

BEASTS AND MEN

BEING CARL HAGENBECK'S EXPERIENCES
FOR HALF A CENTURY AMONG
WILD ANIMALS

AN ABRIDGED TRANSLATION

BY

HUGH S. R. ELLIOT

AND

A. G. THACKER, A.R.C.S. (LOND.)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

P. CHALMERS MITCHELL, M.A., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S.

SECRETARY OF THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

WITH PHOTOGRAVURE PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR
AND NINETY-NINE OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1912

PRINTED BY

JOHN W. BARNES

STATIONERS' HALL, LONDON

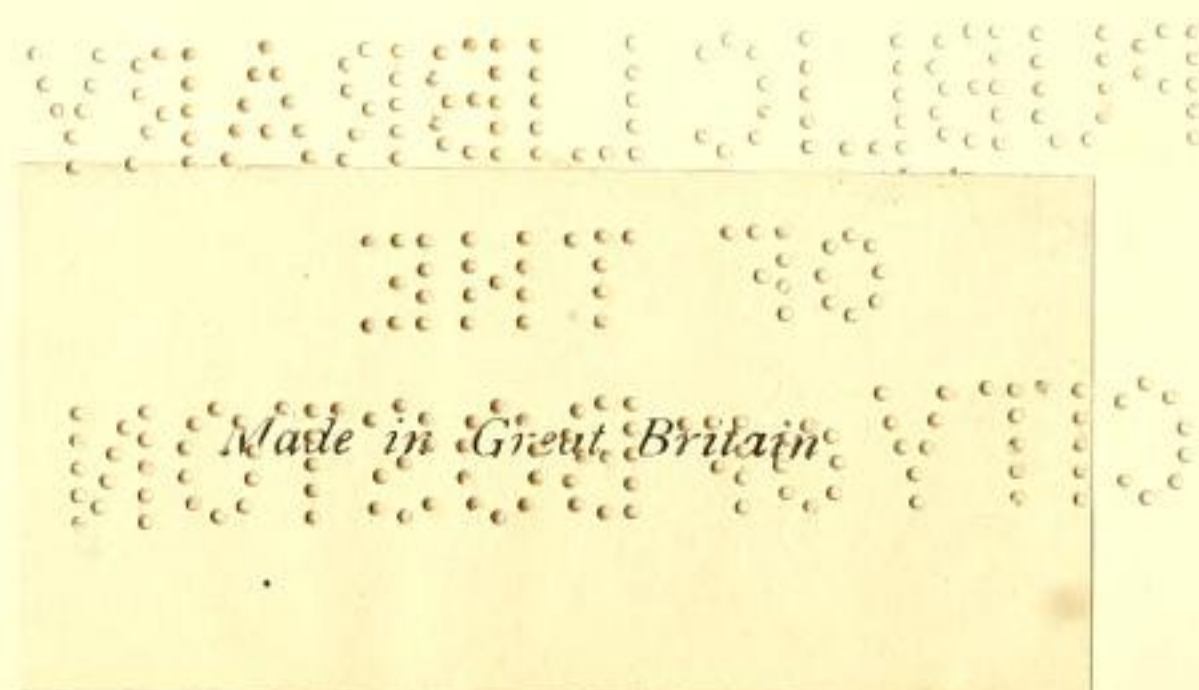
GV1811
H2A4
1912

~~3884.162~~

Dec. 19. 1923
E

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

First printed . . . November, 1909
Reprinted . . . April, 1910
Reissued in Cheaper Form . July, 1911
Reprinted . . . September, 1912



CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT HERBIVORES.

THERE is a widespread belief among the public that the elephant is one of the most intelligent of animals, and I certainly think that this opinion is well founded. Individual peculiarities are very noticeable in these animals : they are wonderfully quick of apprehension, have remarkably retentive memories, and in their likes, as in their aversions, they display great intensity and depth of feeling. The elephant is a much cleverer creature than the horse, and his power of differentiation is almost human.

