

Mounds of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Texas,' in SCIENCE, Vol. XXIII., pp. 583-4, leads me to say a few words on the subject. Mr. Farnsworth cites Mr. A. C. Veatch's article published in this paper, Vol. XXIII., p. 35, and goes on to state that the numerous mounds existing through the region above mentioned were formed by the upturning of trees. I will not question his authority in making the assertion, not having ever lived in the localities he cites; all I wish to give are a few facts concerning the 'Indian mounds' which I have met with in Kendall Co., Texas.

Within a radius of five miles of my old home there, I know of four mounds. They are all of the same shape—elliptical, and measure from twenty to forty feet long by ten to twenty wide by two to three high. They are about twice as long as they are wide, and level on top. Two of them are located on high, hilly ground, and the other two in valleys. They form no group, but are scattered widely over the country. They are made largely of stones about the size of a man's fist, which appear to have been in contact once with fire, and from the small percentage of earth they contain compared with the surrounding ground, they give one an impression that they were formed by the piling up of these rocks. Arrow-heads are common around them, for which the people in the locality attribute their existence to the Indians, and hold that they were used as places of sacrifices, or torture, or cremation.

I will refrain from expressing any opinion as to their probable origin, leaving that to wiser heads than mine, for only the interest I take in the subject induces me to contribute the above.

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MEGASPORE OR MACROSPORE.

It is often asked why some botanists use the term megaspore while others call the same object a macrospore. Since those who say macrospore are likely to say macrosporocarp, macrosporophyll, etc., instead of megasporocarp, etc., it is worth while to call attention to the comparative merits of *mega* and *macro*.

Mega, from the Greek μέγας, means big, great, large; it is equivalent to the Latin *magnus* and is the opposite of *micro*. *Macro*, from the Greek μακρός, means long; it is *not* the opposite of *micro*, as was doubtless imagined by those who first used the term, macrospore, but is the opposite of βραχύς, meaning short. No one would designate the larger spores of heterosporous plants as *long spores*. Why then should any one say the same thing in Greek? The misconception of the meaning of *macro*—a misconception which could never occur to a student of Greek—has become so established that we even have a genus, *Macrozamia*. The taxonomist doubtless thought he was constructing a word which should mean *large Zamia*, but the word means *long Zamia*, while the plant itself is of the short tuberous type. I should not suggest a change to *Megazamia*, although much more radical changes in generic names are made with far less provocation. Botanists dropped the term, *rhizocarp*, because it implied that the sporocarps were borne upon roots, an entirely inaccurate implication. The term, *macro*, except where it refers to length, is just as inaccurate. Let us say megaspore, megasporophyll, megasporocarp, megaphyllous, and, in short use *mega* wherever the idea is that of great size rather than great length.

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SPECIAL ARTICLES.

DINOSAURIAN GASTROLITHS.

THE occurrence of worn and polished quartz pebbles in such close association with plesiosaur skeletons of the Kansas chalk as to suggest that in life these reptiles were pebble swallows was first noted by Professor Mudge and later by Williston.¹ More recently these observations of Mudge and Williston have been confirmed in the most conclusive manner by Mr. Barnum Brown,² who found siliceous pebbles almost invariably accompanying the plesiosaur skeletons, which

¹ Field Columbian Museum Publication (Chicago), No. 73, p. 75.

² SCIENCE, N. S., Vol. XIX., No. 501, pp. 184, 185, August 5, 1904.