

A HEROINE OF THE ENGINE.

THE 'New York World' publishes the following from Bridgeport, Conn.:—

For some time there has been a good deal of quiet talk among railroad men in this vicinity of the singular discovery made by the officers of the Naugatuck Railway Company, that a woman, disguised in male attire, had been running an engine on their road for many months. The fact has been kept secret by the railroad officials. She is an English girl named Mattie Morgans, who came to this country about two years ago, after serving her apprenticeship as a stoker on the Great Northern Railway, between London and Edinburgh. She concealed her sex so cleverly that she readily secured a position as fireman on the Naugatuck, and was evenually promoted to the post of engineer, first on a freight and afterwards on a passenger locomotive, a post which she might have held to this day, but for her voluntary retirement about six months ago. Five years ago, Mattie Morgans, then a pretty girl of 19, fell in love with Tom Winnan, an engineer of the 'Flying Scotchman.' Tom's run was from King's Cross Station, London, to York. The 'Flying Scotchman' service includes a train from Edinburgh and one from London. The Government mail contract calls for a forfeiture of £1 for every minute the train is behind schedule time. Several evenings a week Mattie would wait at King's Cross and listen to Bow Bells and St Paul's to ring out at 7 o'clock. At that moment would come

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the 'Flying Scotchman,' Tom Winnan and the royal mail. She yearned to fly through the air with him. With Tom's earnest assistance she was duly installed as stoker under his charge, her rough fastian suit and face purposely besmeared with coal dust and oil, completely disguising Tom's sweetheart. Day by day the 'Flying Scotchman,' engine No 362, with 7-foot drivers, flew over the rails at the rate of 52 seconds to the mile, honest Tom's hand upon the throttle and his sweetheart fighting at the firebox. Never minded she the steam, the dust, the roar. Tom's cheery words and encouraging smile were ever ready, and his strong arms saved her the heavy burdens. The engine had no cab, but instead the conventional English dashboard, an almost useless thing against a storm.

Tom was very careful. He watched to see that no meddling engineer should observe that his 'stoker' was a woman. So matters went on for a year. Tom and she were to have been married, but fate had decreed otherwise. Tom Winnan was killed; he was run over in the switch yard by a shunted car, and died within an hour, his head upon his 'stokers' lap. It was then in her anguish that Mattie Morgan's grief betrayed her womanhood. She fled the country, and came to the United States. Her money was soon gone. Desperate at last, she determined to

DISGUISE HERSELF AGAIN

and apply for a place as fireman. She was not long in securing a situation upon the Connecticut railroad, and

after serving for nearly two years was appointed as engineer.

'Yes,' she said to the reporter, 'I was appointed engineer of the night freight. I had a seventy-four mile run and old Twenty seven was my engine. The very first night a forward strap of the main rod broke. I disconnected the main rod, covered the parts, wedged up and fastened the crosshead and crawled 20 miles with only one side working, losing less than one hour of my running time. Then we got stalled in an up grade and stood there until morning for relief. I never had any serious accident but I have killed two men. Although it was nothing I could avoid, these accidents had a strange effect upon me. They produced insomnia. I could not sleep. Their faces were constantly staring at me. I began to run down in health, and my last accident drove me from my trade.

'I was taken ill, and when at last I recovered I resumed my skirts. I am done with my disguise, for I am going to be married. 'He' is a stationary engineer, and has charge of the 60-horse power engine in one of the large manufactories.

Mattie Morgans is but 24 years old. She has light-coloured banded hair, large dark eyes, and is quite handsome. Her face approaches, perhaps, the masculine. Yet it lights up with pleasant smiles.
