

## Francis Hutcheson

**Born:** 1772  
**President:** 1777-1780, 1780-1783  
**Died:** 1784

Francis Hutcheson was a physician, chemical scientist, musician and composer. He was the son of Francis Hutcheson the elder, the renowned Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. He was educated at Trinity College Dublin, taking his BA in 1745, MA in 1748 and MD in 1762.

Hutcheson was Professor of Chemistry at Trinity College Dublin from 1760 to 1767. As required, he gave external lectures to all gentlemen who chose to attend. This was advertised as 'A Private Course of Experimental Chemistry, Consisting of about Sixty Lectures at One O'clock Five Days a Week in Which the Principles and Operations of Chemistry Will be Practically Applied to Arts, Manufacture, Agriculture and Especially Medicine and Pharmacy'.

He was Physician to the Rotunda Hospital from 1774 and was the second physician appointed to Meath Hospital but was only on the staff there for one year. He was also one of the physicians at Westmoreland Lock Hospital at which venereal (sexually transmitted) diseases were treated.

This was a period of intense musical activity in aristocratic and professional circles in the British Isles. Francis Hutcheson played the violin in a group with other gifted musicians, such as surgeon John Neale, and he was a founder member of Lord Mornington's Musical Academy. He appeared as a violinist under his own name and composed as Francis Ireland. Eleven glees and eight catches by him are printed in Warren's Collections. One composition is entitled *Oh Doctor Doctor!* The Nobleman's and Gentleman's Catch Club awarded him prizes in 1771, 1772 and 1773 for his compositions.

He married Mary Card with whom he had one son, the composer Francis Hutcheson, and three daughters.

In Gilborne's Medical Review of 1775, the following lines appear about Hutcheson:-



HERITAGE  
CENTRE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF  
PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

Th'accomplished, well instructed Hutcheson,  
Of learned father is the learned son,  
Can well harangue in professorial chair  
Th'elements, earth, water, fire and air.  
He first in chemistry to light has brought  
Full many secrets th'ancients vainly sought;  
To system regular he can reduce  
Of arts and sciences the most abstruse.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Gilborne, *The medical review, a poem being a panegyric on the faculty of Dublin; physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries, marching in procession to the temple of fame* (Dublin: J A Husband, 1775), 17.

