

is finished; which, rising terrace above terrace, with connecting pillars, is one of the most perfect and elegant specimens of insect mechanism.

The tree wasp differs from the foregoing, in hanging its nest from a projecting bough, or between the branches of a low bush—as often witnessed in our woods—but the internal economy is in every respect similar to the former.

There is another species of the social wasp, however, which is dissimilar in its mode of building, as the cells are not enclosed in an outer covering, but exposed unprotected to the influence of the weather. These fabrics consist of a single or double terrace of chambers, which are suspended, in an inclined position, from a branch or stalk of grass, and coated with varnish to prevent the absorption of rain. We have before us a specimen of this kind, which was found, with several others, occupying the corner of the ceiling, in a bed room, at a public house in the interior of Virginia—the windows of which was left permanently open. This respiratory, composed of one range of cells, was not varnished over, as that would have been unnecessary in its sheltered situation. It was attached to the wall by a minute stalk, and seemed to have been the work of the previous summer.

In these labours we see an extraordinary instance of perseverance and intelligent design, on the part of a single insect, who is the sole progenitor of a flourishing colony—overcoming every difficulty in affording a safe asylum for her eggs, and combining usefulness with the utmost elegance of proportion and arrangement;—even the hexagonal form of each cell implies consummate sagacity, for by geometrical calculation, that form is proved to be the best that could possibly be adapted, to economise both labour, material, and space.

The history of the Ant is deeply interesting, as every species evinces some striking singularity in its government and fornicary. They mine hollow chambers and galleries in the earth, the body of trees, and some, as the Termites of Africa, erect hillocks of an enormous size, compared with the bulk of the insect, or build nests in the shape of a mushroom. They generally agree in one respect, namely: the subdivision into three distinct classes, of every colony; each having separate duties allotted to it, and equally zealous in advancing the interests of the commonwealth. These are the workers, to whom the general labour of building and foraging is intrusted, and the male and female ants; the two latter being furnish-

ed with wings, and devoted to the important purposes of replenishing the colony. It is a remarkable fact, that the female ant, when about to lay, loses her wings; but the males, after that period, emigrate from the formicary, never to return; and at that season they may be discovered wandering without stability of purpose, or lying dead in pools and running streams. The busy, labouring ants remain in charge of the eggs, which they foster with unremitting care and attention, removing them in their mandibles to the upper galleries, for air, or at night-fall depositing them safely in the retired chambers below. This labour they continue to perform during the larva stage, and even until the perfect ant is developed. These white grubs, or aurelia, may be seen at any time by removing the stone that shelters a colony of ants. Then the greatest excitement and solicitude prevails; every effort is made to remove the young to a place of security.—Workers are beheld continually pouring down into the main passage, each freighted with a load much larger than itself, while others again are returning for the remainder of their precious store, presenting a most amusing spectacle, which, nothing so forcibly reminds us of, as “piping down ham-mocks” on board a man-of-war, at sunset. These grubs, or aurelia, for many of both may be seen at the same time, are white, the latter being twice the size of a working ant, of an oval shape, and if cut open will be found to contain within a perfect ant, but without signs of life, and of a pure translucent white colour; these aurelia resemble grains of barley, and are vulgarly supposed to be the eggs of ants, whereas they are very minute, and altogether different in appearance.

The history of the organization and manners of these sagacious insects, their wars, migrations, and destructive voracity, are so extraordinary, that nothing less than personal experience would convince those who are not prepared by previous study and reflection, to behold new wonders and the most astounding phenomena, with every step taken in the investigation of the natural world. It is some time ere the mind can become familiarized with those great truths which God has inscribed in immutable characters within the mysterious volume of nature.

Among beetles, may be noticed those which bury their eggs in the ground, with a material most conducive to the rapid development of the germ within. For this purpose, the burying beetle (*Necrophorus vespillo*) effects the interment of dead bodies, such as moles, frogs,