the carriage, "if it comes to a hand-to-hand fight between Hebe and me I don't believe an extra foot or two of height would help me any."

He laughed outright and began telling me how the elephant was hurt. She had stepped on a nail or bit of iron and it had penetrated the tender part of her foot. She was in intense agony and almost wild with pain.

Long before we reached the inclosure in which she was we could hear her piteous trumpeting, and when we entered we found her on three legs, swinging the hurt foot slowly backward and forward, and uttering long cries of anger. Such dumb misery in her looks—poor thing.

Even Dick quailed now.

"You can never get near her," he whispered. "She will kill you, sure."

Her keeper divined what he said.

"Don't you be afraid, sir," he called out to me. "Hebe's got sense."

I took my box of instruments from Mr. Barnum.

"I like your pluck, my boy," he said, but I own that I felt rather queer and shaky as I went up to the huge beast.

The men employed about the show came around us curiously, but at a respectful and eminently safe distance, as I bent down to examine the foot.

While I was doing so, as gently as I could, I felt, to my horror, a light touch on my hair. It was as light as a woman's, but as I turned and saw the great trunk behind me, it had an awful suggestiveness.

"She's only curling your hair," sung out the keeper. "Don't mind her."

"I shall have to cut, and cut deep," said I, by way of reply.

He said a few words in some lingo, which were evidently intended for the elephant's understanding only. Then he shouted with the utmost coolness:

"Cut away!"

The man's faith inspired me. There he stood, quite unprotected, directly in front of the great creature, and quietly jabbered away to her as if this were an everyday occurrence.

"Well, I made one gash with the knife and I felt the grasp on my hair tighten perceptibly, yet not ungently. Cold drops of perspiration came out all over me.

"Shall I cut again?" I managed to call out.

"Cut away!" came again the encouraging response.

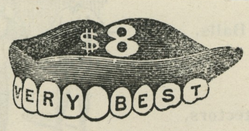
This stroke did the work. The abscess was lanced. We sprayed out the foot, packed it with oakum and bound it up. The relief must have been immediate, for the grasp on my hair relaxed, the elephant drew a long, almost human sigh, and—well, I don't know what happened next, for I fainted dead away. Dick must have finished the business and picked up me and my tools. I was as limp as a rag.

It must have been a year and a-half after this happened that I was called to Western Massachusetts to see some fancy horses. Barnum's circus happened to be there. You may be sure that I called to inquire for my distinguished patient.

"Hebe's well and hearty, sir," the old keeper answered me. "Come in and see her; she'll be glad to see you."

"Nonsense!" said I, though I confess I had a keen curiosity to see if she would know me, as I stepped into the tent.

There she stood, the beauty, as well as ever. For a moment she looked at me indifferently, then steadily and with interest. She next reached out her trunk and laid it caressingly first on my shoulder and then on my hair—how vividly her touch brought back to my mind the cold shivers I endured at my introduction to her—and then she slowly lifted up her foot, now whole and healthy, and showed it to me. That's the sober truth!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