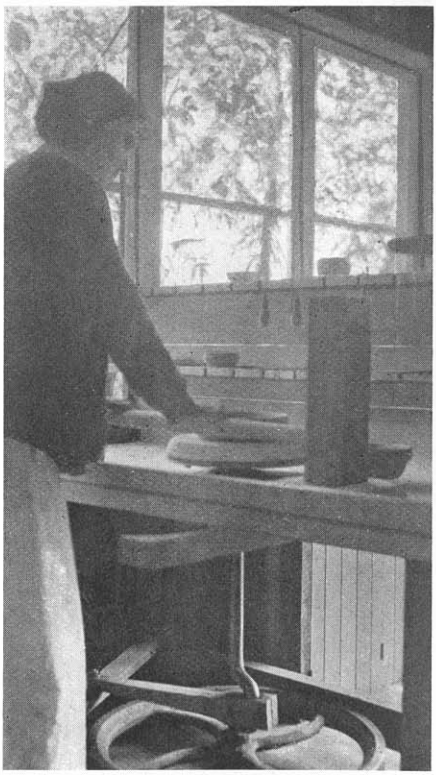
AREQUIPA POTTERY IN BLUES, GREENS AND BROWNS.

ART AS A TONIC: BY ELOISE ROORBACH

AS I walked along a road searching for something beautiful that I knew to be nestling among the hills that lay steeped in sunshine just ahead of me, my mind kept turning over a sentence upon a page of the Craftsman Calendar that hangs upon a wall of my home: "The things we make are of little importance in themselves, except as they affect our lives or the lives of those who own them or those who behold them." It was printed beneath a picture of a girl before a loom, out in a green field, weaving, while tending her sheep. The craftwork of a few girls living in the green hills I was climbing had so affected me who beheld them, that I was now going on a pilgrimage, prompted by the desire to know more about the girls, to see the place where they work, to see more of the things they make.

Passing through a large store in San Francisco a few days before, my attention had been attracted to a few vases upon a table. They delayed my steps because they were beautiful in color and markedly different from the other wares displayed. The large room was filled with cut glass, silverware, imported china and vases of every description, gorgeous in color, glittering like snow in the sunlight, but the vases that interested me were unglazed, modest of hue, reminding me of mignonette in a garden of roses, lilies, peonies, nasturtiums. These vases did not glitter, but somehow conveyed the impression of being rare and exquisite. That they had been made one at a time, by patient, dexterous fingers, was also very evident. A question or so put to the man in charge led me to take the train the next day for Fairfax, a small station in Marin Co., California. Then came the mile and a half walk into the hills.

These vases are made by girls in the first stages of tuberculosis. They provide "the way out" for these girls,—out of poverty, ill health, despair, into independence and



ONE OF THE AREQUIPA GIRLS WORKING NEAR A SUNNY WINDOW.

health. As I climbed the long flight of rough stone steps to a large building that looked as if it were made almost entirely of windows and porches, I heard girls laughing and chatting merrily. Upon a wide porch were little iron beds. Tables around which girls were gathered, reading or sewing, occupied one end. Pillows were on the broad railing, soaking in the sun, so that they would be as sweet and fresh as balsam by night. In this climate tempered by Nature for the healing of city-sickened folk, the girls live out-of-doors in the daytime and sleep out at night. There are about twenty-four girls in this home, named Arequipa, meaning the Place of Peace—all girls who had succumbed to poisonous bargain-basement aisles, badly ventilated stores, sunless back offices in cities where they had earned their living. Consumption generally attacks overworked, undernourished people condemned by lack of education or skill to live and work under vicious conditions.