On the emotional side too, the psychology of these gigantic quadrupeds is most interesting. Darwin was surprised to find that a bull elephant did not accept all the cows which were brought to him, but showed favour to some and rejected others. Now this is a subject which I have had frequent opportunities of studying, and I have found that these beasts "fall in love" in the true sense of the word ; that is, they conceive a truly monogamous affection for one particular cow, and are not merely actuated by a general predilection for the opposite sex. I remember a striking case in point. Some years ago I had in my Zoological Garden a young bull elephant that had just arrived at maturity. This animal became enamoured of a young cow, and, his affection being returned, it was an interesting and touching sight to see them tenderly caressing one another. I decided to test the genuineness of the bull's marital affection by the introduction of a third party—a somewhat cynical proceeding, perhaps, but it was all in the cause of science. One day, whilst the bull

a very confined space in the railway van, and had had scarcely any rest on the journey.

In the middle of the night, perhaps about two o'clock, my old keeper awoke me with the news that one of the elephants was making a rattling noise in its throat and seemed to be ill. I was somewhat alarmed and intended to go and investigate the matter ; but my fatigue overcame me and I went to sleep again. An hour later another keeper knocked and brought a similar piece of information ; this time I roused myself and was in the stables in a few minutes. But I was too late. One elephant was dead and two others lay dying. An examination showed that the soles of the feet of the dead animal were gnawed through in several places, blood still flowing from the wounds. " Rats," said my old keeper, and so it proved to be, for the marks of their sharp teeth could be plainly recognised in the horny hide, and the dying elephants had similar injuries. Who could have foreseen such a danger ? One can only learn these things from experience. There was wooden flooring in the stable, and under these planks the rats had made their nests. The next morning we slew nearly sixty of the assassins, and, I need hardly say, the wooden flooring was promptly removed.

Many large animals are killed by rats. In the Zoological Gardens at Cologne two ostriches were killed by rats during the night. Once, too, fourteen rare Australian parrots belonging to my father were killed by rats at Spielbudenplatz in a single night.

There is no universal rule for the treatment of wild animals. Even individuals of the same species, so great is their variability of temperament, have to be managed according to the particular circumstances of each case. This peculiarity is found, as my narrative has already shown, among elephants. It exists, in a greater or less degree, among all animals, and is a feature in his profession which no successful trainer can overlook.

Moreover, it is difficult to foresee how animals will behave

under any given circumstances, for they are swayed almost completely by the impulses of the moment, and it frequently happens that an occurrence, to us apparently trifling, will cause a perfectly quiet and well-behaved animal to become almost mad with terror. It is for this reason that presence of mind is an essential quality for the animal trainer to possess; for he must be ready at all times to grapple with any dangerous whim which, without the slightest apparent cause, may be hatched out in the half-developed intellect of his formidable charge. Nor is it ever easy to convey to the creature's intelligence what is required of him, or to make him understand that what to him appears terrifying, is in reality perfectly harmless.

Suppose, for instance, that one wishes to induce a rhinoceros to walk across a gangway from a ship to the quay, it is not enough to say, "Please, dear Mr. Rhinoceros, will you be so kind as to walk across these planks," for the great herbivore will fail to understand such language, and the most exaggerated politeness will leave him totally unmoved. Even if one places a cord round his neck, and tries to haul him across the bridge, a friend meanwhile prodding him from behind with a stick, the great beast will in all probability refuse to do what is required (for the language of physical force is a dead language to him, be it shouted never so loudly), preferring as an alternative to charge his puny tormentors, and trample them under his feet. But there is one weak spot in the pachyderm's composition, of which his crafty keeper is not slow to make use. He obeys, if not his master, the cravings of his own stomach. The indulgence of appetite establishes a cosmopolitan language, if I may be allowed to call it so, which every animal comprehends. Hold a handful of food to his nose and he will follow wherever you lead him. So it is, at least, with the rhinoceros. Only do this, and all other forms of polite persuasion become superfluous and unnecessary.

