

Col. Simmons Discusses Knights of Ku Klux Klan

the Christian religion and owe no allegiance of any degree or nature to any foreign government, political institution, sect, people or persons are eligible for membership."

Atlanta, Ga., July 11.—Proof that the noble spirit that actuated the members of the famous Ku Klux Klan in the reconstruction period still lives among the sons is shown in the remarkable growth of the organization, according to Colonel William J. Simmons, imperial wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, its membership now reaches into nineteen states and has representatives in New York, Illinois, Texas, Missouri and other distant states.

The annual convales of the inhabitants of the invisible Empire which was held in Atlanta last May attracted renewed interest in the Klan and its work. It was attended by members of the Klan from every section of the South and from many states in other sections of the country and since that meeting Colonel Simmons has received numerous inquiries regarding the methods to be pursued in attaining membership in the Klan and in organizing branches in other cities.

One of these inquiries came from a leading citizen of California who said he had become convinced that the Klan, because of the high principles upon which it is founded and the purpose it aims to serve, should be extended to California and the Pacific Coast states.

The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan which is a patriotic, ritualistic fraternal order is no hastily "jumped up" affair but has been in the making for the last eighteen years, the idea of perpetuating the principles upon which the old Klux Klan was founded having originated in the mind of Colonel Simmons who is professor of southern history at Lanier University in Atlanta.

Colonel Simmons dedicated his life to this cause and for fourteen years he thought, studied and worked to prepare himself for launching this great institution. In October, 1919, he mentioned his ambition to some friends among whom were three men who were bona fide mem-

bers of the original Klan when it disbanded.

On the night of October 24, Colonel Simmons met with these friends and after he unfolded his plans all those present—thirty-four in number—signed a petition for a charter. On Thanksgiving night in 1915 the organizers of the Klan assembled on the top of Stone Mountain near Atlanta and there at midnight, under a blazing fiery cross, they took the oath of allegiance to the Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

The charter was issued by the state of Georgia, December 4, 1915, and a special charter was granted by the supreme court of Fulton county, July 1, 1916.

Since the Klan had among its charter members three of the original members of the old Ku Klux Klan it was granted all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the original organization which swept the carpet-bagger and the sealawag from the South in the dark days of the reconstruction period following the civil war, restored to the white people of the South their rightful position in the nation, brought order out of chaos by suppressing the lawless element of both races and then, having accomplished the immediate purpose for which it was organized, was quietly disbanded by order of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, who was its chief.

"While conditions today are not the same as they were when the original Klan was organized," says Colonel Simmons, "the need for an organization like the Ku Klux Klan is just as pressing now as it ever was."

"Its purpose is to inculcate the sacred principles and noble ideals of chivalry, the development of character, the protection of the home and the chastity of womanhood, the exemplification of a pure patriotism to ward our glorious country, the preservation of American ideals and the maintenance of white supremacy.

"No man is wanted in this order who hasn't manhood enough to assume a real oath with serious purpose to keep the same inviolate. No man is wanted in this order who will not or who cannot swear an unqualified allegiance to the government of the United States of America, its flag and its constitution.

"Only native-born American citizens who believe in the tenets of