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President Thomas Jackson Simmons

AND

Mrs. Simmons, nee Lessie M. Southgate

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AN APPRECIATION

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By MARY ROSSER



By Transfer  
JAN 23 1914







J. Simmons.

... of ... in Georgia, vol. V, p. 163

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## PRESIDENT AND MRS. SIMMONS.

On the eve of the departure of Dr. and Mrs. Simmons from Shorter College, where they have served so faithfully and with such glorious success for a dozen years, to take up their duties in a new field which offers them a broader scope of usefulness at Brenau College, the compiler of this pamphlet has undertaken in her imperfect way to set forth herein the world's appreciation of the exalted character and noble labors of these devoted educators. The truth of the statement that "we are advertised by our loving friends" is shown by the thousand and more expressions from prominent newspapers and persons of note who have been pleased to bear tribute to the worth of Dr. and Mrs. Simmons, and to the value of their services to the cause of education. A few dozens of quotations—made somewhat at random—from this great mass of tributes to them will fill the space allotted to this pamphlet, and serve to give an outline of their notable careers.

The work to which they are giving their lives, the education of young ladies, is truly a great one, involving natural ability, thought, incessant labor, money, and an unswerving devotion to the high ideals which impelled them to adopt the profession of teaching. All this they have lavished upon the young ladies who have come under their care. To this cause their lives are consecrated, and the zeal with which they labor embodies the idea that "life, like every other blessing, derives its value from its use alone."

They are not troubling themselves concerning theories of woman's rights or making complaints of woman's wrongs, but in spite of hindrances, they are going forward, with a courage born of heaven, in their noble work.

They are blending patience with perseverance, culture with character, society with soul satisfaction; they are filling golden days with golden deeds and with all that which helps the world to look up, hope and be better.

A writer once said that Chopin selected his parents with great care. This seems to have been the case with both Dr. and Mrs. Simmons; for the following references to the parentage and early environment of each, bear the writer out in the statement that Napoleon was only half correct when he said "the fate of a child is always the work of its *mother*."

A sketch of Dr. Simmons by Rev. Junius W. Millard, D. D., in "Men of Mark in Georgia" gives briefly the outlines of his life :

"If heredity amounts to anything in determining character, then Dr. T. J. Simmons was predestined by his ancestry to be a gentleman and a scholar. Students at Wake Forest College, North Carolina, during the seventies and eighties, recall with pride the splendid abilities of the professor of physics, Dr. William Gaston Simmons, a man whose genuine culture was matched only by his refreshing modesty. The traditions of the college are that at one time or another, owing to the necessary shifting of the work in a growing institution, or to the illness of his colleagues, Prof. Simmons taught almost every class in the college, and was equally at home in literature, philosophy and science. Like Lord Bacon he seems to have taken all knowledge for his province. This ripened scholar took to wife Mary Elizabeth Foote, a gentle daughter of one of the leading families of the Old North State, who still survives her distinguished husband. Of this union were born several daughters and two sons, the elder of whom forms the subject of this sketch. The younger son, James Henry Simmons, has gained much distinction as a teacher, first as Professor of English for a number of years at William Jewell College in Missouri, and since 1898 as head of the same department in Shorter College. Of the five daughters, the eldest, Nannie, is the wife of the Hon. W. D. Trantham of South Carolina; the second daughter, Mollie, is the widow of the distinguished lawyer, Hon. David A. Covington, of Monroe, N. C.; the third, Ada, is the wife of Hon. E. W. Timberlake, a judge of the Superior Court of North Carolina; the youngest, Willie, is the wife of Hon. E. Y. Webb, a member of Congress from the Ninth Congressional District of North Carolina. Of this brilliant group, one, Evabelle, never married, but spent her too-



brief life in teaching, a profession for which she, too, like the brothers who survive her, seemed peculiarly fitted, for her learning was great, and she was recognized by all as the ripest scholar among the young women of her state.

"Thomas J. Simmons was born at Wake Forest, N.C., April 18th, 1864, and was prepared for college in a private academy in his home town. Entering the college, he graduated with the degree of A. M., in June, 1883.

"His professional career has been both varied and uniform; varied in its progress from one success to another, but uniform in that all that he has attempted has been in the one direction of educational work. For a year he taught in the public schools of Fayetteville, N.C., and for six years in the schools of Durham, in the same state. In 1890 he came to Georgia to become the principal of the public high school of Athens, and after one year he resigned this position to accept a more important one as superintendent of the public schools of Dawson. In 1893 he became president of Union Female College at Eufaula, Alabama, and after five years accepted the Presidency of Shorter College at Rome, Georgia, which position he filled with dignity and marked success from 1898 to 1910. During the twelve years of his administration Shorter rose from the rank of a small college of rather local influence to that of one of the few really great institutions for the higher education of women in the South, and came to be noted not only for its thorough respect for genuine scholarship, but also for its delightful social atmosphere and its decidedly strong and healthy moral tone.

"To the grief of the friends of Shorter College, Dr. Simmons, in January, 1910, bought an interest in Brenau College, Gainesville, Georgia, under the agreement that at the end of the scholastic year he would become joint president with the former owner of Brenau, Dr. H. J. Pearce. In making this change, Dr. Simmons saw in Brenau, with its large grounds, its well-equipped buildings, and its excellent faculty—afterwards to be still further strengthened by the addition of almost the entire teaching force of Shorter College—a broader opportunity for usefulness than could be found in any other woman's college in the South.

"So signal has been the success of Dr. Simmons that

his alma mater honored herself when she conferred upon him at the commencement of 1905 the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

"But this success has not been achieved without aid, for on November 11, 1891, Dr. Simmons was married to Miss Lessie Muse Southgate of Durham, North Carolina, one of the most brilliant women of her day and a musician of national reputation.

"To the advantages of a regal heredity, and a well-rounded education, and a most fortunate marriage, Dr. Simmons has added the advantages of extensive foreign travel. A dozen times he has crossed the seas to visit the countries of Europe, as well as Egypt and the Holy Land, and from each place which he has visited he has brought with him stores of knowledge and a ripened experience.

"Dr. Simmons's most pronounced characteristic is his modesty, which came to him in a direct line from his distinguished father, yet to those who know him best he stands most of all for an invincible devotion to truth, the other side of which is seen in his hatred of all shams and every species of dishonesty. Tall, big of body and broad of shoulders, a man of few words and those quietly spoken, like all men of gentle speech he has hidden behind his quiet manner the strength of a superb manhood. His is the kind that is rather than SEEMS, and those who know him well have not been surprised at what he has accomplished in the world. Much has he done in these few years for the education of the youth of Georgia and the South, and, best of all, he has evermore insisted upon an education that makes for Christian character and the real glory of God."

From another source, the late distinguished Dr. Thos. H. Pritchard, is taken, in a brief quotation, a characterization of his illustrious father :

"\* \* \* These are the bare facts of his life, but they give a very imperfect idea of his great ability, his profound learning and the sterling qualities of his character. In my humble opinion he was one of the most remarkable men I have ever known.

"\* \* \* I have been thrown into close relations with three great students in my life time. One of them was Dr. Crawford Toy, perhaps the most erudite man I have ever known; another was the world-renowned Dr. John

A. Broadus, and the third was Prof. Simmons. His power of large and ready acquisition, the grasp, vigor and accuracy of his memory, and the ease with which his large attainments arranged themselves in systematic and even scientific order in his mind, were as remarkable as the kindred qualities which have made these two gentlemen so distinguished as scholars. There was scarcely any topic within the wide range of human learning with which he did not seem familiar. \* \* \*

"He was, too, a profound lawyer. The Hon. S. F. Phillips (afterwards Solicitor-General of the United States), pronounced him the ablest student who ever read law with him, and I doubt not but that under favorable conditions he would have developed into a chief justice whose decisions would have been as famous as those of Henderson, Ruffin, Pearson, or the great man William Gaston, after whom he was named.

"Mr. T. B. Kingbury, the foremost editor in North Carolina, recently said of him: 'He was a man of very superior intellect. We doubt if he ever had his superior in his departments in North Carolina. He was a rarely gifted and eminent North Carolinian, an ornament to the excellent literary institution he had done so much to advance and place upon the permanent foundation upon which it now rests and he was par excellence, the most gifted mind among the Baptists of North Carolina, whether at home or abroad.'

"This is high praise from such a source, and yet I believe it is just. His was really a great intellect, and many men with his ability and learning would have made a name famous throughout the world."

