

GUENDOLEN.

I.—SPELLBOUND.

This river in the gray marsh land,
Sluggish and dull goes slinking by,
As if the vanguard of the year
Had passed in silent mockery.

Spring makes no revel here to-day;
Only the halcyon sets his wing
Athwart the gloom, and utters now
That cunning laugh—a haunted thing.

II.—REVERIE.

Yet here is more than Rhine or Thames
Or lotused Nile or Assabet,
For here remembrance is come home
A little while to cheer regret.

It is not dream I love,—for dreams
But come when time is sinking low,
Pilgrims across the sunset hills
From vales of sleep whereto they go.

It is not rhyme I love,—for art
May falter on the brink of day,
And trade with grief, and barter tears
For bitter bread, and die with May.

It is—The goldenwings have sent
A far recall to hither bring
The idle days and leisurely,
Those truant vagabonds of Spring.

Their surging call is swift and far,
And after it I toil to come
Where all paths end in shining mist,
And forest-farers have their home.

III.—AN IDYLL.

Once more to yonder platform gray,
Deserted in the summer noon,
Thunders the inward-bound from Rye,
And you are here and it is June.

Down to the little wooden bridge
The river path (remember) leads,
Then through the meadow of coarse brakes
And tangle of wild vine and weeds.

A fence; and then a waist-deep field
To wade, where someone, as we pass,
Laughs at your girlish tiny fears
Threading that jungle of long grass.

The shore at last; and there our birch
Cools her slim bow within the shade.
Step so; your hand; now we're afloat;
Who does not know why June was made!

So we let slip the world for once,—

Ah, the long winds,—how they o'erbrim
The lonesome coigns of afternoon!
Before them old desires unweave,
And the green orchard floors are strewn.

Behind them lulls of nameless void
Fall on the eddying fields of grain,
Ruddy to harvest with still frost,
Old dawns, and sleep, and sunny rain.

Only athwart their drift bear down,
From undiscovered harbor dells,
The freighted royal bodes of rest
Beyond where spring the morning wells.

VI.—SEA JOURNEY.

Now, where unwinds that stream of sun,—
The island-moted summer-tide,—
Forth we, a-homing with the wind
For shelter twilights undescried!

Half close your eyelids: Fleet and far,
One crocus sail upon the blue,
We brush the skyline, homeward bound
For haunts of dream and dusk and dew.

Like molten sand of the sun's core,
Outwinds an ocean path for us,
Whose goal... Look there, the caverned fogs—
What dream pavilions ruinous!

Brave heart, my spirit of the sun,
A little while! and we shall come
Through the rock-barriered Fundy port
Into the Summer's Norland home.

The bank of mist rolls up and clouds
The twin cliff bastions; the surge
Goes daily through them searching far
Inland with immemorial dirge.

And there with music, to the shout
Of foam-devouring winds that ride,
With all the slumber in his heart,
Welaastook gets him to the tide.

VII.—VINLAND.

Steer in. There lies in open shine
A vinland bordered from the sea
With Autumn hills, where love no more
Shall beggar immortality;

So fair, the bargain-driving years
Loiter and gaze and half forget
To traffic there with lust and death
For the sad children of regret.

We take the inland trail with June,
Where go, on secret high behest,
The wan cloud-shadow-bearing winds,
Those weary gospellers of rest.

MARJORIE.

I.

*The lover of child Marjorie
Hath one white hour of life brim full;
Now the old nurse, the rocking sea,
Hath him to lull.*

Across the dark unlifting noon
I wandered lonely, having heed
Of nothing save the haunting rune
I could not read.

The world that day was bleak with grime;
The void of heaven, unenvied, dim
Beyond the narrow marge of time
Lay sheer and grim.

Above the vague unknown profound;
That universe of sunless North,
There seemed a boding; yet no sound,
No gleam, went forth.

So day wore down to darker day.
Thou canst not read, O my fond soul!
Thou art a dupe to scribes who play;
Put by the scroll!

Then strangely through the wards of gloom
There came that stir the sparrows know,
When April dawns put forth their bloom
Of gold and snow.

Across the cheerless afternoon
A belt of sun flamed forth and glowed,—
Made the spring weather one wind-strewn
Bright orchard road.

Through the glad fields I wandered then,
And caught an echoed cadence wild
Of that old rune which haunteth men,—
The sleep-beguiled,

The unfulfilled, the dream-distraught
And unabiding ghost of joy,—
That song the saints through ages wrought,
Nor storms destroy.

Before all life, beyond all death,
More keen than dawn, more still than dew,
There came a sound of woven breath
Where the wind blew.

Deep as the wells of night, yet bland
As the pale Northern plane whereon
The eerie dancers, hand in hand,
Shift and are gone,

Was the long reach of day wherein
I loitering betook me now,
While many a call flew clear and thin
From bough to bough.

She learned I know not where to sing,
My fair girl mother, (glad the while
Of the blue martins chattering,
Would croon, and smile.

I have forgotten rhyme and tune,
But not the dear untroubled way
Her face would lighten to the rune
At fall of day.

Once in her teens, I sometimes think,
She loved too well and lost too far
Some shy dark poet o'er the brink
Of night and war.

A child of Norland forestry,
Where snows and June lie verge to verge,
He tracked and knew the thrush's cry
By the sea surge;

From sunned forelands where roses bloom
He watched the storm-gulls wheel, and guessed
The immemorial foredoom
Of calm and quest.

Belike within his heart she lay
With frost and sun, as Mayflowers lie
In hollow banks of pine and May,
Nestled and shy,—

Or stirred, as a red leaf might brush
Through silence, frore and blue and deep,
Some morning when the year's long hush
Is fallen asleep.

Or it was noon beside the stream,
With ox-bells on the road far off,
Where the delaying dusty team
Drank at the trough.

And there he sang that old Norse croon
Of love to her, who reckoned not
Till the long days of many a June
That June forgot.

Or twilight heard the tasselled corn
Whispering idly husk to husk;
Then whippoorwills began to mourn
Across the dusk;

Earth eased her burden of old pain,
And every sound was far to them;—
Earth, with her one brown bird's refrain
For requiem.

And there he knew how bale and bliss
Divide the summer as twin shears,
When Marjorie with one long kiss
Unpent the tears!

The rune he sang, the rune she heard,
Died on the air in little space,
The hills of echo keep no word,
The wells no trace.