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Some Problems Regarding A Series of Letters Between Francis Hutcheson and Gilbert Burnet

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NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

though "went" is colourless and "roaring smother" rather vague and generalised. Mr. Scott's line really swirled:

And gart her birl three times round wi the swaw;

I know of no words in current English with exactly the kind of force expressed by "birl" and "swaw."

The last line of the canto needs care; there must be no anticlimax.

infin che'll mar fu sopra noi richiuso.

Miss Sayers' line

And over our heads the hollow seas closed up.

sounds effective so long as one does not enquire too closely in what respect the seas were hollow and how this "hollow" thing "closed." Mr. Scott's line both sounds as it ought to and is free from ambiguity:

Until the ocean gurled abuin our heids.

In "gurled" we hear and see the waters. In Miss Sayers' line the description is generalised and sounds as if the figure had been worked out by Ulysses retrospectively, but in Mr. Scott's we feel that Ulysses is experiencing yet again what happened when his ship went down. In "gurled" we see and hear with him.

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The first reactions in print to the first edition of Francis Hutcheson's *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (published at the end of February or the beginning of March, 1725) seem to have been a letter from "Philopatris" in the *London Journal* of March 27, 1725, and a series of letters exchanged by "Philaretus" and "Philanthropus" between April and December, 1725, also in the *London Journal*. The letters were collected and published as *Letters Between the Late Mr. Gilbert Burnet, and Mr. Hutchinson [sic], Concerning the True Foundation of Virtue or Moral Goodness. Formerly published in*
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the London Journal (London, 1735). The preface to this collection, supposedly, and probably, written by Burnet, the son of the bishop of Salisbury, reveals that "Philaretus" was Burnet and that "Philanthropus" was Hutcheson. However, there is cause for much confusion over these letters.

First, the initial letter in the collection is signed "Philopatris," who remains unidentified. The letter is merely an objective, uninvolved, though careful, account of the purpose of Hutcheson's Inquiry as described in its preface, and of the content of Treatise II of the Inquiry. It is possible that "Philopatris" was either Burnet or Hutcheson.

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