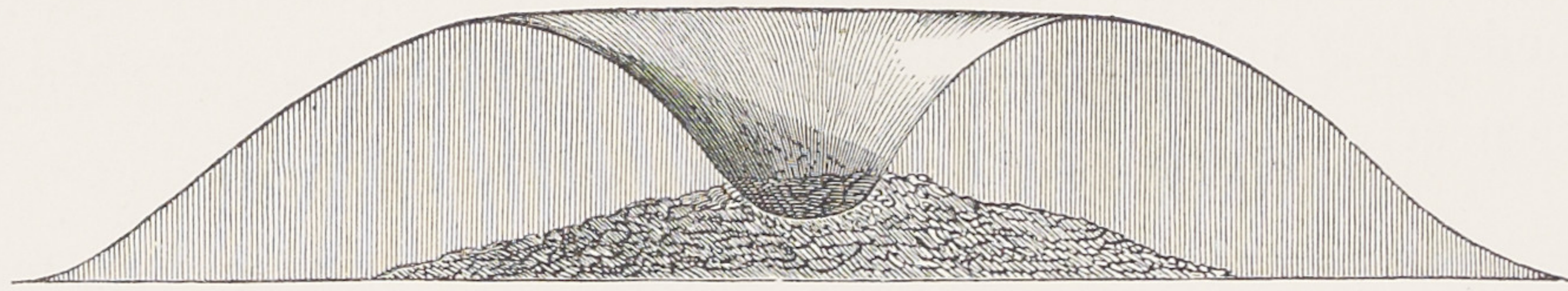


interstices, but always in the same plane, so that at last there is a circle of eight eggs all standing upright in the sand with several inches of sand intervening between each. The male bird assists the female in opening and covering up the mound; and provided the birds are not themselves disturbed, the female continues to lay in the same mound, even after it has been several times robbed. The natives say that the females lay an egg every day.

“Eight is the greatest number I have heard of from good authority as having been found in one nest; but I opened a mound which had been previously robbed of several eggs, and found that two had been laid opposite to each other in the same plane in the usual manner; and a third deposited in a plane parallel to that in which the other two were placed, but  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches below them. This circumstance led me to imagine it was possible that there might be sometimes successive circles of eggs in different planes.

“I enclose three sketches which will convey to you a complete idea of the form of the mound, and of the manner in which the eggs are placed in it. These sketches were drawn by Mr. Knight, from a rude one of mine, and are very accurate.

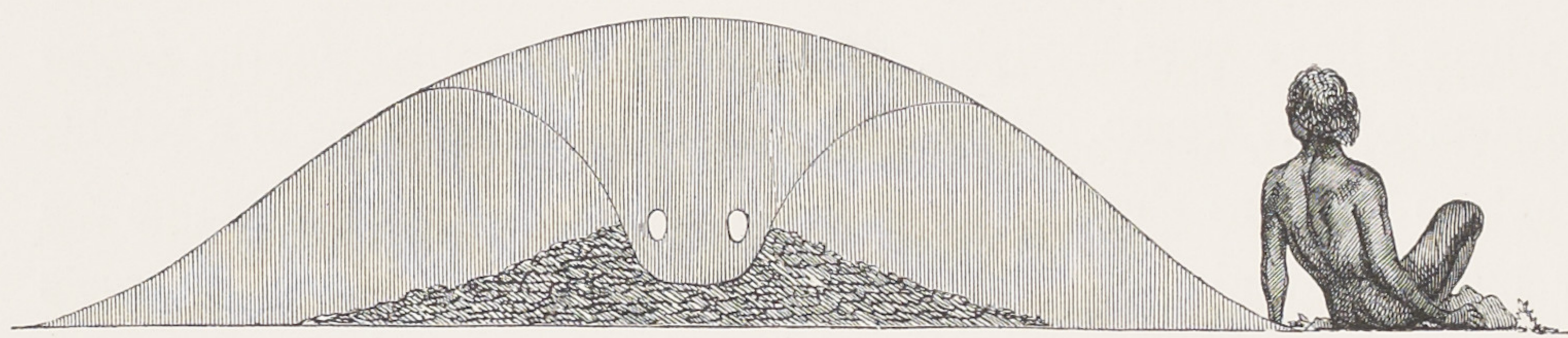
No. 1.



This sketch represents a section through the mound after the sand has been cleared out in such a manner that the eggs could all be removed, and the bottom of the nest of leaves be laid bare. It shows the form of the opening the natives make in the mound when they rob it of its eggs; this opening has however been continued below where the eggs are placed, in order to show the form of the interior nest.

