

ACCUSED OF HYPNOTISM.

Novel Complaint of Colonel Parsons of Virginia.

He Says Mrs. Nathan Appleton, Formerly Miss Jeanette Ovington, of This City, Exercesed Undue Influence Over His Daughter and Induced the Latter, by Hypnotic Means, to Leave Her Southern Home Against the Wishes of Her Parents—The Father is Resorting to the Law in His Efforts to Separate the Women—What S. V. White Says.

A very improbable story appeared in one of this morning's New York newspapers concerning Mrs. Nathan Appleton, now Miss Jeanette Ovington of this city, and Miss Katherine Parsons of Natural Bridge, Va. Mrs. Appleton was married to Nathan Appleton on November 16, 1887, at the house of her uncle, Theodore T. Ovington, 69 Willow street, the late Edward Everett Hale officiating. The affair was one of the social events of the season, as the bride was a belle in Brooklyn, the groom being equally well known at his home in Boston. He was connected with the Panama canal company, which is causing considerable disturbance in France just now, and on the death of a bachelor brother was left a large fortune. Miss Emma Thursby, the opera singer, was the matron of honor and Bud and Harry Appleton, cousins of the groom, and Charles Ovington and Henry Gillig were the ushers. The bridesmaids were Miss May Ovington, Miss Rosa Maize, Miss Florence Ovington and Miss Frances Curtis of Boston. Charles Longfellow, a cousin of the poet, was the best man. The couple went to the far west on their honeymoon trip and then returned to Boston, where they remained during the winter. Then they spent some time in Paris, where the bride had been educated. About three years ago it was rumored that there had been a disagreement between the two, and, shortly after, they separated and the husband made a liberal allowance to his wife. Mrs. Appleton went to live with her friend, Miss Thursby, and, for a few months, the two women were inseparable. Then came a quarrel, said to have been about money matters. Eighteen months ago Mrs. Appleton went to Natural Bridge and made the acquaintance of Colonel H. C. Parsons, the owner of the famous natural bridge, where George Washington wrote his name on the rocks a foot higher than any other man. Colonel Parsons belongs to one of the oldest families in Virginia and is very wealthy. He fought through the war on the confederate side and acquitted himself with distinction. He has three daughters, the favorite of them being Katherine. She is a tall, stately blonde and is possessed of many accomplishments, among them being painting and drawing. According to the story told by Colonel Parsons, Mrs. Appleton had a mysterious influence over his daughter from the very first, and this became more and more evident as the time went by. Shortly after the acquaintance began, Mrs. Appleton and the colonel went into partnership to photograph the scenery near and about the natural bridge, each to take one half of the profits and Mrs. Appleton to do the work with the camera. A quarrel arose and the partners became estranged. To the astonishment of the entire Parson family, Miss Katherine left the house in company with Mrs. Appleton and took up her residence with her. Appeals and entreaties were alike in vain. The two women went to Paris shortly after and remained there until the spring of this year. Last summer they lived at Oyster Bay, L. I., and when the colonel learned of his daughter's whereabouts, he wrote to her to return. The letters remained unanswered, and at last the father engaged a lawyer to go and visit the women. He did not have any success.

The two companions then returned to New York and engaged rooms at a boarding house at 68 West Thirty-ninth street. Both Mrs. Appleton and Miss Parsons became the favorites of all the boarders at the Thirty-ninth street place. Mrs. Appleton asserted that she was acquainted with all the people worth knowing, and when Mr. S. V. White of Plymouth church, in whose Sunday school class she had formerly been, called upon her all doubts as to the truth of her remarks were dispelled. Mrs. Briggs, who kept the boarding house, told the reporter that she was sure that Miss Parsons was under hypnotic influence and that she was not responsible for her acts. She further asserted that their behavior caused so much talk that she was compelled to give them notice to vacate their rooms. The women then moved to 8 West Twenty-eighth street, where they now live. Colonel Parsons is sure that his daughter is being mesmerized by Mrs. Appleton and asserts that he will leave no stone unturned to get Miss Katherine away from her friend. He is said to have gone to Boston to get Mr. Appleton to interfere in the matter and has engaged George K. French of General Butler's law firm to look after the case for him.

When a reporter saw the two women, they laughed at the story of hypnotism and said that it had been in circulation for some time. Miss Parsons said:

"My family wished me to remain home, but I could not study art as I wished to, and for that reason I am living with Mrs. Appleton. We have been close friends for some years. As for her exerting any undue influence over me, that is absolute nonsense."

S. V. White says that it might just as well be asserted that he was hypnotizing John L. Sullivan as to say that Mrs. Appleton was using any such mysterious power over Miss Parsons. He pronounced the story as "perfectly ridiculous."

Charles Ovington, a cousin of the bride, was seen this morning at his store, on Flatbush avenue, and said that hypnotism did not run in his family. He thought that Miss Parsons was quite able to take care of herself, being about 25 years of age. He had known both of the women for many years and thought that the story was absurd.