



MAHOUT REMOVING A THORN FROM ELEPHANT'S FOOT



SKINNING THE TIGER

WHEN a man goes hunting tigers from the back of an elephant, about one-third of the danger lies in the damage the tiger might do and the other two-thirds is contributed by the various things the elephant is liable to do. In fact, if the danger from the tiger were the only thing to consider, tiger hunting would be a favorite diversion for a society hunt club where tea is served at the end.

In a tiger hunt, anywhere from a half dozen to 100 elephants are used. When an Indian prince goes forth on a royal hunt, there are even more elephants than that brought along. When a normal man issues forth he endeavors to get along with the half dozen. For elephants are expensive; they cost all the way from \$400 to \$1,200, a dollar a day to feed, besides the pay of the guides, which is not cheap. So that the man who has a tiger shot that he has captured himself upon his parlor floor, has probably paid close to \$1,000 for it.

India is the only country in which elephants are used for hunting. In Africa the elephant is not tamed; he is captured almost solely for his ivory. But in India the elephant is used quite entirely for hunting and working purposes.

The excitement of a tiger hunt begins long before a tiger is sighted. The wild beasts of India build their hives in a hanging position on the limbs of trees. Very often these drop down close to the ground and the thick undergrowth hides them from view. It is a not infrequent incident of these hunts for an elephant to calmly walk into one of these hives and scatter the beast inmates in all directions, whereupon the beasts quickly recover and seek revenge on the clumsy elephant and his riders, and all the other elephants of the party. Such an incident is a common occurrence that helps to enliven a tiger hunt and for the time being drives all thoughts of tiger skins from the hunters' minds. The basket or howdah in which the hunter rides is another feature that often lends excitement to a hunt, such as no tiger could provide. The hunter, that is the gentleman hunter, who has gone to India for the sport, occupies the howdah. This is a very large basket fastened to the elephant's back by a very strong rope. The spectacle reminds one of a captain standing on his bridge, high above the lashing waves. The native sits on the elephant's neck, or, to follow the same figure of speech, he is down on deck.

Now, elephants are often skittish and liable to fly off in a panic. They do this, quite forgetfully of the captain on the bridge, and the result is that the tiger hunter often has to cling with both hands to the sides of the howdah and receive a severe shaking up as though he were a pebble in a tin can. Nor is this without its dangers. Often when the elephant becomes panic stricken he will charge into a jungle and tear madly down with fatigue.

Another danger is when an elephant gets caught in a tropical mire and founders about. At these times the elephant will grope about for anything he can reach, to pounce down under his feet to get a firmer foothold. Small trees and branches are thrown to him which he dexterously arranges with his trunk and fore legs until he has built a foundation upon which he can rest. But at these times the elephant is not scrupulous in regard to

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