RAG-DOLL-MAKING.

FIG. 1.

Since the introduction into England of the French mechanical doll, the art of doll-making has greatly developed, and the present well-headed and correctly-limbed article has become an artistic object.

How recently this transformation has been brought about was forcibly shown to us in the interesting account published last year of the Queen's favourite dolls, which have been preserved at Windsor, and are now kindly lent by her Majesty for charitable purposes. These dolls, dressed entirely by her Majesty, are all of the wooden Dutch doll make. They are small in size, have painted faces, with but little attempt at a nose and no expression to speak of; yet these were the cherished and loved possessions of the little girl whose destiny was even then foreshadowed. They were clothed in the richest of materials procurable; they represented many well-known historical characters; and it is presumable that if a doll of a better make could have been procurable it would have found a place among the collection. In 1845, if we may credit Charles Dickens's account of such matters in his *Cricket on the Hearth*, dolls were no longer all of one kind. Caleb Plum- mer, doll-maker, far improved upon Nature, and superadded striking personal differences that marked the place in society the doll was destined for. Thus, "the lady of distinction had wax limbs of perfect symmetry, while the next in grade were made of leather, the next of coarse linen stuff, and to the common people they had matches out of the tinder-box for arms and legs, and thus were established in their position without any chance of improving it." These match-made dolls are no longer to be met with, and it is evident that doll manufactory has moved with the times, and have assigned to the working doll and the housemaid and footman of society a more important position.

The little ladies and gentlemen that now figure in our shop-windows as heroes and heroines of romance, that give balls, that appear in Court costume, in fishing, riding, and highland costume, that are wedded or christened with all due solemnity, are beyond the scope of this article, and indeed are beyond the needs of real doll-life—they are too fine for us. They need to live on rose-leaves, and to be served by footmen, and to live in perpetual glass-cases; and their destiny is generally to be much admired and coveted when first possessed, to be taken out with the best frock for the drive in the park, or for display to other little girls, and then to be neglected and despised.

It is the work-a-day doll we want! The Cinderella, whose dear, smirky face conveys no reproach to our own, whose clothes are not too good for the nursery wash, and whose limbs do not fracture or their face break when, in the ardour of affection, we smother them in bed, or in the paroxysm of rage send them flying into a corner of the room. It is the dear old rag-doll of everyday need that is really the doll we love, and not the painted and perfumed beauty.

The true rag-doll is rarely sold now. There is a doll that can be bought which is made of rags, but it has a hard face and an attempt at a nose, and the old rag-doll had no such blot on her countenance; her head was, we will not say soft, but shapely, and had nothing solid or spoilable about it.

In the illustration, Fig. 1, we give a real rag-doll made by a lady, and one that any of our readers can easily copy. The body of this doll is made of pink satin; the length of the doll is fifteen inches, divided into three for the head, six for the body, and six for the legs. Length of arm four and a half inches, two and a half in circumference. Waist measure is six inches, neck three inches, breadth at shoulders three inches, but round the shoulders six inches. The face is two inches in length, with an inch beyond for hair; it is two inches broad where shown, but is five inches in circumference. The head is the most difficult part of the doll to make. It is first formed of a piece of bone covered with fine chintz, stuffed with good cotton wool, and made in the shape of an egg. The stuffing of the little ladies and gentlemen that are required (this can always be taken from the clean part of the salmon or de naude glove), and this is fitted to the head, and hair and

FIG. 2.
FAMOUS WOMEN ARTISTS OF THE WORLD.

INTRODUCTION.

Hope to write a series of pleasing and instructing papers on some famous women artists of every age and country, not with the ambitious aim of studying the fine arts in connection with the fair sex, but with the simpler and more sympathetic part-takers, both the artist and the lover of art. In this, we shall be guided by our trust in the power of truth, and by the conviction that the facts we present will do more to enlighten the blind to the beauty of art than a thousand words of precept. We shall endeavor to present the artists in their true light, as they are, and not as they are painted by the world's critics. We shall not be afraid to tell the truth, and we shall not be afraid to paint it.

1. In all essays on artistic things it is considered absolutely necessary that some dramatic criticisms of art, partly to influence the public mind, but mainly, one believes, to create among the simple minded, a profound impression of the superiority of our art to that of the Greeks. This is not to say that we are not aware of the great strength of the Greek art, but it is an impression born of the ignorance of the public.

2. As the notable women artists of whom history speaks in detail may be reckoned up by hundreds, it would be impossible, in a series of short papers, to speak worthily of even ten in every fifty. So I shall select only those who were most famous in their age and generation, bearing always in mind the fact that those whose lives were short will supply me with the best copy.

3. I hesitated at first how to handle my subject, but after reflection it seemed to me that in the first essay about the fair painters of classical antiquity, I should introduce you to all my chosen Italian heroines, ranging from the fifteenth century to the present day, beginning with Marguerite van Eyck, and ending with Madame Rommer; to come next to those of Luther's country, then to those of our own, and to conclude with our own fair disciples of the pencil, the brush, and the chisel. This we shall avoid, the irritating mental exercise of passing rapidly over persons constantly from without and within. I really need not think that I shall be so stupidly unpatriotic as to give undue prominence to foreign talent and foreign genius. No! The Union Jack shall fly in these pages every week as long as any other part-coloured standard!