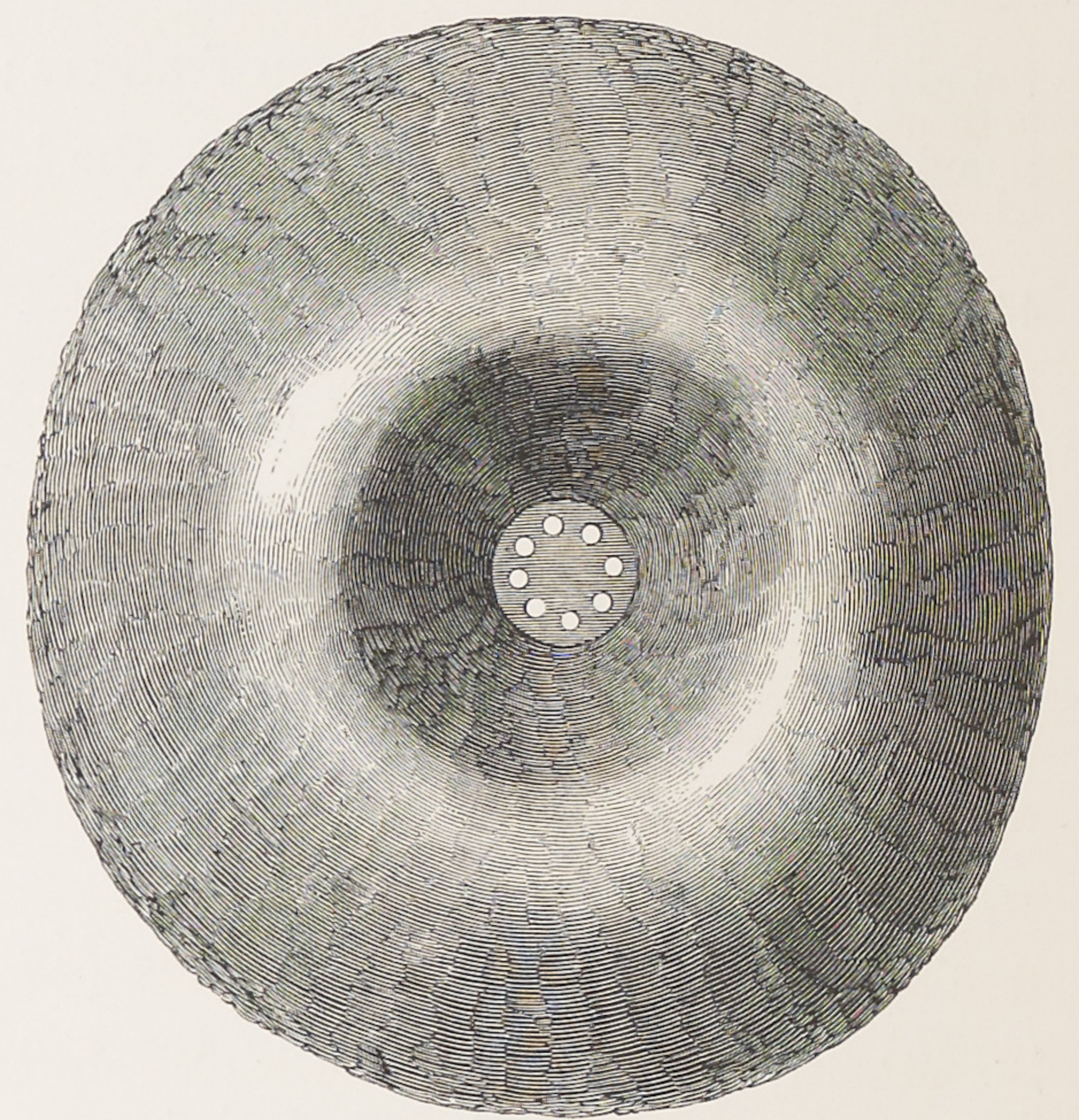
The pale tint represents that portion which is made of sand; the darker tint the part which is made of leaves, &c.

No. 2.



This sketch represents a section through the mound in its undisturbed state; the pale tint indicates the portion of sand, the darker tint the leaves, &c.

No. 3.



This sketch shows a bird's eye view of the mound as seen from above; the sand is supposed to have been so far thrown out as to leave the tops of the eggs exposed, and to show them standing upright in their relative positions.

“One of the mounds of these birds which had been robbed of its eggs on the 11th November, some of which were quite fresh, had two fresh eggs laid in it on the 27th of the same month, and the birds were seen at the nest on the morning of the 28th, apparently for the purpose of laying, when the male bird was shot.

“Sometimes several of these mounds are constructed close to one another. I found two within 200 or 300 yards, and have seen five within the distance of four or five miles. They were built in precisely the same situations that I have seen them in other parts of the continent, that is, in a sandy, scrubby country, the site of the mound being in some little open glade, in the very thickest part of the scrub.

“The eggs are of a light pink, the colour being brightest and most uniform when freshly laid. As the time of hatching approaches, they become discoloured and marked in places with dark spots.

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| The greatest length of these eggs is about . . . . . | $3\frac{6}{10}$ inches. |
| „ breadth „ . . . . .                                | $2\frac{2}{10}$ „       |
| Circumference in direction of length . . . . .       | 10 „                    |
| „ „ breadth . . . . .                                | $7\frac{2}{10}$ „       |

“The temperature of the nests I have examined has always been warm; not so much so, however, as I should have thought necessary for the purpose of hatching eggs.

“There are two great peculiarities about these eggs; the first is, that both ends are of nearly the same size; which form is peculiarly adapted to the position in which they are always placed; the egg being compressed in every part as nearly as possible towards the axis, in which the centre of gravity lies, there is the least possible