

Classic Poetry Series

Jacques Tahureau

- poems -

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Jacques Tahureau (1527 - 1555)

Jacques Tahureau, was born in Mans in 1527, and died in Paris in 1555 at the age of 28. He was a French Renaissance Poet.

Biography

Jacques Tahureau was born in Mans, France in 1527. He was a good scholar and studied the Latin and Greek languages at the University of Angers. Following this he took part in the wars of Henri II against the Emperor Charles Quint.

On his return to France, Tahureau took up residence in Paris and mixed with a number of poets including Pleiad and Jodelle. In 1554 he published his first collection of his own poetry, which included several sonnets and odes.

The following year he was married to a young woman named Marie Grené. Also that in that year he entrusted his manuscript Dialogues to a bookseller, but was unable to see it published due to his sudden death on 28th September 1555. Dialogues of Jacques Tahureau, gentleman of Mans was therefore published posthumously in 1556 and later republished fifteen times. As the title suggests, the piece is presented as a dialogue between two characters: Démocritus and Cosmophile.

Works:

Dialogues of Jacques Tahureau, Gentleman of Mans (1556)

Moonlight

The high Midnight was garlanding her head
With many a shining star in shining skies,
And, of her grace, a slumber on mine eyes,
And, after sorrow, quietness was shed.
Far in dim fields cicadas jargonéd
A thin shrill clamour of complaints and cries;
And all the woods were pallid, in strange wise,
With pallor of the sad moon overspread.

Then came my lady to that lonely place,
And, from her palfrey stooping, did embrace
And hang upon my neck, and kissed me over;
Wherefore the day is far less dear than night,
And sweeter is the shadow than the light,
Since night has made me such a happy lover.

Jacques Tahureau

Ode: Si en un lieu solitaire

Si en un lieu solitaire
Les ennuis me font retraire
Pour me plaindre tout seulet,
Si je cherche les montagnes,
Ou des plus vertes campagnes
Le murmurant ruisselet;

Lors ces choses tant secrètes,
Bien qu'aux autres soient muettes,
Me voyant en tel émoi,
Toutes d'un chant pitoyable
Mais, hélas ! peu secourable,
Gémissent aveque moi.

En quelque part que je tourne,
Toujours le deuil y séjourne;
Le cours même du ruisseau
S'enfle aux pleurs de ma complainte;
Sa fleur tombante à ma plainte
Y pleure maint arbrisseau.

Les poissons viennent en tourbe;
Le plus fort chêne se courbe
Au son de mes piteux cris;
Et le Satyre folâtre
Tout coi délaisse à sébattre
Pour déplorer mes écrits.

Je vois l'oiseau qui se penche
Tout pensif dessus la branche,
Puis en douloureux accents
Dégoise en son doux ramage,
Qui au plus félon courage
Pourrait chatouiller les sens.

Je vois le troupeau champêtre,
Qui oublie à se repaître
Pour entendre ma chanson;
J'entr'ois les cavernes basses,
Par leurs voix rauques et lasses,
Lamentant mon triste son.

Mais que me sert faire entendre
Mon chant pitoyable et tendre,
Si une, hélas ! n'en croit rien,
Que sur toute autre j'admire,
Et que seule je désire
Se convertir à mon bien ?

Jacques Tahureau

Shadows of His Lady

Within the sand of what far river lies
The gold that gleams in tresses of my Love?
What highest circle of the Heavens above
Is jewelled with such stars as are her eyes?
And where is the rich sea whose coral vies
With her red lips, that cannot kiss enough?
What dawn-lit garden knew the rose, whereof
The fled soul lives in her cheeks' rosy guise?

What Parian marble that is loveliest,
Can match the whiteness of her brow and breast?
When drew she breath from the Sabaeen glade?
Oh happy rock and river, sky and sea,
Gardens, and glades Sabaeen, all that be
The far-off splendid semblance of my maid!

Jacques Tahureau