These observations recall to my mind a somewhat dangerous adventure which I had in the year 1871, at which time

I possessed no great experience in managing these animals. William Jamrach had arrived in London from India, with a number of elephants, rhinoceroses and other animals, which I was to take over. I went to London to receive them. Among the other animals there was a large female rhinoceros, full-grown, being seven or eight years of age. The animal was housed in an immense cage built upon the deck. As this could not be removed, it was necessary to find some



William Jamrach.

method of transferring the rhinoceros from the ship to the van provided to convey her to the stable where she was to be temporarily lodged. The difficulty to be overcome lay in the distance which separated the ship from the van, a space of about 500 yards. Jamrach suggested that, as the animal was well behaved, it would be safe to lead her along the docks; and without sufficiently realising the great danger of this foolhardy mode of procedure, I acquiesced in the proposal. Moreover, I believed that we were really dealing with an unusually quiet animal.

The preparations were soon complete. Two ropes were firmly bound round the rhinoceros, one being used as a halter round her neck and the other being attached to one of the creature's forelegs, whilst a number of other ropes were kept in reserve in case of accidents. Then we addressed her in the cosmopolitan language common to man and beasts. Jamrach's keeper, offering her food from his hand, backed slowly, while feeding her, across the gangway. The rhinoceros followed and the whole party moved in the desired direction. I gave the long rope attached to the halter to six keepers, and instructed them to pass this through the bars forming the

side of the van as soon as that vehicle was reached, and to fasten the end to the axle, thus preventing the possibility of the rhinoceros beating a sudden retreat. I myself took the other rope, that attached to the foreleg, and straightway commenced the march through the docks, the rhinoceros following quite quietly. The whole affair appeared to be child's play.

All went well until our strange company had nearly reached the van. Then a most untoward event occurred. To my horror I noticed that a locomotive with a goods train was approaching, and it immediately occurred to me that now, at the very last moment, the rhinoceros might take fright at a spectacle no less novel than terrifying. With a speed which only the fear of danger can explain, I sprang to the van, drew the rhinoceros after me, and, the keepers becoming infected with my energy, we had the animal firmly fastened up before the locomotive reached us. The sequel soon showed how fortunate this was. The engine-driver, who had noticed the uncommon rapidity with which we had completed the last part of our journey, played an idiotic practical joke by blowing his steam-whistle to frighten the rhinoceros. This threw the animal into a terrible state of agitation and she commenced to snort with terror. I had just time to secure her other foreleg with the reserve cords, when her excitement at the continuance of the shrill whistle and at the uproar around us upon the quay turned into furious rage, accompanied by desperate attempts to break away out of the van. The first obstacle she encountered was the coachman's box, which was situated high up in front of the van. In a second the brute had her head under this box and sent it flying into the air. It fell with a crash into the road—luckily missing the horses, or the results would have been disastrous. The infuriated rhinoceros next tried to charge through the front of the van. I was now, however, prepared for the emergency, and swinging myself on to the pole of the cart I seized a thick rope and began to thrash the beast between the ears with all my might and main. Surely even a rhinoceros must feel this, I thought! Eventu-

ally both I and my unruly friend the rhinoceros got tired, and gradually the formidable creature recovered her senses and became quiet. But our troubles were not yet at an end; there remained the still more difficult task of getting the animal out of the van. The stable opened on to the street, so that we were able to back the van up to the door. The animal had to come out of the cart backwards, but this was a proceeding it highly objected to, and the obstinate brute refused to budge an inch. Eventually we fastened cords round each of her hind-legs, and then drew the cords through a ring fastened to the wall of the stable, the same thing being done with the halter-rope and with the ropes attached to the forelegs, so that we now had the animal to some extent in our power. As we were hauling the brute out of the van, however, she fell once more into a furious rage, and hurled herself against its sides. She was, moreover, further maddened by the excitement of the crowd which had collected around the stable to witness so unusual a scene. Then I went round to the front of the van and vigorously belaboured the rhinoceros with a cudgel; this had the desired effect, and we were at last able to get the rebellious monster into the stable. This was the last time I ever transported a rhinoceros in such a manner. I had had enough of the experiment. For the journey to Hamburg I caused an immense cage to be constructed, in which the animal was not nearly so troublesome. This incident will show the reader what sort of difficulties we have to encounter when transporting wild beasts. The adventure might have had a very serious termination.