At the beginning of his career as a college president, there appeared in print as an introduction of Professor Simmons to the people of Alabama, his new home, a few of the letters written about him by prominent persons who had been pleased to speak of his character and attainments.

"Executive Department, State of Georgia.

"Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 21, 1893. This letter will introduce Prof. T. J. Simmons, of Dawson, Georgia. Prof. Simmons is personally known to me both as a man and as a teacher. I cheerfully recommend him as both. I have visited his school, and inspected his method of teaching. He is thorough, progressive, and efficient. I

regard him as an excellent teacher, and fully recommend him to the fullest confidence and consideration of all. He is a gentleman of high character and ability and deserving of the esteem of his fellow-citizens.

Very respectfully,  
W. J. NORTHEN, Governor."

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"Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of North Carolina.

"Raleigh, N. C., June 11, 1889. It affords me pleasure to bear testimony to the high character and excellent scholarship of Mr. T. J. Simmons, and to say that these qualifications, added to his experience and success as a teacher, commend him to any school officers who may be seeking a live, progressive teacher. I can safely say that he will fill with credit any position which he will accept.

S. M. FINGER,  
State Supt. Public Instruction."

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"President's Office, Wake Forest College.

"Wake Forest, North Carolina, June 15, '89. Mr. T. J. Simmons, of Wake county, N. C., received his Diploma as Master of Arts of Wake Forest College in June, 1883. During the seven years of his student life here, he was assiduous as a worker and blameless as a Christian gentleman. His career as a teacher, since his graduation, has been a marked success. I can very cordially recommend him to any who may wish to secure the services, as a teacher, of an honest, earnest-hearted, scholarly man.

CHAS. E. TAYLOR, Pres't."

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"Durham, N. C., April 11, 1889. It has been my good fortune for several years to be intimately acquainted with Prof. Thomas J. Simmons, in regard to whom it gives me pleasure to be able to make the following statements:

"As regards character, I think I may well say that I have known no man whose life better evinces the attributes of the true Christian gentleman.

"The intellectual and social advantages which he has

enjoyed during his whole life have been of the very highest order, and well to say, he has appreciated them sufficiently to merit the reputation of being one of the foremost educators in the South.

"He is a son of the late Dr. William Gaston Simmons, of Wake Forest College, who was one of the ablest men North Carolina has ever produced. The son is following the noble example of the father. He has a strong mind, and it is well cultivated. In teaching he is clear, sympathetic, and forcible. His store of information is wonderful for a man of his age.

"He will discharge faithfully, creditably, and with dignity the duties of any position that he would accept.

EDWIN W. KENNEDY,  
Supt, Durham Graded Schools."

"Wake Forest College, N. C., June 14, 1889. It affords me great pleasure to make the following statement in regard to the mental endowments and personal worth of Prof. Thomas J. Simmons.

"While he came under my instruction only in Greek, yet what he did in it revealed such powers of mind as would generally enable one to master any subject to which he might apply himself. The grade he maintained in Greek was high, and might easily have reached or approximated the maximum, if he had given special attention to it. His tastes, however, led him rather into other fields. In Physical Sciences he did perhaps his best work. His honored and accomplished father, the late Prof. W. G. Simmons, LL. D., who then filled the chair of Natural Science, was his teacher for the most part in this department. Since his graduation he has been engaged most of the time as leading instructor in the large and efficient Graded School of Durham, N. C., and from those most competent to express a judgment as to his ability and success, there comes only praise of the highest order. All the accounts place him in the front rank as a teacher.

"I regard Prof. Simmons as a young man of singularly pure morals, and I feel confident that those who may be brought into intimate official or personal relations with him will find him a Christian gentleman with whom it is a pleasure to be associated.

W. B. ROYALL, Prof. of Greek."

“State School Commissioner, of Georgia.

“Atlanta, Ga., Jan. 28, 1896. To Whom It may Concern: Having known Prof. T. J. Simmons personally and professionally for some time, it gives me great pleasure to testify to his ability as a teacher and to his character as a gentleman. He bears a most excellent reputation where he is known, both for his good character, and his scholarly attainments.

“It was my pleasure upon one occasion to visit his school in Dawson, Ga., and I can say that I was more than pleased with the manner in which he conducted it. The discipline was as good as the best, and the organization and instruction was such as to recommend him to me as a thoroughly competent teacher.

“Very truly,  
S. D. BRADWELL,  
State School Commissioner of Georgia.”

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“Wake Forest College, April 30, 1889. Prof. T. J. Simmons took the Degree of A. M., at this institution.

“During the period of his connection with the college it so happened that my work underwent three changes, so that I caught him at more points than any other professor in the Faculty. And I can truly say that I never found him otherwise than well prepared, and accurately informed. In the Moral Philosophy Course, he was noted for a disposition to inquire still more deeply into the reason of things than the text-book really demanded, and not to accept a proposition until he fully comprehended it in all its bearings.

“In French, German, and English, he displayed great interest and succeeded admirably. At graduation he was unusually well qualified to give instruction in these branches. To this may be added the fact that having never allowed himself to neglect the acquisitions of the college course, he may safely be counted on as an instructor in any of the branches the study of which he prosecuted so successfully here. Were I at the head of any institution of learning, I should certainly feel no hesitancy in entrusting to him any department to be taught in or conducted by him if he fully consented to undertake the work involved. His success in teaching and the reputation he has achieved already are better grounds of commendation than can be found in letters or other testimonials.

"I cheerfully recommend him to any college in need of a teacher in the departments of Higher English, French and German, Moral Philosophy, the Ancient Languages, Physics.

WM. ROYALL, Prof. of English."

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"Dawson, Ga., May 21, 1893. We, the undersigned, members of the Board of Education of the Dawson Public Schools, take pleasure in recommending Prof. T. J. Simmons as a man of the best moral character and of high order of ability as a superintendent of a school system.

"As a disciplinarian he has few equals, and the interest manifested by his pupils as well as their advancement in their studies show him to be a man fully capable of discharging all the responsible duties of a superintendent.

"J. M. Griggs, president; J. A. Laing, A. J. Baldwin, E. L. Laney, O. B. Stevens, J. R. Mercer, R. F. Simmons, R. L. Melton, W. C. Kendrick, S. R. Christie, J. G. Dean."

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"Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 26, 1893. Prof. T. J. Simmons, Dawson, Ga. Dear Sir:—During a recent visit to Dawson I had the pleasure of inspecting the institution of learning over which you preside.

"I said then what I take pleasure in repeating now—that I have never seen a school of the same grade in which the discipline was more wholesome, and the teaching more skillful and satisfactory.

"I believe you are pre-eminently fitted for a broader field of usefulness than the one which you now occupy, and if you should ever determine to remove from Dawson, it will give me real pleasure to aid you in procuring a place in which you can exercise your ability to the best advantage.

Yours truly,

J. B. HAWTHORNE, [D. D., LL. D.,  
Pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta.]"

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"Office of Superintendent Charlotte City Schools.

"Charlotte, N. C., May 6, 1889. 'To all whom it may concern,' this testimonial witnesseth:

"That I have known Mr. Thomas J. Simmons since 1883. Mr. Simmons was principal of our High School,

a department of the city schools of Fayetteville, N. C. He was elected at a higher salary principal of the Durham Graded and High School.

"Mr. Simmons was unanimously requested by our Board of School Commissioners (21 in No.) to remain with us.

"He was successful as a teacher to an eminent degree, and gave universal satisfaction to superintendent, patrons, trustees and pupils. He was then quite young. The very high standard of excellence of which he then gave evidence in no uncertain manner, he has retained in Durham. I take great pleasure in endorsing every word of commendation and praise which he has received.

"In regard to his address and Christian character, I cheerfully state that Mr. Simmons is all that the most exacting could require. The man has fulfilled the promise of youth, and I regard the community as fortunate which secures permanently the services of Mr. T. J. Simmons.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM,  
Supt. Charlotte City Schools."

"I have known Mr. Thomas J. Simmons from his birth, and regard him as an exemplary Christian gentleman.

"He has enjoyed exceptional educational advantages, having stood high in his classes at college, and having taught for several years since with distinguished success.

"His father, Prof. W. G. Simmons, LL. D., was one of the ripest scholars and most efficient instructors North Carolina has yet produced, and he had the benefit of the careful training of such a father.

"In my judgment, any institution of learning would be fortunate which should secure Mr. Simmons as professor.

