

Ellen Hutchins to Dawson Turner: 5th January 1810

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Jan. 5

Ping. No 28 from

Mr. Mackay

How shall I thank you, my dear Sir, for your kind wish to gratify me by writing as soon as my little parcel arrived, & for the pleasure your letter* gave me. Its arrival on New Year's day I take as a good omen, & sincerely wish that this & many succeeding years may be productive of peace & health to you & those on whom your happiness depends. That you like the drawings is a great pleasure. Wherever you see any defect pray tell me that I may do better copies for you. I am not myself satisfied with the magnified parts of the *Rivulariæ*, but now that I have a better microscope if I can live till next season, you shall have much better magnified parts & I shall, I hope, be able to make some observations on the fruit which seems to me not of the same nature with that of *Conferva gelatinosa*. Think, my dear Sir, what a feast it was to have all those plants to examine & compose in one day. The impression it made & the reflections it produced I shall never forget - Surely *rivularia angulosa* has no affinity to those plants of which I sent you the drawings. In the conn[ection?] of its filaments it rather resembles the family of *distorta*, but unlike that tribe they terminate in pointed pellucid hairs - The day or two after I recd. your letter I sent off a parcel containing drawings of nine *Confervæ* not described in Dillwyns. If you like to describe them I shall be very much pleased & hope you will add No 13 which has no resemblance to *C. Hookera*. It is not, I believe, sufficiently magnified. The microscope I had when it was done did not magnify so highly as the last drawings of *Confervæ*. The plant named after you in Dillwyn I have never seen. I should be glad of a specimen. I now think that what I have been accustomed to call *Turneri* is a different plant from what I sent you, as *Plumula*, with a suspicion of its being *Turneri* in a young state. The latter I have observed in all stages of its growth & find that it constantly produces four ramuli at each joint. *Plumula* as constantly has but two & is beside a more delicate slender plant, the ramuli & joints longer, & is very rare here, *Turneri* very plenty. I cannot tell you how delighted I have been with your Lichens, which I recd. quite safe, with the assistance of Sprengel I have made out many genera, but I don't expect to do much until Mr Borrer's work is out. When I can have it to make out the species you may be sure if you do not get Lichens from me that it must be my fault, not that of the country. Where there are so many rocks & heaths there must be Lichens. I am half afraid of the [] ones, they are so numerous. I have put a few specimens in the last parcel. I fear they cannot be of much use to you. When I open'd your paper with *Parmelia diatrypa* I was quite surprised it was an

old acquaintance of which you can have many specimens. I had taken it for physodes from Withering's description. I enclos[e] two Jungermanniæ. No 27 I found here full of fruit in October. I think y[ou] will find it distinct from either par[melia ?] or multiflora, both which it resembles, in its upright, unbranched shoot & terminating fruit. I can send you more & regret that I omitted to put it in the parcel. No 28 Mr. Mackay sent me as quinquedentata, but surely it cannot be that. Is it With[ering's] angulosa? I hope Mr. Hooker will soon give us the Jungermanniæ. What a delightful family they are. I often regret that Mr. Dillwyn has so completely concluded the Confervæ. Sometimes I think myself very ungrateful to feel dissatisfied when he has taught me all I know of that genera, but it is impossible not to feel regret. I am sorry to hear he is so plagued with law, of all earthly torments one of the worst. I hope you found the mosses in the last parcel interesting. All mosses are very much so, nothing delights me more than the sight of a great rock cover'd with a variety of mosses. In winter the rich shades of green they afford are very beautiful. I have a rock in my little flower garden, the north side of which is freely covered with mosses & ferns. I am sorry Mr. Woods was not as successful as he expected in Botany. I should think a traveller not likely to grow [?] a great deal unless he goes to some distant untried part of the world. Any country requires to be minutely examined & travellers seldom spend time enough at any one place to know what it produces.

Your letter by Capt'n. Mangin I have not yet recd., but am in daily expectation of it, tho' letters & parcels are often long delayed they in the end are received in safety. I hope my last will not be as long on its journey as the two xxxx former ones.

Of late I have been much amused & occupied with shells, of which we have a better variety than I at first expected. Some I cannot satisfy myself about, & some rare ones I have got among others Venus triangularis finer than the figure represents, & being prettily coloured. You shall in some time have the best specimens I can procure of what our own shores produce. I have half blinded myself picking seashells out of sand.

Believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours

E. Hutchins

Ballylickey

Janry 5th. 1810

** The letter Ellen had received was the one written by Dawson Turner on 22nd December 1809.*