

The occasion of this gathering tonight is not only a matter of great pride to the members of the Isle of Patmos Lodge, but of special interest also to ~~Masons~~ everywhere. One hundred years, viewed merely as a matter of time, does not occasion much concern but viewed as <sup>a fact</sup> ~~a fact~~ in the life of a state, or in what is of greater interest to us tonight, the life of an organization, it is indeed a matter of much interest.

The fact, then, that the Isle of Patmos Lodge is a century old today presents some interesting facts for our consideration. And first among these is the fact that a hundred years ago Masonry was instinctive and very pronouncedly a part of the American pioneer spirit. It is like the instinct for education and religion- wherever the church and the school-house found their way the Masonic Lodge soon followed. And just as religion played a large part in creating the fine physical fiber and moral stamina of our first settlers in Vermont, so Masonry put a kind of moral iron in the blood that helped mightily toward making a race of courageous, steady, honest, and reliable men.

To bring this fact a little more vividly to your attention, may I ask you to let your imagination draw a picture of what community life might have been on these <sup>I</sup> Islands a century ago. Consider, first of all, that the first actual settlement was made by the French at Alburg in 1782, only thirty nine years before the Isle of Patmos Lodge was given its charter. Now, to pioneer the wilderness and make it fit for the habitations of men is not an easy task. <sup>now</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> does ~~not~~ require much effort from the imagination to produce a fairly accurate picture of the stupendous task that lay before those men and women who, ~~a hundred years ago~~, domiciled themselves in the heart of our Island forests. Today, even with our fairly good roads, the questions of roads is vital, especially in Vermont. Every phase of our rural community life is dependent, ultimately, for its solution on the question of good roads. The church, school, markets, social and community life all ~~hark~~ <sup>hark</sup> back to the question of good roads. To the man of a century ago the problem of roads must have been a perplex-