T. H. PRITCHARD, (D. D., LL. D.,)  
Pastor First Baptist Church, Wilmington, N. C."

"University of Georgia, Chancellor's Office.

„Athens, Ga., June 2d, 1891. To whom it may concern: I have personal knowledge of Mr. Simmons's work as Principal of the Washington Street Public School in this city, inasmuch as he has had my sons under his in-



mediate tuition as they are preparing for the University.

"I regard Mr. Simmons as a scholar and good teacher, a man of Christian faith and blameless life. And as such I commend him to any community where his lot may be cast.

WM. E. BOGGS,  
Chancellor of the University of Ga."

Regarding the work of President and Mrs. Simmons in Eufula, the writer has seen many expressions of highest praise from the most prominent people of the community and others throughout the South, from which it is evident that there can hardly be a better or more artistic school than theirs.

The few quotations made here (1) from a recent Governor of Alabama, Hon. W. D. Jelks; (2) from a well-known divine, Rev. J. B. Culpepper; (3) from a Judge of the Superior Court of Georgia, Hon. W. C. Worrill; (4) from a prominent business man, cotton exporter, A. C. von Gundell; (5) from a distinguished Congressional leader, Hon. J. M. Griggs, are typical of the whole.

(1) "I am of the opinion that as a home for a girl there is no other place in any state that offers the refined surroundings, and where she may secure the same gentle, gracious attention and kindness, as within the walls of Union Female College. The faculty is made up of the loveliest people I know. I believe that the mental training to be secured there is of the highest order, and that in every way it is superior to any other school in the South, at least. I freely recommend Professor Simmons and his school to any man who has a daughter or ward to be educated."

(2) "\* \* \* \* I know of no institution in the whole country which is more deserving of success, and in whose prosperity I shall more rejoice. I thank God that there is a college in which young ladies may receive an education and then return to their Christian homes and mothers as pure as when they left them.

"A better place for parents to send their daughters cannot be found anywhere south of Mason and Dixon's line—nor north of it, nor east of it, nor west of it!"

(3) "The several visits I have made to your College through the term have given me opportunity to learn much of your methods and the character of your work, from which I feel justified in saying that I do not believe that there is a female college in the country at large where more conscientious, faithful and thorough work is being done.

"I certainly think that you have the most elegant and refined corps of teachers I have seen collected together, and it would be impossible for a girl of any degree of intelligence to come in contact with them and with yourself and Mrs. Simmons and not go out greatly benefited.

"I notice that all of your girls get plenty of exercise and the necessary recreation. They look healthy and contented, while their neatness of dress and the ease and elegance of their manners prove that all those graces that would be inculcated in the home training of their daughters by parents are scrupulously guarded. In short I regard Union Female College under your management as one of the most desirable institutions a father can select for the education of his daughter. Certainly I know of no other to which I could send my daughter with the feeling of more assurance that her proper training would not be neglected." (Note: Judge Worrill's daughter mentioned above afterwards became famous as an opera singer in Germany.)

(4) "It has ever been a source of great delight to my wife and myself that we succeeded in finding for our daughter a college, so near at home, which in my estimation ranks as high as any in the South. I find that the advantages your college offers in all branches of study can hardly be excelled. As regards music I do not hesitate to say that no college in the United States has advantages surpassing those of Union Female College under the directorship of Mrs. Simmons.

"Last, but not least, I am happy to say that the discipline of your school is perfect, and that all the surroundings are of great refinement. The fact that the girls love their teachers, and love the college as a second home, proves that they meet with loving and congenial spirits."

(5) "I am glad of an opportunity to give an estimate of your school. Knowing Mrs. Simmons and your-

self as I do, I do not hesitate to declare my firm belief that no better school exists anywhere in the South.

Mrs. Simmons's genius and culture in music, your own extraordinary capabilities as an educator, and the great executive ability and Christian character of both of you, render you specially fitted to preside over a school for the training of girls and young ladies. I look upon your school as an ideal one, and cannot but wish it were in my own state."

In addition to the great mass of commendatory expressions similar to the above, the writer desires to direct attention to the following publication issued by the Board of Trustees in 1893.

"Office of Board of Trustees, Union Female College.

"Eufaula, Ala., June 29, 1896. In 1893, Prof. and Mrs. T. J. Simmons took charge of Union Female College, and during the past three years they have by their untiring energy and efficient management placed it among the foremost female colleges of the land.

"After the past three years' acquaintance with the work of Prof. Simmons and his faculty, and after a careful consideration of all matters pertaining to the College, we, the Board of Trustees, wish to endorse in the strongest terms the work of the College during said years. Prof. Simmons has more than fulfilled the promises made to the Board of Trustees when he assumed control; and if merit ever insures success, Union Female College under its present management has a most brilliant career before it.

"We have noted carefully the eminent qualifications of the large corps of instructors engaged for the coming session, all of whom have had very successful experience in teaching in first-class colleges. We feel confident that such changes as have recently been made are, in every instance, improvements; and we desire to claim that what has been said during the past three years of the College's superiority over other similar institutions, will be all the more true as to its future work.

"It affords us pleasure to bear testimony to the high character and excellent scholarship of Prof. Simmons, and to say that these qualifications, added to his experience and success as a teacher, commend him and his school in the highest degree to all persons who have daughters to educate.

“Mrs. Simmons, the gifted wife of the President, at the head of the Department of Music and Voice Culture, enjoys a well-earned reputation. She has few equals in America or Europe. As a teacher of instrumental music and vocalization, she is almost without a peer.

“In the Literary Department, the College affords facilities for higher culture which fully meet the most exacting demand. In the ornamental branches, especially the music under Mrs. Simmons and her superb corps of assistants, young ladies enjoy the best instruction given in any college in this country. Union Female College is moreover a Christian home for our daughters, and stands for all that is purest and best in the development of true culture and Christian womanhood.

“In view of the healthfulness of Eufaula, its accessibility, the home-like care of the pupils, the thoroughness of the instruction imparted, and the reasonableness of the terms of the school, no parents in this or any neighboring state should fail to educate their daughters in Union Female College.

“Not only have Prof. and Mrs. Simmons given to Eufaula a college of such high character, but they have been lavish in the expenditure of their own money in adding to the beauties of the home. No person who is in any way interested in Eufaula or her welfare can afford to overlook these facts or be indifferent to the College's financial prosperity; for it cannot be denied that the interest of the College is the interest of the city. Prof. and Mrs. Simmons certainly deserve the earnest support and patronage of all our people; and we, the Board of Trustees, heartily bespeak for them the aid and encouragement they so richly deserve.

“James Milton, President; E. B. Young, G. L. Comer, L. Y. Dean, J. R. Barr, J. L. Pitts, Z. A. Barnes, J. B. Stewart, C. L. Boyd, G. T. Marsh, Wm. Petry, Sec'y, Trustees.”

After a labor of five years in Eufaula, Prof. Simmons accepted the presidency of Shorter College in Rome, Georgia, moving to Rome at the end of the session 1897-'08. Alabama's appreciation of the value of his work and that of his estimable wife is attested by the remarkable tribute accorded them by the City Council of Eufaula, in spreading upon its minutes, and

in giving to the Press in February, 1898, the following resolutions:

"Whereas Prof. T. J. Simmons, who has been at the head of the Union Female College in this city for the past five years, which institution is under the control of the City Council of Eufaula, has decided to remove from our midst and has tendered his resignation to take effect next June,

"Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Eufaula:

"1st. That we take pleasure in commending Prof. T. J. Simmons as a gentleman, as a scholar, as a disciplinarian, as a teacher, as a citizen. He possesses every requisite to make him a model teacher. Five years of close observation of his conduct of Union Female College convinces us that that institution, in its forty-four years of existence, has never been under more competent management,

"2nd. That in our opinions Mrs. T. J. Simmons is without a peer in the South as a musician and teacher of music—vocal and instrumental. Her success has been a marvel. Such results as she has attained were never considered possible before. She is a woman having in the highest degree those attributes essential to the efficient management of a young ladies' school.

"3rd. That these people have given us one of the best educational institutions to be found anywhere, and we sincerely regret their decision to remove from amongst us. We cordially commend them to the public everywhere as worthy of every confidence, and competent to fill any position to which they may aspire. They need no eulogies from us. Any community into which they may go will realize an immediate elevation of its moral, social and intellectual standard.

"The good wishes of a grateful people here will abide with them wherever they may go.

"Approved, February 1st, 1898.

(Signed) P. B. MCKENZIE, Mayor.

