

A GREEK JOINTED DOLL

THROUGH the generosity of Miss Alice M. Freeman, the University Museum has recently acquired a little terra cotta of extraordinary interest. This is a small female figure, nude, and with arms and legs that fit into joints in the body, to which they are attached

by means of thread. Miss Freeman bought this interesting specimen in Athens many years ago, and presented it to the Museum last winter. On the occasion when she brought it to the Museum, she told the writer that it is doubtful whether the head is part of this, or of another figurine. It was decided, however, to join the head to the body, as the fit seemed close enough to warrant the assumption that they belonged together; and, in any case, the real head, if this be not it, was almost exactly the same.

That this little statuette (it is only fifteen centimetres in height) was a toy, is clear. We can, therefore, look on it with absolute certainty as a doll, the favorite plaything of some little Athenian girl of long ago, in the days when Pericles was great in Athens. Doubtless she used to dress and undress it, to put it to bed and fondle it, just as little girls of today are accustomed to do with their larger and more elaborate dolls. One is tempted to romance about it, and deduce from it that the little girl who owned it died young, and had it, as her favorite plaything, laid to rest in the tomb with

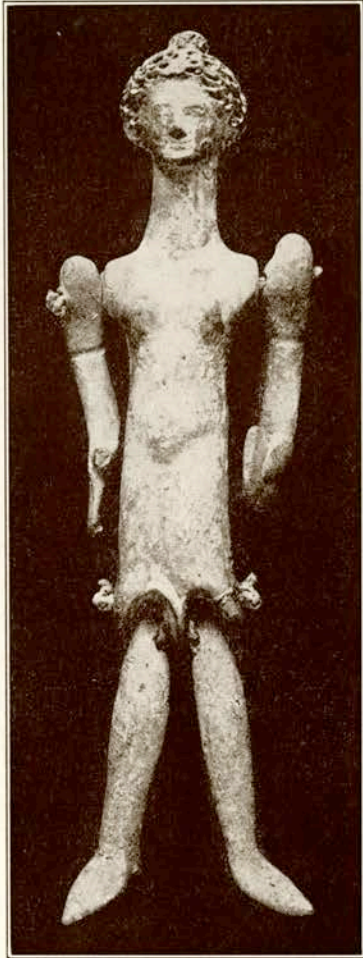


FIG. 71.—A Greek jointed doll.

her. Moreover, such romancing would probably not be far from the truth.

The existence of dolls like these has been known for a long time, and there are others in existence in museums. Still, they are not com-

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mon, and the acquisition of one by the University Museum is a great piece of good fortune. A similar one, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, will be found published in Fowler and Wheeler's excellent book, "Greek Archæology," page 297, Fig. 220. The Boston specimen is about ten centimetres taller than Miss Freeman's gift, and shows signs of having been painted, faint traces of which appear on this specimen also.

With this gift, Miss Freeman also presented to the Museum a small Attic red-figured skyphos, or two handled cup, of the "late fine" style, which was prevalent in the end of the fifth century B. C. On one side of the vase is a design of a seated youth and a maiden; on the other, an Eros, or love god, and a Maenad. The principal beauty of this little vase lies, not in its paintings, which are of the decadent period, but in the fine, delicate, egg shell clay, and its perfect preservation.

S. B. L.