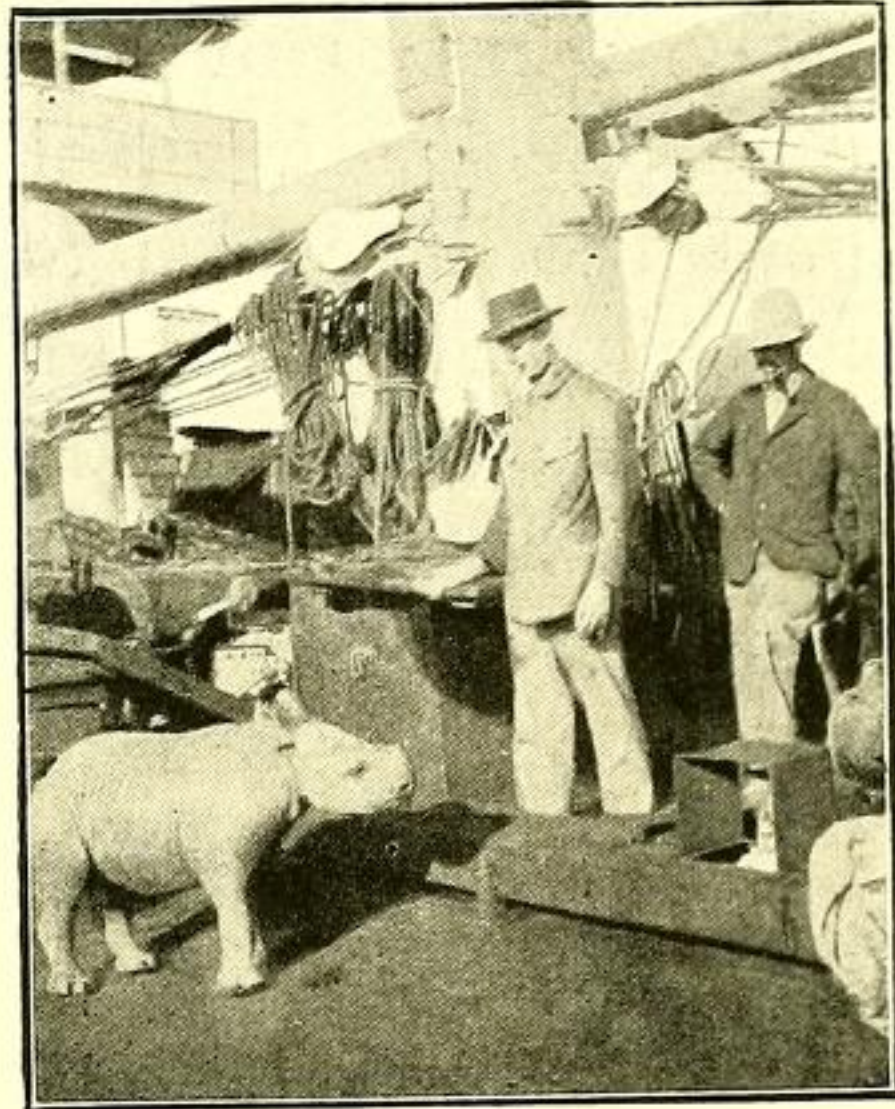
Besides the common Indian rhinoceros and the African rhinoceros, *Rhinoceros bicornis*, I received towards the end of the seventies the genuine Javan rhinoceros, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*. In addition, on four different occasions the black Sumatran rhinoceros came into my possession, although with this latter animal I have always had very bad luck, for all the five specimens which I purchased died of enteritis. Unlike the Indian rhinoceros, which is always captured young—