(Seal) City of Eufaula, Ala."

Rome's welcome to President and Mrs. Simmons is sufficiently described in the following special to the *Atlanta Journal* concerning the largest and most brilliant reception ever given in the history of this city.

"Rome, Ga., August 23.—(Special.)—Last night decidedly the most brilliant and the largest social function ever given in Rome took place at Shorter Col-

lege. It was a reception given by the trustees of the college in order to introduce Professor T. J. Simmons, the new president, and his wife to the public. The following invitation was issued:

"On Tuesday, August 23, at from 8 to 11 p. m., a reception to the new president and faculty of Shorter College will be given at the college by the trustees. They cordially invite all past and present patrons, pupils, those who contemplate becoming patrons or pupils, young ladies visiting the city and all gentlemen accompanying ladies. No written invitations.'

"Fully 500 guests were present. The beautiful grounds were dotted here and there with Japanese lanterns and underneath the foliage of the wide-spreading trees, or in some sequestered nook of the long clambering rose vine might be found inviting seats. It was a lovely midsummer night scene—the gay throng, the elegant toilets, the flashing lights and the music to be found within the spacious hall where all the city's best had united to make the hour and the occasion enjoyable. President and Mrs. Simmons, assisted by the members of the faculty and the wives of the trustees, stood in the long parlor. This room, by the way, a perfect dream in color and harmony, has just been newly decorated in artistic tints of green, white and gold. The carpet is of moss green, showing a dresden pattern and the border a dresden pattern of moss rosebuds. The soft white curtains at the long French windows repeated this design in garlands of pink roses fashioned in the dresden pattern and tied with bows of white ribbon. At either end of this elegant saion was banked a huge mass of palms and ferns. Mrs. Simmons was regal in a yellow brocaded satin, slightly decollete, Marie Antoinette collar. The bodice was trimmed in shirred chiffon with bands of passementerie. The front of the skirt was shirred in the same material, bordered on each side with a cascade of pleated chiffon. Her ornaments were diamonds. She was in every respect handsome and queenly, and her cordial graciousness won her friends by the score. Professor Simmons, in an elegant dress suit, reflected the gracious and hospitable manner of his wife, and during the entire evening these two were the center of an admiring group. Professor Henry Simmons, Professor J. L. Kesler and Miss Pell, who are members of the new faculty, were also present and add-

ed much to the attractiveness of the occasion.

"The long hall, which is 110 feet, was decorated in pink, and green potted plants and roses only enhanced the delicate shade of the rose color of its walls.

"These same colors introduced themselves into the private parlor of the president's wife, into the library, where 6,000 volumes look down from the walls, and into the girls' parlor. Roses, roses, and palms, palms, were on every side, as sweet and as graceful as the myriad light-robed forms flitting about them.

"The refreshments were ordered from a noted caterer from a distance, and kept up charmingly the color scheme of the midsummer tints of pink and green. The ices came in the shapes of all kinds of flowers and fruits.

"Many guests from a distance came to attend the reception, and were the guests of the college.

"Shorter College has given a bright page for the memory book of her friends. She is now on a firmer basis than ever, and the future beckons to halls charmingly filled with golden hopes and promises as rosy as the summer garlands woven for the delight of those assembled within her gates on the night of August 23, 1898."



In the development of Shorter College since 1898, so important a part has been taken by Mrs. Simmons that a biography of her would form a most appropriate chapter in any history of the institution.

Few women of this or any other age have exercised a broader or more beneficent influence than Mrs. Simmons.

There are hundreds of musicians and teachers who owe their inspiration and success to the admirable training given by this inspired and inspiring teacher. There are daughters all over the land who "rise up and call her blessed."

We are not surprised to learn that this brilliant woman had for her great grandfather on the maternal side, a man who was noted for his wonderful brilliancy and ability as an orator, Lord Robert Wynne of Wales, who was a member of the House of

Lords. Mrs. Simmons had for her great grandfather on the paternal side, a son of Richard Southgate, the bishop of London. His son assisted John Wesley in his rescue work around Oxford, where they were students together.

No more enviable reputation could be earned by anybody than that which has attached itself to Mrs. Simmons as a musician, artist, lecturer and teacher. Wherever she has gone she has been admired and loved for her wisdom and her womanly ways. The beauty and strength of her character and the power of her personality are such that no young woman can be brought in touch with her without being mentally and spiritually benefited by it; and many a fond mother has selected Shorter College for her daughter for the sole purpose of placing her under the influence of this great and noble woman.

To learn something of the life history of the truly great is always an inspiration, and the writer desires here to give a brief sketch of this illustrious Southern woman as an aid and encouragement to aspiring girls.

Mrs. Simmons was Celestia Muse Southgate, daughter of James Southgate of a distinguished Virginia family, and Delia Wynne Southgate, one of the most intellectual women of North Carolina. Celestia, whose name was shortened to Lessie, was born in Louisburg, North Carolina, where her parents were then engaged in educational work at the head of the Louisburg Female College. From her earliest childhood she showed unusual powers of mind and in her favorite work, music, she was considered by all a remarkable prodigy. She was educated in Virginia and pursued her musical education further in New York and Europe. No money was spared in her education, and she had the benefit and inspiration of the greatest music masters in both hemispheres. Her education did not stop when she herself became a teacher, for since then she has enjoyed several periods of study in Europe, both in voice and piano. The late E. DeleSedie, the greatest teacher of modern times, regarded Mrs. Simmons as one of the ablest pupils he had ever taught; also one whose own work as a teacher could not be surpassed.



And yet, unlike many other famous musicians, Mrs. Simmons's talent was not confined merely to one thing; on the other hand, she is a person who can do well anything which she undertakes. Before becoming a teacher she specialized not only in music, but in oratory, gymnastics and medicine. In oratory she displayed such ability that before she was twenty years old she was urged to go on the stage in Shakespearean tragedy. At that time she was already doing much concert playing in piano, which was her favorite work, though she had given much study to the voice. Two years later she was urged to become a Wagnerian opera singer, as such roles as Brunhilde and Isolde seemed suited to her talents and dramatic soprano voice. Coming, however, from a religious family, she felt some prejudice against a stage life. For several years she did much concert work, doing the triple roles of pianist, vocalist and elocutionist, and she met with great success.

Even as a very young girl she felt "called" to teach, and was never so happy as when helping some other person grasp the principles of music. She believed in inspiration, felt that her life work must be that of a teacher, and so deliberately chose this occupation. Probably no other woman at any time has been so successful in the work of teaching, successful from the standpoint of results accomplished in the cause of music. Her work, too, was not without reasonable remuneration, for her teaching the first year brought her a salary of \$1500. Later her private music school in Durham brought her an annual income of \$3000 to \$4000, according to the limit of pupils. Some years she would do more teaching; others less, in order to have more time for her studies. She spent her vacations always in study with the greatest masters, and about every third year would cease from teaching to devote her entire time to study. In 1890 she was offered \$6000 a year to become connected with a New York conservatory, the duties to include also some recital work. Subsequently she was offered \$4000 to conduct a woman's musical organization for six months in the year. This was a period of many opportunities, as concert offers made her would have netted her many thousands a year, but this was also a time for

her to make a serious decision—a decision which has added to the beauty and happiness of her life. After her marriage on November 11, 1891, she went with her husband to Dawson, Ga., and two years later to Eufaula, Ala., and after five years moved to Rome, Ga., where she has done a wonderful work as<sup>6</sup> Director of the Conservatory and Head Professor of Voice. No person has lived in the South who has been a more potent factor in the development of music.

Though in her girlhood her special fondness was for the piano, and her first teaching was largely in that branch of music, her subsequent studies in Europe under the greatest vocal teachers of the age, combined with the fact that her fame as a teacher created such overwhelming demand for her instruction, made it necessary for her to confine her work during recent years entirely to the teaching of voice, and her success in this is such as has not been surpassed by any other teacher in the land. To an American interested in vocal methods and discussing them recently with one of the greatest teachers in Europe, the latter said: "I have never met Mrs. Simmons, but I feel as if I had known her always because of her work; for instance, my friend D. [mentioning an American pupil of Mrs. Simmons who is now celebrated as a singer in Europe] whenever I mention what I consider one of the best points in vocalization, always replies 'That is exactly the way Mrs. Simmons says it'; and from the knowledge I have acquired of her work with her pupils, I am sure that there is not anywhere in Europe a better teacher than you have in America in Mrs. Simmons."

