

THE REPORTED MAN-WOMAN CASE.

The newspapers have been filled with accounts of an alleged extraordinary discovery made on the death of Charley Parkhurst, a once famous stage driver of this State. It is said that in preparing the body for burial it was discovered that the supposed man was a woman, of perfect physical formation. The statement that certain physicians examined the body and certified to the fact would have been much stronger had their names been appended. As the case stands there is in fact no verification of it before the public, and as such verification could not have been in the least difficult, the truth of the whole narrative is seriously impeached by the omission. There is, however, nothing intrinsically incredible in the story, for women have in many remarkable and well-authenticated cases played the part of men, and maintained such disguises to the end. Parkhurst was a noted whip, and of courage once proved conclusively in a fight with highwaymen. A case, however, is on record in which a woman spent the greater part of her life as a common soldier, and engaged in many battles, fighting as sturdily and bravely as any of her male comrades. It is indeed much commoner to find women capable of personating men than men capable of personating women. Of the latter the Chevalier D'Eon is the most remarkable example. During his life the most conflicting reports as to his sex were circulated, but there never was any doubt of it. He was, however, so effeminate in appearance that when he dressed in women's clothes he was always believed to be a woman, and at one period of his life he wore this disguise for several years. If the story of Parkhurst be true it will add another and a particularly consistent and well-rounded instance to the catalogue of abnormally masculine women. In such a case it is evident that the masculine character is present in the fullest sense, and that the physical marks of sex are scarcely more than abortive developments. Such a woman is very much more of a man than anything else, and in adopting male clothing and habits she only obeys the law of her nature, which is in such cases no doubt the safest guide.