

AN ABERRANT LASIUS FROM JAPAN.¹

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In a small collection of Japanese ants recently sent me for identification by Professor S. J. Kuwana, of the Imperial Agricultural Experiment Station at Nishigahara, near Tokio, I find a single female specimen of such unusual conformation that I at first supposed it to represent an undescribed genus. On closer examination, however, it proves to be a *Lasius* strikingly different from the females of any of the known species, and suggests two hypotheses for both of which provision will be made in the following paragraphs. The specimen may represent either a new species or merely an aberrant female phase of some one of the known Japanese *Lasii*. The latter supposition will be considered at length in the sequel; the former calls for the following, perhaps merely provisional, taxonomic description:

Lasius spathepus sp. nov. (Fig. 1, A and B.)

Female (deälated). Length 6 mm.

Head cordate, slightly broader than long, with notched posterior border and rounded, convex posterior corners and sides; convex above; gula concave, with a median longitudinal ridge. Mandibles small, flattened; apparently 5-toothed, with concave external borders. Clypeus depressed, broadly rounded in front, obscurely carinate in the middle. Frontal area obsolescent; frontal groove distinct. Eyes rather large; ocelli small. Antennal scapes broad and compressed, reaching well beyond the posterior corners of the head; funiculi slender, not clavate; all the joints distinctly longer than broad; joints 1-3 more than twice as long as broad; terminal twice as long as the penultimate joint. Thorax much narrower than the head, fully twice as long as broad; mesonotum and scutellum flattened above; epinotum short, rounded above, with the declivity abrupt, straight in profile and longer than the base. Petiole with an erect scale, compressed antero-posteriorly and with its upper margin rather sharp and distinctly notched in the middle. Gaster very short, but little longer than

¹Contributions from the Entomological Laboratory of the Bussey Institution, Harvard University. No. 22.