To the few who know intimately the home-life of Dr. and Mrs. Simmons, there can be nothing more beautiful than the true affection quietly shown in the home, "in honor preferring one another," the husband giving credit for their success to the wife, she to her husband. The writer without permission takes the liberty of quoting from a letter by Mrs. Simmons only a year ago, after eighteen years of married life:

"My husband is my ideal of true, noble manhood. He has meant more to me than all else in life. His ideals are the loftiest, his honesty and integrity of the purest type, and his kind-

ly spirit, gentleness and patience have been a daily lesson to me and have inspired me to struggle to reach his heights. His modesty, purity, and beauty of character are quite different from the glamour of the footlights, and I have no cause for thankfulness equal to this—that I ignored worldly applause and came in touch with that life that has inspired me for more enduring things, and no honor could equal the privilege of being his helpmeet in whatever humble way in his life of usefulness, for I know that where he is, there, purity, honesty and Godliness dwell. I am so thankful that we have been permitted to live together in so useful a work during these eighteen years. I have seen success come from our efforts, and I know that what success we have had is due largely to him; I know that the ideals were his, and that the plans were all worked out through his brain.”

Mrs. Simmons was an important figure in the musical world almost before she was past her teens, as illustrated in her early career by the following editorial notice in *The Keynote* of New York :

“Among the builders of musical culture of the highest order in the South, Miss L. M. Southgate, of Durham, N. C., appears with the foremost. Her musical education was begun under the guidance of her mother, who was one of the most highly cultivated, accomplished and versatile women of this country. Later on, she studied under Prof. Ide, of Staunton, Va., where she graduated, with first honors of her class, in instrumental music. Her success at school induced her to attend the best conservatories of the North. Her work was pursued under the following renowned instructors : Organ : George Wm. Morgan and Samuel P. Warren; Piano : Otto Hackh and S. B. Mills; Voice : Signor Greco, Madame Murio-Celli, H. W. Green and Paolo Giorza.

The breadth of her superior musical training, combined with rare native endowments, has enabled her to accomplish perhaps as much as any musician of her age, in imparting to others that which she herself has attained.

The Durham School of Music, of which she is the Director (organized in 1886), already has a reputation second to none in the South.

“Many contemporaries have given expression to their admiration of this estimable and persevering young worker in notices and criticisms on her splendid concerts. Her programmes exhibit her great knowledge of the importance of repertoire. The names of Liszt, Schubert, Heller, Chopin, Kullak, Mills, Gurlitt, Moszkowski, Bargiel, Joseffy, Mendelssohn, Godard, Mozart, etc., are proof that the lady is one of the noble musical missionaries. Miss Southgate has been prevailed upon to accept the post of vice-president of the Music Teachers' National Association.”

Even in the earliest part of her professional career such appreciative notices as the following were common:

“Steinway Hall, New York, June 13, 1889. My Dear Miss Southgate:—Please accept my sincere congratulation on the excellent work you have done, and are doing with your school.

“You were such an earnest and painstaking student when you took lessons of me, and also so successful, that I feel sure all your pupils cannot fail to be inspired by your good example.

“I wish you to greet Master Vernon Darnall in my name, and also extend to him my best congratulations for having won my medal; for I am certain that from what he has played under your direction, he must be a student of remarkable talent.

“Wishing you every success, I am your friend and fellow-worker.  
S. B. MILLS.”

“Durham, N. C., July 25, '90. Mr. Josephus Daniels, Dear Sir:—Under the spell of the enravishing feast of delicious music and fine dramatic recitals—prepared especially as a delectable compliment to the Press Association of this state—you honored me by asking for a written expression of my judgment of the concert. I thank you for so doing, because you thus give me an opportunity to gratify my inclination without risking any imputation of ostentation. \* \* \* \* \* After this preamble, I need only say that the entertainment gave me serene enjoyment and intense gratification, much more replete and complete than very many of the single forenoon, afternoon and night programs that I very recently enjoyed in New York City, Saratoga and Detroit; and regarding the master spirit of the music last

night—and of all the fine music of Durham—Miss L. M. Southgate, I will at this time only say, briefly as I can, that I have known from my first meeting with her, in the musical festival at Goldsboro, in 1884, that she is a genuine artist, instrumental, vocal and dramatic, by both nature and culture. What I saw and heard last night not only confirmed my previous high estimate of her; but very greatly enhanced in the height, breadth and depth, not only in her unaffectedly, graceful, artistic work but in her invaluable tutorial work as amply manifested through the charming, alert, and easy capability of all who participated in the judicious and tasteful program. \* \* \*

Yours very truly and respectfully,  
*Raleigh Daily Chronicle.* W. H. NEAVE "

"The entertainment was conducted by Miss Lessie M. Southgate, which of itself guaranteed its success. This most highly gifted woman, on this occasion, fairly eclipsed herself. As an elocutionist, vocalist and pianist, she stands facile princeps among the ladies of North Carolina, and it is no wonder that the refined and cultured citizens of Durham are so proud of her.—*Chatham Record.*"

"Miss Lessie Southgate gave the association a delightful entertainment of music and recitations. Miss Southgate is a most accomplished musician, and is very highly appreciated at home, as is proved by the fact that she has lately declined the offer of a most flattering salary from New York.—*Statesville Landmark.*"

"The singing of Miss Southgate was a splendid treat, while her recitations were greatly enjoyed, and showed her to be an elocutionist of remarkable powers. She possesses a rich and highly cultivated voice, and has an exceedingly graceful and attractive stage presence of which the audience showed their appreciation by generous applause, and would not be satisfied until she responded a second time at each appearance.—*Henderson Gold Leaf.*"

"Having been educated to a superlative degree of excellence, in the best schools in the country, she is a woman of rare attainments. Her abundant means have enabled her to cultivate to the fullest extent, her

unusual gifts as a pianist, vocalist and elocutionist. She has been Vice-President of the North Carolina Musical Association, was organist and chorister of the leading church in Durham, and director of the St. Cecilia Society. Her tireless self-sacrifice in the interest of her pupils has won for her the confidence and patronage of a large *clientele* among the Southern people.

"The young ladies who come under her care are especially fortunate, not only because of her musical influence, but because of the high moral tone of this remarkable woman.—*Catalogue of the Metropolitan Conservatory of Music New York.*"

"The piano solos by children only twelve and thirteen years of age were rendered with a skill and technique that kept the audience in a delightful state of interest and wonder. More excellent execution and expression could not have been expected from professional pianists.

All these young ladies are the pupils of, and have had their entire musical instruction and training under Miss Southgate, who is recognized as one of the most accomplished lady musicians in the country. Great inducements have been offered her to move to New York City. Not more than a month ago she declined an offer of four thousand dollars per annum, in addition to which she was offered fifteen hundred dollars a year to become the organist of a church there—an aggregate salary of five thousand five hundred dollars per annum. There are few ladies in this country who can command greater salaries than United States Senators, and Miss Southgate is one of them.—*Raleigh News and Observer.*"

"The instrumentation of Miss Southgate was simply superb.—*Asheville Citizen.*"

"Her touch is full of pathos with the proper degrees of light and shade, and at times her playing is characterized by great brilliancy and power.—*Brooklyn Eagle, N. Y.*"

"Miss Southgate performs with the skill of a master, and she has the happy faculty of imparting knowledge to her pupils.—*Durham Recorder.*"

“The piano recital given Friday evening by Miss Lessie M. Southgate was exceedingly fine. We doubt whether Miss Southgate has an equal in the South.—*Durham Plant.*”

“Both Miss Southgate’s singing and reading were delightful and beyond criticism. Her reading was “The Famine” from *Hiawatha*, and was given with such impulses as must have inspired the soul of the poet, Longfellow, when he wrote his beautiful, pathetic and famous Indian story. The wail of lamentation, the calls of *Minnehaha* to *Hiawatha*, and their rolling, lingering echoes were given by Miss Southgate with wondrous effect.—*State Chronicle.*”

“Mr. Greene was assisted by Miss L. M. Southgate, of North Carolina, who combines a rare degree of excellence as elocutionist, pianist and vocalist, with a charming personality that has won for her the proud distinction of being the most accomplished woman in the South.—*Elmira Gazette, Elmira, N. Y.*”

“Miss L. M. Southgate, of North Carolina, appeared in an entertainment at Elmira, N. Y., August 21st, and was well received. She is an eloquent vocalist, elocutionist and pianist.—*Werner’s Voice Magazine, N. Y.*”

