

**THE THIRD SEX.**—A few years ago there was a discussion afloat regarding the epicene or third sex, but there never was such a case known as that of the Chevalier D'Eon, whose gender was a matter of doubt during his long life of eighty-two years, and the question never was settled until a medical examination was made of his body after his death. In his early life he wore male costume, and was an advocate in Paris. When he was under thirty, Louis XV sent him on a secret mission to St. Petersburg. Having no beard and an effeminate face and manner, he adopted feminine garb, and with woman's tact and cunning ingratiated himself in the favor of the Czarina Elizabeth, achieved his political object and returned to France to announce his success.

He revisited Russia soon after in masculine attire, palmed himself off on Elizabeth as the brother of her former favorite, became a subject of court scandal on account of his relations with the Empress, and once more prospered in his negotiations. He went back to his native land, served in the army and in several diplomatic missions, degenerated into a mere adventurer, and yet enjoyed a pension from the King. He lived in London for a while, and during that period heavy wagers were laid upon his sex. A lawsuit was brought before Chief Justice Mansfield to decide one of these bets, and the decision was in favor of the plaintiff, who introduced witnesses to prove that D'Eon was a woman. These all swore to the Frenchman's femininity as a fact within their personal knowledge, and their testimony could not be successfully impeached.

Years after he returned to Versailles, and Louis XVI, who had succeeded to the throne, in a freak ordered him to exchange his dragoon's uniform for petticoats. Once more he slipped over to London, and while there the French revolution broke out and he was declared exiled. He supported himself by selling his library, teaching the sword exercise and picking up a hand-to-mouth living. As he approached old age he journeyed back to France and petitioned the National Assembly, under the name of Madame D'Eon, for leave to re-enter the army, which was refused. Again he retraced his steps to England, where he died in petticoats, retaining them to the end. After his death illustrious surgeons made an examination of the body and decided that D'Eon was a man. A stranger career history hardly records.