after the mother has been driven off or killed—and brought up on milk, the Sumatran rhinoceros is taken in pitfalls. This species is often captured, but in captivity the animals are very liable to die of the same complaint that killed off all my specimens. There is a representative of this kind of rhinoceros living in the Imperial Zoological Gardens at Schönbrunn, near Vienna, and this one is, as far as I know, the only example which has survived for any length of time in captivity. Another rarity is the form *Rhinoceros lasiotis*, of which there was about thirty years ago an example housed in the London Zoological Gardens, where it lived for more than twenty years. The common Indian rhinoceros and also the African rhinoceros thrive excellently in captivity and in our climate; I know several of these animals which have lived for more than thirty years in Zoological Gardens. They are also possessed of great vitality. On several occasions I have known rhinoceroses break off their horns, without being in any way injured; the horn soon grows again, and in the course of a year reaches quite a considerable size.

When they are young, rhinoceroses are very easy to tame. The young animals which I formerly received from the Egyptian Sudan were led loose through the desert, it being found unnecessary to fasten them up in any way. After their arrival in the laager they became speedily accustomed to their black keeper, and would follow him about like dogs. In the Nubian collection which I brought to the Berlin Zoological Gardens in the seventies there were three of these young rhinoceroses, and I used to allow them to run about loose, much to the amusement of the public. Great was the delight of the visitors when the keeper hid himself for a joke, and the animals, uttering plaintive cries, began to search for him.

It was some forty years ago that the first rhinoceros was brought to Europe by my traveller, Cassanova. I went to Trieste to take it over. I paid £800 down for it, being under the impression that I had thereby made a very

good bargain. My hopes proved to be illusory, however, for after much discussion the Zoological Society of London, from whom I had expected to obtain a very high price, refused to give me more than £1,000, and even this sum they only offered me under the condition that I should deliver the animal in their Gardens in a good state of health. I did not even receive the purchase-money in hard cash, but to the extent of half the sum had to accept other animals in exchange for my rhinoceros, so that altogether I cleared very little profit out of the transaction.



Young rhinoceros on board ship.

