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Publisher: Taylor & Francis
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Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tped18>

III. On the Preparation of Fungi

Mr James English ^a

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Published online: 01 Dec 2010.

To cite this article: Mr James English (1870) III. On the Preparation of Fungi , Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, 10:1-4, 28-29, DOI: [10.1080/03746607009468643](https://doi.org/10.1080/03746607009468643)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03746607009468643>

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On the morning of Saturday, 8th August, the party inspected the marshy ground near Gatehouse, and gathered *Œnanthe crocata*, *Sium angustifolium*, and *Veronica Anagallis*. They also visited the grounds of Cally House. On the shores of the loch at Cally were found *Littorella lacustris*, *Peplis Portula*, *Nasturtium palustre*, *Lysimachia Nummularia*, &c. In the course of the day they attended a horticultural show in Gatehouse, and in the afternoon proceeded to Tarff station, where they picked *Genista tinctoria* and *Alisma Plantago*. On reaching Dumfries a delay of about an hour and a half enabled some of the party to visit the banks of the Nith. Near the old bridge were gathered *Medicago denticulata*, *Phalaris canariensis*, and *Xanthium spinosum* (introduced). At Lockerbie, *Symphytum officinalis* was gathered. The party reached Edinburgh about 10 P.M.

Professor Balfour concluded by giving a few notes on a visit he had made later in the autumn to Sandringham, near Lynn, in Norfolk, where he collected *Lastrea Thelypteris*, *L. cristata*, *Osmunda regalis*, *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, *Solanum nigrum*, *Arnoseris pusilla*, *Hypericum Elodes*, *Verbascum floccosum*, &c.

Specimens of the principal plants collected in the various trips were exhibited.

II. *Notes on the Flora of Malta and Sicily.* By Dr H. CLEGHORN.

(This is printed with the continuation of the paper read June 10.)

III. *On the Preparation of Fungi.* By Mr JAMES ENGLISH, Epping. Communicated by Professor BALFOUR.

The author remarks, that during his entomological rambles he has for many years observed fungi, and often thought that it was a pity that no plan had been adopted for preserving such beautiful vegetable forms, so as to have characteristic specimens in botanical museums. He resolved, accordingly, to endeavour to find out an easy mode

of preservation. His efforts, however, were for a long time unsuccessful, and it was only three years ago that he fell upon a method which promised good results. He saw much depended on proper manipulation and the use of chemical agents. The soft fugacious species were special objects of attention. Their rapid growth, and their equally rapid decomposition, interfere much with all ordinary modes of preservation. By the process which he had adopted growth and decomposition are arrested, and the specimens are prevented from shrivelling, at all events to any great extent. In the case of a specimen of *Agaricus campestris*, nine inches in diameter, he ascertained that the shrivelling in diameter was little more than half-an-inch. Most fungi contain more or less of alkaline deliquescent salts. After being dried, they absorb moisture, and decay goes on with rapidity. The process adopted is that of waxing the specimens, and thus preserving their natural pileus and stipe. Specimens preserved in 1866 are now as fresh as when first prepared. He expects ere long to have a very complete collection of fungi, and thus to be able to direct more attention to an interesting order of plants which have been long neglected. A collection of a hundred species can be supplied at the rate of 10s. for each species. The species, however, are represented in groups; that is to say, the type and the variations in form and colour, when such exist, are given. Thus there are several specimens representing each species.

Numerous fungi thus prepared by Mr English, and now in the Museum at the Botanic Garden, were exhibited to the meeting. This includes the following species:—*Amanita muscaria*, *A. rubescens*, *Agaricus procerus*, *A. melleus*, *A. squarrosus*, *A. mucidus*, *A. rachodes*, *Boletus edulis*, *B. luridus*, *Cantherellus cibaridis*, *Peziza aurantia*, &c.

IV. Miscellaneous Communications.

1. Dr Thomas Anderson, Calcutta, sent a report on the number and distribution of Cinchona plants in the Government plantations at Darjeeling on 1st September 1868. The total number in the various plantations at that date was 2,075,078; viz., *C. succirubra*, 1,118,557; *C. Calisaya*,