

Classic Poetry Series

**Nicolas Joseph Laurent  
Gilbert  
- poems -**

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## Nicolas Joseph Laurent Gilbert(1751-1780)

Nicolas Joseph Florent Gilbert (December 15, 1750 – November 16, 1780) was a French poet born at Fontenoy-le-Château, Vosges, Lorraine.

Having completed his education at the college of Dole, he devoted himself for a time to a half-scholastic, half-literary life at Nancy, but in 1774 he found his way to the capital. As an opponent of the Encyclopaedists and a panegyrist of Louis XV, he received considerable pensions. He died in Paris in 1780 from the results of a fall from his horse.

The satiric force of one or two of his pieces, as *Mon Apologie* (1778) and *Le Dix-huitième Siècle* (1775), would alone be sufficient to preserve his reputation, which has been further increased by modern writers, who, like Alfred de Vigny in his *Stello* (chaps. 7-13), considered him a victim to the spite of his philosophic opponents. His best-known verses are the *Ode imitée de plusieurs psaumes*, usually entitled *Adieux à la vie*.

Among his other works may be mentioned *Les Familles du Darius et d'Eridame, histoire persane* (1770), *Le Carnaval des auteurs* (1773), *Odes nouvelles et patriotiques* (1775). Gilbert's *Œuvres complètes* were first published in 1788.

# L'Amant Désespéré

Forêts solitaires et sombres,  
Je viens, dévoré de douleurs,  
Sous vos majestueuses ombres,  
Du repos qui me fuit respirer les douceurs.

Recherchez, vains mortels, le tumulte des villes ;  
Ce qui charme vos yeux aux miens est en horreur :  
Ce silence imposant, ces lugubres asiles,  
Voilà ce qui peut plaire au trouble de mon coeur.

Arbres, répondez-moi !... Cachez-vous ma Sylvie ?  
Sylvie, ô ma Sylvie !... Elle ne m'entend pas.  
Tyrans de ces forêts, me l'auriez-vous ravie ?  
Hélas ! je cherche en vain la trace de ses pas.

Nicolas Joseph Laurent Gilbert