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For the GAZETTE.

### A PAPER HOUSE.

Many of your readers have seen the paper house constructed by the paper wasp, or hornet, as they are sometimes called; but probably few have ever seen the process of building them; or have ever carefully examined their interior. And, indeed, knowing the well-known temper of the insect, and their well-known "hot foot," few would care to get near enough to their nests when in course of construction, to watch their method of building. There are two varieties of wasps that build paper houses, one, a large wasp, with the abdominal rings colored light gray and black alternately, which builds its houses in low shrubs principally, sometimes in bush piles and under trees that have partly fallen. The house of this wasp, is of pyriform shape and is not an uncommon object in the pastures and clearings of this country. The other paper wasp is much smaller, and the abdominal rings are marked alternately black and bright yellow. This wasp usually builds its paper houses under an old tree stump, or under a mass of roots of shrubs that for some cause have been lifted from the soil sufficiently to give the requisite amount of room for the structure.

I have often observed the first mentioned wasps

building their houses, but (owing to the habits of the yellow wasp of concealing its nest,) never had an opportunity, until this year, of observing its methods of building or its domestic habits. In the house I reside in there is a door facing the east, with a recess of about ten inches. The door has a glass porch. This spring, I was agreeably surprised to find a yellow paper wasp had departed from its usual habits, and had commenced the construction of its house at the top of the recess of the door, at a few inches from one corner, and in full view through the glass panels of the door, giving me a chance, (which I have improved with a naturalist's ardor) to safely observe its methods of construction and also to some extent its home life.

Before giving the observed details of construction, a few words on the structure of the insect and its method of obtaining the material for paper, will assist the reader in understanding its methods of work. The general anatomy of this wasp is much like that of the common honey bee, with the exception of the head; this, in the wasp, is larger, more triangular in shape, and is provided with a larger pair of cutting forceps. The material it uses for paper is obtained from old wood, that has been exposed to the weather, so that the fibre is soft. These fibres it scrapes off with its mandibles with great care, to secure the finest and softest portions, and it is made into paper pulp by being moistened with a fluid the insect secretes.

The old mother wasp commenced her home by firmly cementing a portion of paper pulp in a circle, about three-eighths of an inch in diameter, to the wood of the recess. This was the foundation from which the future structure was to depend. Then commencing at the edge of the foundation, working backwards, round the circle, building less than a sixteenth of an inch in width at each round, she slowly supplying the pulp from the mandibles, and laying the material smooth and thin with her two first feet, constructed an almost perfect sphere of paper, an inch in diameter, leaving an entrance at the bottom just large enough to enable her to creep in. This was the first story of the house, and occupied nearly three days time of