“Miss Lessie M. Southgate, of Durham, was the star of the evening, both because of her magnificent apparel, her superb physique and womanhood, and her perfect mastery of the art, science and mystery of music.—*Warrenton Gazette.*”

“Miss Southgate was the recipient of hearty encores and gave three responses to the persistent appeals of the admiring audience.—*New Berne Journal. (Cor. from the State Teachers’ Association at Morehead.)*”

“Miss Southgate was a favorite, and thrilled and charmed the audience with both her enchanting singing and her charming elocution.—*Raleigh News and Observer.*”

“It is needless to speak of the exquisite performance of Miss Southgate. Her power to enthral her hearers by her music is well known. Her recitals last night

were especially well received, and three times she responded to encores,—*Durham Globe.*”

“Miss Lessie Southgate as Pauline (Lady of Lyons) interpreted the pathos and beauty of that wayward heroine with faultless personation, and in the more impassioned scenes she rose to that intense sublimity of emotion which passed the bounds of mere acting, and seemed absolutely real—the perfection of elocution, whose slightest whisper swept through the audience with a thrill of sympathetic response. It was irresistible.—*Goliad Guard, Texas.*”

“Miss Lessie Southgate who always attains to excellence, both in music and elocution, gave one of the finest recitations that it has been our pleasure to hear. It was truly grand and added another gem to this lady's brilliant reputation. The applause that followed was earnest and enthusiastic, and she responded with a humorous selection which was also rendered in admirable style and gave evidence of great versatility.—*Durham Tobacco Plant.*”

“Miss Southgate is the happy possessor of a fine voice of great power, thorough culture and perfect self-poise—that minute and exhaustive detail which is alone the result of superior training.—*Goliad Guard, Texas.*”

(Account of the third day's proceedings of the Musical Festival and State Musical Association).

A medal was awarded to Miss Lessie M. Southgate, as the best solo pianist.—*Goldboro Messenger.*”

“The treat of the evening was a solo by Mrs. Simmons, of Dawson,—a selection from the ‘Barber of Seville.’ Mrs. Simmons possesses a magnificent voice and her rendition of the song was truly artistic. Dr. Palmer announced that no encores would be allowed, but he received a request from the vast audience that Mrs. Simmons would favor them with another selection. He announced that she would give her encore next Monday evening.

THE REQUEST—“One thousand entranced hearers do earnestly request that Mrs. Simmons be allowed to give an encore. Do not refuse us. COMMITTEE.”—*Albany Herald.*



For several years Mrs. Simmons was the musical director of the Georgia Chautauqua at Albany. The writer finds some press notices concerning her work during the first year, 1895, when she succeeded as musical director the man who was perhaps the most noted choral leader of New York:

“The Georgia Chautauqua. Entertaining Exercises at the Tent Tabernacle. A Grand Chorus. Mrs. Simmons’s Work Complimented by Everybody Who Has Seen It.

“The largest audience that has assembled in the tent tabernacle yet was there last evening to listen to the delightful program which had been arranged by Mrs. T. J. Simmons.

“About 8:30 the applause from the rear of the tent announced the approach of the choir. They came in single file and, marching up, took their seats upon the chorus stand, which had been beautifully decorated for the occasion. All were in evening dress and a more beautiful sight cannot be imagined. Mrs. Simmons is truly a wonderful woman. The chorus this year shows the training of a master, and surpasses anything we have ever had.—*Macon Telegraph.*”

“THE GEORGIA CHAUTAUQUA.—The best part of the Chautauqua program will be music. That will be under the care and direction of Mrs. Simmons of the Union Female College. She is one of the most gifted pianists and vocalists in America. She is besides a great teacher, bringing to the work a magnetism inspiring, an energy that never falters, and a devotion such as only the best and purest can feel for an art almost divine. The greatest privilege any music-loving soul can know is to sit at her feet and learn of the heavenly voiced harmonies. The Albany people got the best musical director to be had anywhere. There could not be a better. The chorus Mrs. Simmons trains will be worth hearing.—*Eufaula Times.*”

“The seventh annual assembly of the Georgia Chautauqua began today under the most flattering auspices. There are hundreds of visitors already in the city, and the indications are that the Chautauqua will be better patronized than ever before. The opening sermon, by

Rev. G. T. Dowling, a distinguished divine of Boston, Mass., was listened to by 3,000 people. The chorus of 150 voices, under Mrs. T. J. Simmons, is the finest in the history of the Chautauqua.—*Atlanta Constitution*.”

“One of the hits of the evening was the toast to Mrs. Simmons by Dr. Duncan, in which he said that she was ‘first in music, first in peace and first in the hearts of her countrymen.’ And Mrs. Simmons, assisted by the chorus, most gracefully responded in a musical toast to Dr. Duncan, which captured the audience as well as the subject of the toast.—*Albany Herald*.”

“The Tent Tabernacle is now up; the rehearsals of the big Chautauqua chorus, under the direction of Mrs. T. J. Simmons, have commenced.

The chorus at this assembly promises to be the largest and best we have ever had. The department of music seems to have flourished under the administration of Mrs. Simmons, and some grand musical concerts may be expected. These concerts are among the most delightful features of Chautauqua and never fail to draw large audiences.

Mrs. Simmons, the Chautauqua Musical Director, is drilling a large chorus, which meets every night, and the mornings and afternoons are devoted to classes taking special courses in music. The music teachers and others well advanced in music derive great benefit from these special courses under Mrs. Simmons, who stands at the head of her profession in the South, and is never happier than when helping others on the line of “What to teach and how to teach.”—*Albany Herald*.”

“The ‘Jewel Song’ from Faust, was magnificently rendered by Mrs. T. J. Simmons, and her lovely voice was never heard to better advantage. The audience never tires of the sweet tones of her voice, and she was compelled to respond to a thunderous encore.

“Everything passed off delightfully, and Mrs. Simmons has added another wreath to the crown of laurels which the Albanians have so gladly placed upon her queenly brow.

“Mrs. Simmons was kinder to her audience than she usually is, and after the rendition of the ‘Cavatina’ from Semiramide, she graciously responded to two encores, much to the pleasure of all. Mrs. Simmons and

the chorus are to be congratulated on the selections of this program and the successful rendition of this part.—*Albany Herald.*”

“The music during the entire season gave universal pleasure, Mrs. Simmons and the Chautauqua Chorus winning enthusiastic applause. So well was the grand concert received that at its close the audience by a rising vote asked that another night be given during the session—a wish which was granted.—*The Chautauquan (N. Y. Magazine.)*”

“The Choral Society in this city is an organization of which Eufaula may justly feel proud. Under the direction of Mrs. T. J. Simmons, whose tastes and talents in the gifted art are of a high and unusual order and whose reputation as a teacher is second to none in the South, the society could hardly fail to entertain the most cultured and refined tastes. The program last night was both interesting and varied, and embraced features of song and instrumental music and readings which were executed in a most highly creditable manner, and held the large and intelligent audience perfectly enchanted and delighted.—*Daily Times.*”

“The Choral Society is composed of the very finest home talent, and is under the direct management of Mrs. T. J. Simmons, whose reputation as a vocalist stands in critical challenge with the very best singers of modern times.—*Times.*”

“As a musician, Mrs. Simmons has no superiors and few peers in the South. She is queen in the realm of song, her delivery being easy, natural and impressive, awaking the enthusiasm of all lovers of music. Having enjoyed the best advantages that America and Europe afforded, her native talent shows the highest culture and wherever she appears her audiences are captivated by her grace of manner and charm of voice.—*Cuthbert Liberal-Enterprise.*”

The work of Dr. and Mrs. Simmons in Rome, since 1898, has been so universally admired, and has called forth such a wealth of commendatory expressions that it is difficult to refrain from attempting to make more extensive quotations than the space allows. From local papers are clipped editorials of June 2nd, and November 12th, 1903.

“No institution in the state has written more remarkable history of its own growth and development in a period of five years than that which all Romans love to name and are proud to claim, Shorter College. Just five years ago President and Mrs. T. J. Simmons assumed the management of the college. Their reputation preceded them, and their coming was heralded with resolutions in the Alabama papers, regretting to give up so valuable educators and commending President and Mrs. Simmons for a brilliancy of administrative and educational ability that could not be surpassed.

