

The Woman's Husband in Manchester.

From the Manchester Guardian.

Subsequent inquiries confirmed the truth of the statements made in the Guardian of Wednesday as to this singular case. And, as the circumstances of the case and the name of the husband, have now become pretty generally known throughout the town, we see no longer any necessity for concealing the latter. The assumed name of the master bricklayer is Henry Stoaks; her real name we believe to be Harriet Stoakes, and till the late exposure the parties resided in Cumberland street, Deansgate. This woman man, who, for probably more than five and twenty years, has succeeded in concealing her sex, and in pursuing a trade of a more than ordinary masculine and hazardous description, with a degree of skill and ability which has led to her establishment in a good business in this town, bound herself apprentice, at the age of 16 or 17 years, to a Mr. Peacock a bricklayer and builder at Bawtry a small market town in the West Riding of Yorkshire, on the river Idle which separates the counties of York and Nottingham. She did not remain with Mr. Peacock during the whole period of her apprenticeship but was "turned over," as it is called, to another person in the same business. It was during her apprenticeship that she met with her present wife; and they were married at the Old Parish Church of Sheffield in the year 1816, when the wife was only seventeen years of age.—Since the investigation and disclosure of circumstances on Thursday week, the wife and husband have separated. We believe that although no legal proceedings have been, or indeed could be taken in this extraordinary case, Mr. Thomas Deputy constable, has had several interviews with the husband, in which he has endeavored to induce her to make some provision for the woman whom she has so shamefully deceived, and who, after having for 22 years filled the character of a wife, greatly benefiting the interests of her supposed husband not only by her care of household concerns, but of the business books and accounts, had surely some claim to compensation as a servant, if she were unable by law to demand maintenance of a wife. We believe that Mr. Thomas so far succeeded in this humane negotiation, as to induce the husband to agree to give up to the wife, the house in which they had resided up to the time of the discovery, with all the furniture that it contained. The wife is, therefore, still residing there; and the husband has gone to lodge elsewhere. The habits of the latter, we believe, are much more in accordance with those of her assumed sex and occupation than a woman; and no one except perchance from her beardless cheeks, and a certain shrillness of voice, could for a moment suspect that the little broadest bricklayer was of the soft sex. At present she employs in her business, besides being most industrious herself in its practical details and manual operations, eight men, and a boy who is apprenticed to her. In her business and dealing she appears to have borne hitherto, a good character for punctuality and honesty in her payments, and we believe she has stated, that she has made enough by her business to enable her to live in ease without labor. Yet strange to say, with a degree of irritability which we should rather expect to find in the injured than the injurer, she vehemently refuses to consent that any sum shall be set apart as a provision for her so-called wife.

Among other social duties which this female husband has performed during her residence in this town, is one that certainly it might have been expected, if the least feelings appertaining to her sex had remained she would anxiously have endeavored to evade. But, on the contrary, there seems to have been a sort of pervisity in her, which carried her into all extremes. She was for many years a special constable, in the 13th division of that body, acting for this town; and we are assured that on all occasions where the services of the division were required, as at elections, orange processions, and meetings of trades' unions, turn-outs, &c.; so far from absenting herself from what, as in the case of well-grounded apprehensions of a riot, must have been, to a woman a post of some unpleasantness she is remembered to have been one of the most punctual in attendance, and the most forward volunteer in actual duty, in that division.—We understand that she is only no longer a special constable because she did not, on the last annual special session, held for that purpose at the New Bailey, present herself to be resworn. She was not discarded or discharged; there was no complaint against her; and probably the extension of her own business was her only motive for not resuming the duties of this office.

Altogether, this is by far the most singular case of the kind which has ever reached our knowledge. The celebrated Chevalier D'Eon was not married; and James Davis (so called,) the discovery of whose sex took place only after death, had not been married for so long a period as the woman who is now under notice. There, too, the discovery was made too late to obtain from the party herself any clue to the motives which led her to so unfeminine a course of description; but here both parties to the supposed marriage are alive; and the one who assumed the male sex is still alive to give, if she choose the true history of her reasons or fancy for laying aside the garb and character of her own and assuming the appearance, and undertaking the toil, of the other sex, which would certainly be a very curious chapter of biography.