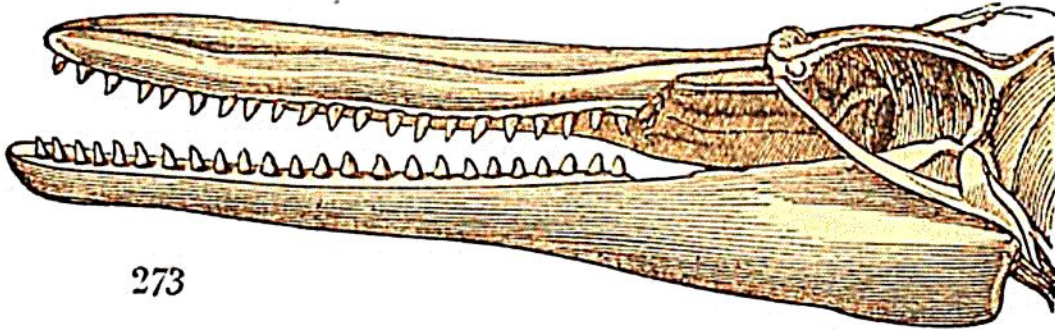


the *Dugong*, or Indian Walrus, have teeth very differently formed. The tusks of animals must necessarily, as respects their shape, be classed among the conical teeth.



273

The sharp-edged teeth perform the office of cutting and dividing the yielding textures presented to them; they act individually as wedges or chisels, but when co-operating with similar teeth in the opposite jaw, they have the power of cutting like shears or scissors. The flat teeth, of which the surfaces are generally rough, are used in conjunction with those meeting them in the opposite jaw, for grinding down the food by a lateral motion, in a manner analogous to the operation of mill-stones in a mill. The tuberculated teeth, of which the surfaces present a number of rounded eminences, corresponding to depressions in the teeth opposed to them in the other jaw, act more by their direct pressure in breaking down hard substances, and pounding them, as in a mortar.

The position of the teeth in the jaws is another ground of distinction. In those Mammalia which exhibit the most complete set of teeth, the foremost in the row have the sharp-edged or chisel shape, constituting the blades of a cutting instrument; and they are accordingly denominated *incisors*. The incisors of the upper jaw are always implanted in a bone, intermediate between the two upper jaw bones, and called the *intermaxillary* bones.\* The conical

\* Those teeth of the lower jaw which correspond with the incisors of the upper jaw, are also considered as incisors. In Man, and in the species of *quadrumana* that most nearly resemble him, the sutures which divide the *intermaxillary* from the *maxillary* bones are obliterated before birth, and leave in the adult no trace of their former existence.