging up the earth when the animal fancies a tasty root for dinner. These also, in "Babe's" case, have to be kept cut back, though they do not cause him so much inconvenience, when too long, as the tusks.

To enable the operation to be satisfactorily performed, "Babe" was led out into the arena and placed near a stout iron post which had been deeply and rigidly fixed into the ground. The hippopotamus looked about him quizzically as if endeavoring to divine what move was in contemplation. Chains were passed round his short legs, and fastened firmly to the ground. "Babe" not quite comprehending the meaning of this secure hobbling, gave a sonorous grunt, and looked threateningly at his keeper. But at this juncture a leaf was

offered to him, and his momentary anger was instantly appeased. "Babe" was then enticed to open his mouth widely by means of further dainties held temptingly above his nose. At first he refused point blank, but he finally succumbed to the bait, and opened his capacious jaws to the extent of two feet. Immediately two assistants, standing in position, dexterously threw chains over the distended jaws—one over the lower and the second over the upper—and passed the ends through ringbolts fixed to the post. "Babe" attempted to close his jaw, but in vain. He was a secure prisoner, bound literally foot and mouth.

The keeper then proceeded to perform the necessary operation with all possible celerity. For this delicate dental work the menagerie proprietor had provided a special outfit, consisting of a small, finely tenoned saw, three files, one of which is about as coarse as a wood rasp, and the other two very fine and more suited for polishing purposes. The files are only cut upon one side, the other faces being covered with thick and soft leather, so that in the event of the file slipping off the tooth, the brute's mouth would not be wounded in any way.

The front digging teeth first claimed attention. The keeper set to work with a will, merrily filing at the teeth as if he were rasping a piece of wood fixed in a vice. The animal gurgled and spluttered, and large tears, like balls of crystal, rolled from his eyes. He grew restless, and in two or three minutes his struggles became so violent that the operator had to desist.

When "Babe" had quieted down once more, the dentist again set to work vigorously, and ceased for a few moments every time the hippopotamus grew restless. Probably the animal suffered little real pain, but experienced a disagreeable sensation as the strong steel file rasped over the bone, which proved to be extremely hard. At the end of five minutes, one tooth had been filed down an inch and a quarter, and before a quarter of an hour had elapsed both the digging teeth had been treated and polished.

A curious feature was observed during the operation. The body of the animal appeared to be bathed in blood, and the ground immediately beneath it was dyed a deep red. This was due to "Babe" violently perspiring, as the perspiration of the hippopotamus, when excited, is red in color.

The dental surgeon then directed his skill to the tusks. This task was considerably facilitated by sawing off the tusk to the desired length, and then finally grinding the teeth down to the requisite shape by the files. They were then polished, and the unpleasant operation was completed. Great excitement now followed. Every man, with the

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