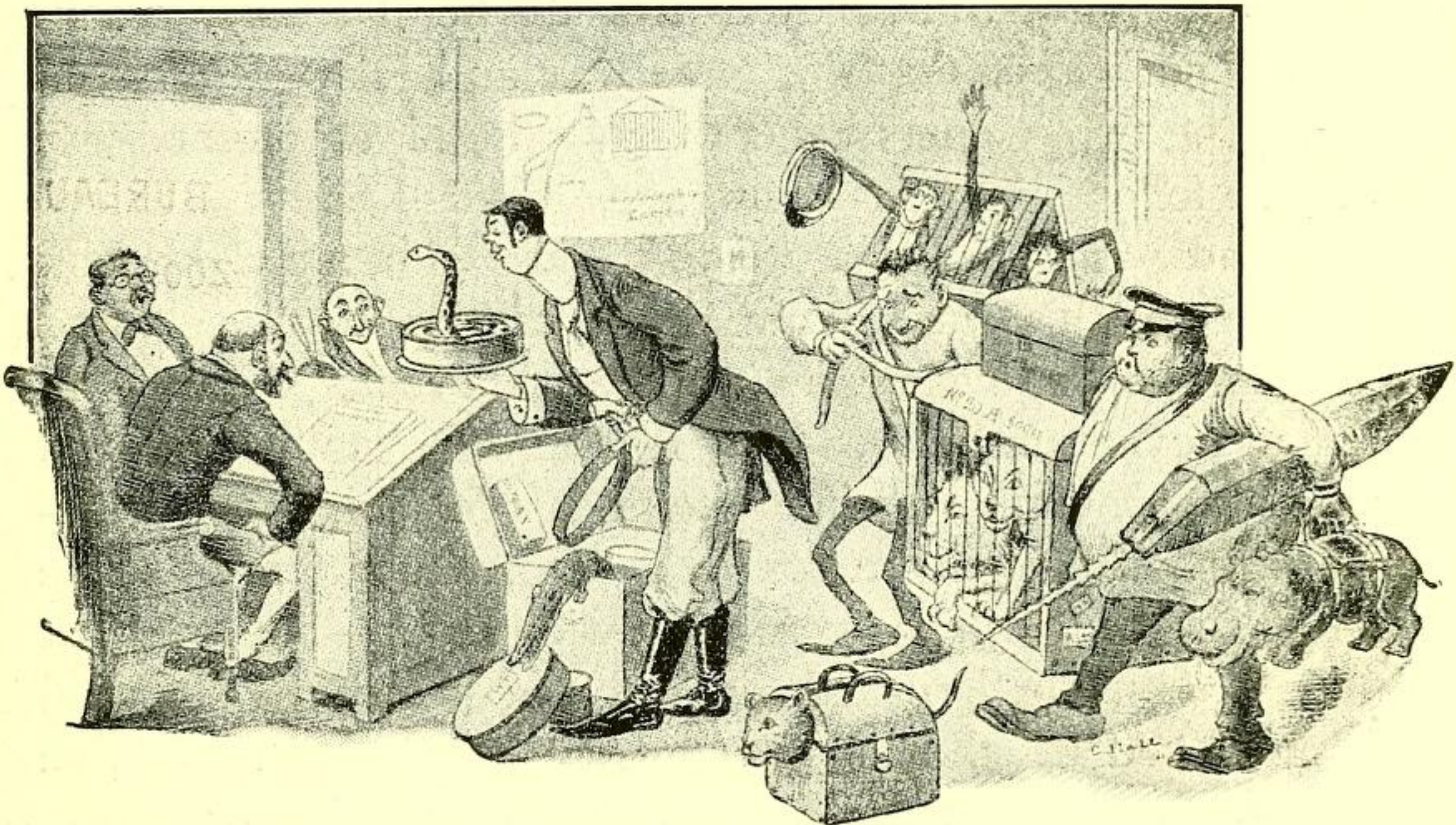
I remember this rhinoceros well, for he came near to doing me a nasty injury. He was quite a young animal and stood only about thirty-two inches at the shoulder, but nevertheless he blossomed out one day into a veritable athlete, a fact which I remember the more because he challenged me to a match, in which no doubt I should have come off second best had I not thought discretion the better part of valour. On the journey from Trieste to Vienna I travelled in the same compartment with the young rhinoceros, for, thinking him to be a very especial treasure, I wished to take charge of him personally. I was dozing comfortably in a corner, when I was suddenly awakened by a pull, and saw that the young rhinoceros had the tail of my coat in his mouth and was cheerfully sucking away at it. The animal appeared to find the flavour pleasant, but the operation not being precisely beneficial to my garment, I endeavoured, with all due politeness, to free the coat from the young herbivore's jaws. The brute, however, was not disposed to submit to this privation; he flew suddenly into a terrific rage, gave a shrill cry of anger, and assaulted me with fury. I fully admit that I was not

over-anxious for a duel with the little monster, and indeed I found the situation far from pleasant. With quite remarkable agility I leaped over boxes and sacks to escape from the formidable onset, and in so doing I upset a sack weighing about 150 lb., which rolled into the rhinoceros's stall; and the animal, possibly mistaking the harmless sack for his enemy, hurled it into the air as though it had been an india-rubber ball. Not wishing to give our African guest any opportunity of playing catch-ball with me, after the manner of his game with the sack, I hastily changed my quarters and completed the journey in safety. Later, when I was taking this young rhinoceros to London, I had further proof of his violent disposition. Being annoyed by the movements of his cage while it was being taken ashore, he charged the wall and split the thick planks as though they had been no stronger than the wood of a cigar box. I then, however, covered the entire cage in a cloth, which put the animal in darkness and thus quieted him, and he eventually arrived safely at his destination.