“In the five years of President and Mrs. Simmons the evolution of the college into a Southern educational center has been something marvelous. The dormitory and college building have been remodeled and enlarged and the purchase of three additional buildings became a necessary enlargement, for the increased numerical strength of the boarding department which is now twenty-five per cent. more than in any previous administration. Departments have been enlarged and improved, the curriculum raised to the highest standard, and whereas the college formerly found its patronage and reputation among the people mostly of this section, the student body is now composed of girls from every Southern and many of the Northern and Western states.

“In January the large city papers made the announcement that because of the crowded condition of the college the registration list was closed, and then pupils began registering for the Fall, and the September registrations were made in January.

“Nothing in the history of the college has attracted more attention than the beautiful and artistic fitting up of the Conservatory of Music, and through President and Mrs. Simmons Rome in this splendid annex to the college has been given the privilege of musical treats that much larger cities could not procure.

"The faculty and assistants number thirty and no institution of learning has ever been crowned with greater literary polish or lustre of art. The social life is ideal. A beautiful hospitality has characterized the Simmons administration and the functions at which President and Mrs. Simmons, the Faculty and Senior class are at home to Romans have made of the college a social center from which is drawn attractive lessons of grace and art and beauty."—*Cherokee Messenger*.

"Shorter College has completed another year of usefulness and, within the next few days, will close its doors for the summer months.

"The scholastic year just ended has been the most successful in the history of the college. Attendance has been as large as conditions would permit and the standard of excellence in all departments has been raised above even the high standards maintained in the past.

"President Simmons and his brilliant and accomplished wife have every reason to feel proud of the results of their management of the college. Assisted by an able and hard working faculty they have brought Shorter up to a grade second to none in the land. Under their guiding hands the best ideas along modern educational lines have been put in practice here and the result is that the young lady who wins her diploma at Shorter now goes forth better equipped than ever graduate went forth before. The Simmons administration has been given a fair trial, and, believing that we voice the great majority in Rome, the Tribune feels that there is nothing to be said but words of praise and commendation. We believe that Shorter College is today in the most satisfactory and healthy condition of its history.

"To the graduating class The Tribune extends its hearty greeting and best wishes for the future. To Professor and Mrs. Simmons, and their splendid faculty, we tender our sincere congratulations and we trust that their vacation may be pleasant and profitable."—*Rome Tribune*.

"The Tribune is gratified to know that Shorter College, that grand and splendid institution, has made such a satisfactory beginning to what promises to be the most thoroughly successful year of its glorious history.

"Shorter College is one of the grandest institutions of learning in the South and Romans are proud of it and never weary of singing its praises.

"As magnificent as the past is, however, it must be conceded that the college was never before in such eminently satisfactory condition as it is today. From 40 boarding pupils in 1898 the rolls have increased to 120 today, and it would be even larger were it not for the fact that the management has been forced to decline more for lack of accommodation. The day pupils' roll is also filled to the limit.

"As for the faculty, all Romans realize that the faculty of Shorter College was never so strong as it is now. Every chair is filled acceptably and competently and the scope of the work in all the departments has been greatly magnified and broadened during the past few years. The moral atmosphere, the culture and the refinement that permeates everything in connection with the work of the college was never so studiously and emphatically maintained as it is at this time; and all of these things are not said in criticism or disparagement of any past history, but they are mentioned as facts indicating the inevitable results following a tireless and persistent struggle to reach a cherished ideal, be that ideal as lofty as it may if still within range of possibility. We say, unhesitatingly, that the present management of Shorter College has conceived a very high ideal, and if not yet satisfied with the elevation reached, a continuance of the tireless energy of the past few years must bring to the faculty an early and complete realization of their most cherished dreams.

"Rome is proud of Shorter College and every loyal Roman stands ready to lend its faculty a helping hand when needed, and, while the argument is not one often invoked or considered, the fact that the institution turns \$25,000 into the channels of trade in Rome every year is something beyond the lines of sentimental and educational thought which may well be considered in rendering a verdict in favor of Shorter as one of Rome's most valuable assets."—*Rome Tribune, Nov. 12th.*

The following is from the *Daily Times* of Chattanooga :

"While the institution has had an honorable history from its inception, yet new life was put into the college

and a more progressive policy inaugurated when (in 1898) President T. J. Simmons, a man in the vigor of youth, though with great experience in educational problems, was called to the administration of its affairs. During no time within the life of the College have greater improvements been made than since the date of his inauguration; and the higher rating of the institution in the educational world is due to his work and that of the eminent educators whom he has brought into the faculty. It is gratifying also to the friends of the institution that the number of students who registered on the first day of the session following his inauguration was the largest known in many years, and that the number enrolled, particularly from states formerly unrepresented, has constantly increased, until now the dormitory building is entirely filled.

"President Simmons's theory is that good work done inside a college will soon have its effect outside, and he sticks close to his duties on the hill instead of going out to talk to people about the excellence of his institution. He is a man of unusual reticence with reporters, and it was with some difficulty that we secured the material for this sketch of the college, though justice to this splendid institution would compel us to write a great deal more, had we the space to print it.

"We cannot close without reference to the College of Music, with its large and able faculty, mentioning especially the cultured musician who is the head professor of two departments, Mrs. T. J. Simmons, pianist and vocalist, who, under her present name, or as Miss Lessie M. Southgate, is well known in all musical circles, both north and south. She has had the best training in Europe and America, and no teacher anywhere has succeeded better in imparting her knowledge of music to her students."



Apart from the excellence of the instruction given by the faculty, the numerous concerts given by Mrs. Simmons and her students have served to bring the college prominently into notice and to establish its reputation throughout the South as a school affording the highest type of culture. To give an adequate idea of these entertainments would be impossible in the limited space devoted to this pamphlet, but a few extracts are given from the *Atlanta Journal*, *Atlanta Constitution*, etc.

"All musical Atlanta, from the recognized critic down to the casual attendant at a concert, has been commenting enthusiastically on the entertainment given Thursday evening by the students of Shorter College.

It was a really remarkable concert, and impressed the listener, not as an amateur effort, but as a finished performance.

"The ensemble piano playing showed fine training—every arm, hand, finger of these girls moving in unison, the heads directing in unison, the whole a complete interpretation of the great composers, complete in both technique and temperament.

"There were two of those ensemble piano numbers, both classic compositions—Chopin's Revolutionary Etude and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodie. And a different set of pianists performed in each selection, making a fine showing as to the number of classic musicians in Shorter College—16 girls who can render music of that character being unusual in any one school.

"The utility of such training in accurate work is not less obvious than its beauty. The discipline of eye and hand and head and heart necessary for the attainment of that result is of incalculable benefit to the student. It brings that discipline without which life's music cannot be wholly harmonious.

"Mrs. Simmons, who already has a host of admirers in Atlanta, added numbers to the list during her recent visit here. She is a very charming and gifted woman, with that magnetism that comes from the genuinely sympathetic nature. Her pupils are devoted to her, and no one wonders at it.

"Mrs. Simmons is a woman of wide travel and an equally wide acquaintance with the best art and artists of the world. She goes abroad every summer and keeps in touch with the progressive spirit both abroad and at



home. When a person has this inner enrichment, out-flowing in a wealth of comment and talk, it is a liberal education to those associated with him or her.

"Shorter College and Georgia girlhood there represented are thus fortunate."—*Atlanta Journal*.

"The Grand was filled with a brilliant audience last night for the concert by students of Shorter College, Rome, and enthusiasm colored the performance and the reception from start to finish.

"The opening selection was Weber's Jubel Overture, which was presented by eight young ladies, the brilliance of whose achievement was due to individual as well as collective excellence of execution, and the several solo numbers for piano displayed exceptional attainment.

"In their singing the young ladies as a whole, and as soloists, gave evidence of delightful voice quality, in which the southern softness and sweetness was emphasized, and of most creditable training.

"The audience seemed unwilling that some of the soloists should cease, so pleasing was their work, and Mrs. Simmons, dean of the college, who is responsible for the concert, was accorded the congratulations she deserves."—*Atlanta Constitution*.

"A brilliant and fashionable audience was present at the Grand last evening to hear the Shorter College girls in their annual concert. It is not too much to say that it was one of the best concerts heard here. There was not a pause from start to close.

"Mrs. T. J. Simmons, musical director, has long been recognized as one of the finest teachers in the South, both for voice and piano. Her pupils show a finish and ease rarely seen off the professional stage.

"The two overtures at the beginning and close of the program were beautifully executed. Eight girls at four pianos, playing with finish, correctness, naturalness of close study, made the audience realize and appreciate the excellent training they had received.

