

The weary paddle on the lake's last-reach,
To gain the margin of the golden beach,
And build the camp-fire ere again they leave
The spot selected *Corpus Christi* Eve;
Illuming woodland with the festal light
The faithful kindle for midsummer night.
Here while the evening hastens swiftly by,
And night bejewels the blue summer sky,
Once more the Father stays beneath the ledge
Which rose in mid-air near the water's edge,
Close by the hillock whence at first he saw
These waters rippling on the circling shore;
And whence, far southward, heavy laden went
Around the border of Saint Sacrament.

Again his lodging he prepares for night,
And, thoughtful, muses by the fire's red light,
Talks of the journey with his savage guide,
Whose skill the forest has so often tried,
Lists to the legends that the red men tell,
Of sprites that linger round each rock and fell,
Or haunt the recess of the wood and take
Their merry pastime on the sparkling lake.
He hears Jean Bourdon, whose strategic eye
Ranged o'er the region both afar and nigh,
Discerning stations with a soldier's glance
For future castles of imperial France.
Long with the savant the good priest conferred,
With pious patience each opinion heard;
How, 'gainst the English, these fair waters held,
The French possessions would to oneness weld,
And close all access to an open door
The foe might enter in a time of war;
Till growing weary, as the hour grew late,
Of treaty, fortress and affair of state,
He spread his blanket, then low breathed a prayer,
Reposing calmly in the summer air.