The hippopotamus is an even more bulky animal than its relative the rhinoceros; but nevertheless one of my travellers on one occasion actually transported a specimen in an ordinary travelling trunk. The story no doubt sounds slightly improbable and may perhaps remind the reader of the American commercial traveller who journeyed with his trunk full—so he asserted—of telegraph poles! Yet on this occasion I am not trying to presume upon the credulity of the public. Curiously enough there occurred a considerable time ago an illustration in a German comic journal—which is here reproduced—representing a traveller for my firm exhibiting samples of various animals, all packed in this very fashion. The artist might well be alluding to the incident of which I am here speaking, for I did really receive a hippopotamus packed up as ordinary luggage. The keeper whom I sent to Bordeaux to receive the animal transported it simply in a large travelling trunk, which he registered to Hamburg as luggage! The beast

was a female hailing from the west coast of Africa, and weighed, it is true, only eighty pounds. The trunk, with its unusual contents, was delivered safely in Hamburg, and the hippopotamus is now to be seen in the Zoological Gardens at Hanover.

It does not do to play with these great animals, for, like rhinoceroses, they are liable to violent fits of ill temper and are then extremely dangerous. Indeed, they are (as I have previously remarked when describing the methods of capturing the beasts) much less tractable than rhinoceroses, and do not



"My name is Schmidt. I am travelling for the firm of Hagenbeck. Permit me to show you my samples."

usually conceive that strong affection for their keepers which is so commonly to be observed in the case of the latter animals. The transport of these creatures is often a most difficult, not to say dangerous, operation. I once had an adventure with a female hippopotamus, much resembling the little incident with the rhinoceros at the London docks. It occurred about twenty-five years ago. I had just purchased the hippopotamus in question in South Germany, and on the animal's arrival at Hamburg it was, of course, necessary to transfer it from the waggon to the stable which was to be its home. The usual method of procedure—the cosmopolitan

language—was first tried, but the lady, having not only a thick hide but also a thick head, obstinately refused to come out. She merely approached the door, and snapped at the delicacies offered her, then retired once more into the waggon. This sort of foolery continued for several hours, until at last I lost all patience with the brute and ordered two of my people, whilst I once more enticed her to the door with a handful of food, to belabour her from the rear. Seeing the food, the cow once again came to the door, but on being hit from behind, instead of coming right out, she turned round in a fury, and charged the barrier dividing her from her assailants with such force that this gave way and fell with a crash, burying the two keepers beneath it. The hippopotamus was about to follow up her advantage, when I sprang to the rescue and gave her a tremendous kick with my right foot. The result of this was to turn her attention to myself, and with a snort of rage she came at me with a rush. I ran—ran as I had never run before—and fled into the stable prepared for the hippopotamus, the infuriated beast following with wide-open jaws. Springing across the bath, I made my escape through the bars, which were very wide apart—but only just in time! Outside, I rushed round to the door of the stall and quickly closed it—the hippopotamus was secured! I have always regretted that there was no photographic—or better, cinematographic—camera on the spot to preserve the doubtless highly comical sight of my panic-stricken flight from the hippopotamus cow.

Hippopotami thrive excellently in captivity and have bred in many Zoological Gardens, among others in London, Amsterdam, Antwerp and St. Petersburg. The act of mating takes place in the water, the animals becoming sexually mature in the fifth year. It is a pretty sight to see the mother playing in the water with her baby, or, when the little one is tired, giving it a ride upon her back. As I have said, the animals are usually somewhat bad tempered throughout their lives and are apt to be irritable, but of course the