"The entire program was beautiful. It was not only an artistic success, but another musical triumph for the musical department of Shorter College."—*Atlanta News*.

"A magnificent audience greeted Mrs. T. J. Simmons and her attractive pupils of Shorter College last evening at the Grand. The stage, with its four grand pianos, palms and a deep row of sweet peas across the footlights, made a lovely setting for the young musicians. \* \* \* \* \*

"The program was exceedingly well rendered and the great audience applauded most enthusiastically. The two four-piano numbers were excellent, the eight participants playing with unusual finish and abandon. The chorus work was fine, the voices blending beautifully. The St. Cecilians were heartily applauded, and their little song, 'Cupid Made Love to the Moon,' from the old Welsh, received an enthusiastic burst of applause, their encore being equally appreciated. \* \* \*

"One of the soloists most heartily applauded was Miss Rena Barbee, whose unusually sweet voice won all. Her solo 'Tonight and Tomorrow' (Leoncavallo) was an exquisite thing, and her encore was also highly appreciated. Her second encore, 'Mighty Lak a Rose,' received such a deafening applause that she had to repeat it. \* \* \* \* \*

"Atlantians evidently realized that a treat was in store for them, for the Grand was filled. \* \* \*

"The evening was a distinct triumph for Mrs. Simmons and the Shorter girls. They gave their hearers some genuinely delightful music and they were received with the greatest enthusiasm. From every point of view the evening was a great success."—*Atlanta Journal*.

"The second day of the Shorter College commencement was distinctive for its two brilliant musical concerts. The music throughout has demonstrated that this institution's musical department will take rank with any in the country, North or South. To the fine artistic temperament of Mrs. T. J. Simmons is due the meed of praise for lifting Shorter into the sphere of the really great musical institutions and spreading the name and fame of the college throughout the length and breadth of the United States."—*Rome Tribune*.

Regarding the recent work of President Simmons and his Faculty in Shorter College, it is superfluous to undertake to speak here at all, for not only is the splendid work of this regime well-known to everybody throughout Georgia and all contiguous states; but a recent issue of the College Bulletin, much larger than the present pamphlet, was filled with words of highest praise from patrons and friends of the College not only in Rome but throughout America.

In January 1910, the plans made some time before by Dr. and Mrs. Simmons for their removal with the leading members of their faculty to Brenau College, Gainesville, Georgia, at the close of the scholastic year, were at last made public. The news of their intended departure cast a gloom upon the city of Rome such as no other event in its history had ever done, and the universal expressions of regret throughout the community constitute the most eloquent tribute that they could possibly receive—a tribute even greater than the recently published letters of praise from the friends of the College. No doubt a still much greater work will be theirs under more favorable conditions in the new home to which they are about to go and to which they carry the best wishes of thousands of appreciative friends.

Regarding the announcement of Dr. Simmons's future connection with Brenau College, the editorial columns of the *Atlanta Constitution* of January 23, 1910, have this to say:

“WELL-KNOWN EDUCATORS COME TOGETHER.

“As the result of the purchase by Dr. T. J. Simmons, for twelve years president of Shorter College, Rome, from Dr. H. J. Pearce, for seventeen years president of Brenau College-Conservatory, Gainesville, two of the best known and ablest educators in the state have consolidated interests with the purpose of building a greater Brenau.

“Few men in Georgia have become so prominent in the educational field, or have so well equipped themselves for the work of educating and training young women.

“In 1893 Brenau had thirty boarding pupils; now it has more than 300; and Dr. Simmons, who will be associated with Dr. Pearce in its presidency, goes to it

with the purpose and determination of still further building it, both in efficiency and extent of work.

"This consolidation, which becomes effective in June, in time for the opening of the 1910-11 term, will give Brenau as strong and able a force as can be found in any institution in the south, if not the entire country.

"Presidents Simmons and Pearce are to be congratulated upon their conjunction of forces and efforts, which will give the south an institution whose influence and standing must be productive of greater and still more far-reaching achievement."

The news columns of the *Atlanta Journal* in an illustrated article, introduced with voluminous headlines, have this to say regarding the consolidation:

"The announcement comes from Gainesville, Ga., that Dr. T. J. Simmons, President of Shorter College, Rome, Ga., has bought from Dr. H. J. Pearce an interest in Brenau College. Dr. Simmons will leave Shorter College next June and will be associated with Dr. Pearce in the Presidency of Brenau College-Conservatory.

"The larger part of the beautiful equipment of Shorter College, consisting of twenty-two pianos, all of the magnificent furnishings of the Oriental and Italian parlors, some of the scientific apparatus and much of the furniture, which is the personal property of Dr. Simmons, will be transferred to Brenau and used in the equipment of the splendid new building which is to be erected within the next few months. This new building will be ready for occupancy by the opening of the next session, September 15th. This addition to the Conservatory equipment gives Brenau a total of more than eighty pianos. Perhaps no other college in America has so large an equipment of interesting pictures as will be brought to Brenau by Dr. Simmons, who has gathered them from all parts of the world.

"The leading members of the faculty of Shorter College, both literary and musical, will be transferred to Brenau and added to the already large faculty of Brenau, which will thus be increased to some forty-five members.

"This consolidation is the result of several months negotiation between President Pearce and President Simmons, and means much for the future development of Brenau, which is already one of the leading colleges for

women in the South, having at present the largest boarding patronage of any college in Georgia. The present student-body includes representatives from twenty-five states of the Union.

"Dr. Pearce has been president of Brenau for seventeen years, being, in time of service, the oldest college president in Georgia, with perhaps one or two exceptions, although he is still comparatively a young man in years. Last year he acquired the complete ownership of the college, and the present consolidation is part of a comprehensive scheme of development and enlargement.

"Dr. Simmons has been president of Shorter College for twelve years. During his administration this institution has greatly increased in numbers, and has become one of the best known colleges in the South. The prestige acquired during these dozen years by Shorter College through the good work of its faculty will increase in like measure the prestige of Brenau College when the two faculties have been consolidated.

"Immediately associated with Dr. Simmons in the development of Shorter has been Mrs. Simmons, widely known both in this country and in Europe as one of the most brilliant American musicians. As Dean of the College of Music she has given a tone and reputation to this department of the institution, which is second to none. She will greatly add to the already brilliant reputation of Brenau Conservatory, and will be Head Professor of Voice.

"The complete personnel of the new faculty has not yet been announced, but it is stated that there will be no material change in the present faculty of Brenau except the enlargement which will result from the addition of the leading members of the Shorter faculty. Brenau is at present crowded and the time of every teacher is filled, so that the additional growth which is expected on account of the coming of Dr. and Mrs. Simmons and the erection of the new dormitory will make a large increase in the teaching force also necessary. This increase will be made by the additions from the Shorter faculty.

"The development of Brenau during the past seventeen years has been little short of marvelous. In 1893 there were thirty boarding students; during the present year they will exceed three hundred. When it is considered

that Brenau is a private institution, without support of Church or State, this growth is the more remarkable. It is an illustration of what may be accomplished in a community when its leading citizens give loyal and united effort to its educational interests. Many of the city's best citizens, some of whom are gone, have given largely of their time and money in the interest of the school.

"Dr. T. J. Simmons, who is now to become identified with the management of Brenau, is by inheritance and training an educator. His father was for many years a well known professor in Wake Forest College, North Carolina, and in this institution Dr. Simmons received his education. He came as a young man to Georgia and became principal of the high school in Athens, and then superintendent of schools in Dawson, Georgia; then president of Union Female College, Eufaula, Ala., and finally president of Shorter College, Rome, Ga. In addition to his master's degree, his alma mater has conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws in recognition of his distinguished service to the cause of education.

"Inasmuch as Brenau is strictly non-denominational, it is perhaps a fortunate circumstance that Dr. Simmons is a Baptist while Dr. Pearce is a well-known Methodist. Dr. Pearce is a graduate of Emory College of the class of 1891. Later he took the master's degree at the University of Chicago, and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Wuerzberg, Germany. He was first professor of Latin in the Columbus Female Seminary, and later president of that institution.

"Presidents Pearce and Simmons are making large plans for the future development of the institution. They will at once prepare to take care of five hundred boarding students. The new dormitory and its equipment will cost approximately \$35,000, and in addition several club houses for the different sororities will be erected. Work upon one of these buildings will begin next week."



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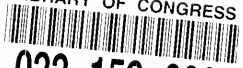
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