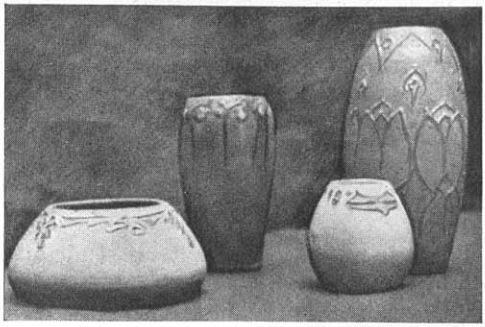
To the poor, one of the terrors of tuberculosis is that they have no means with which to endure in idleness the two or three years of helplessness the disease demands before giving final release. The making of beautiful pottery has saved a few girls from this difficulty and from the humiliation of accepting charity, for by working a few hours a day shaping and decorating vases and tiles these girls are able to support themselves in the Place of Peace. It seems unbelievable that the producing of small vases could support so large a sanatorium. Yet the girls not only pay their way but actually have a surplus! Friends do not buy misshapen jars in order to help sick girls. Strangers buy the vases because they are beautiful. So—to return to the sentence—the effect that the making of vases is having upon the minds of those who make them and those who behold them is of more importance than can possibly be estimated—it is too far-reaching to be summed up in words. For those who make them the strain of a terrible disease is lessened through the surest and finest way in the world—happy work. For creative work drives away the weakening fear of poverty and despondency over ever-increasing helplessness; it gives the workers opportunity to become acquainted with beauty that has, in the main, been denied them, and feeding starving souls and healing sick bodies, it gives hope.

Some girls who have been discharged from the sanatorium as cured dread to go back to the conditions that sickened them, so instead of returning to the city as clerks or stenographers, they live in the neighborhood and go daily to the pottery to work, to earn their living by serving beauty. This desire of the girls to live in the country has suggested to philanthropists the idea of building a large pottery separate from the sanatorium where the cured can earn a living in a healthful way, where the deaf, the dumb, crippled or in fact any handicapped person may learn to be happy,

SHOWING SOME INTERESTING FORMS OF THE AREQUIPA POTTERY.

useful and self-supporting. It is a great and kind purpose which may some day be carried out in many parts of our country. Absorption in pleasant work goes a long way toward giving the sick the peace which makes for health, especially to those who have not had enough joy to become satiated!

The fact that untrained girls, inexperienced in craftwork, can make pottery that is really good, presupposes a wise, guiding hand. Prof. Rhead, who teaches the making of pottery, comes from a long line of potters—is the fifth generation of those skilled in forming clay into beautiful things. He was born in Staffordshire, England. His knowledge of low-fire glazing has given him an honored place among potters. The delicacy and refinement of his ware, its extreme simplicity and grace of design, have ranked him among the best-known present-day workers in clay. He has made over three thousand tests and reports of American clays and declares this country to be rich in earth valuable for the potter's purpose. The clay used in Arequipa is from Placer Co., California. It is mixed by hand, run through a sieve and the water is soaked out on plaster slabs. All the work is done by hand; everything, throwing the vase, drying, baking, decorating, being done slowly, carefully, with individual interest, after the processes of the ancient Indians and Mexicans. The larger pieces are thrown by a man, but the rest of the work is done by the girls, who when they first come are not able to work more than an hour a day. But they are carefully watched, and as a rule soon grow stronger, enjoying more and more the pleasant occupation of mind and fingers.



A GROUP OF YELLOW AREQUIPA VASES.

The financial and artistic success of this whole plan is due in great part to Prof. Rhead's management. When he came to the Pacific Coast on a lecture tour he became interested in the idea promulgated by Dr. Philip King Brown, of self-support for tuberculosis patients. He declared that he could make a pottery self-supporting and has actually done so within a year's time. The girls are paid by the piece; they seldom work more than four hours a day at the utmost and rest two whole days a week.

A sanatorium where tubercular patients can earn their own treatment, pay for their own food, laundry, etc., while happily engaged in pleasant work is the result of great effort on the part of Dr. Brown. There are other sanatoriums both in America and England where patients partially support themselves. But this is the only place, as far as I could find out, where the

THE DECORATIONS OF THE AREQUIPA POTTERY ARE ESSENTIALLY SIMPLE AND SUITED TO THE FORMS USED.

whole establishment is self-supporting. This has been made possible by the commercial success of the pottery. Dr. Brown succeeded in raising funds for the building, a generous sympathizer gave the land upon which it stands. There are no invested funds, no donations. The place is entirely independent—thanks to the beauty of the pottery.

The illustrations give but an inadequate idea of the charm of this ware, for its chief beauty lies in the color and simplicity of design. A group of yellow vases—one with a conventional design, one with a long stemmed flower, another depending upon the proportion of its paneled spaces for its charm—is like a box of pastels. A group of green vases—one with a landscape motive along the rim, one with a primly graceful flower, another depending upon the wonder of its glaze is like a mossy bank. Each one is as individual in character as the hand that made it.

It was growing dark before I could persuade myself to leave the place where frail girls worked with beautiful forms and colors, where the potter's wheel whirled shapeless lumps of earth into flowerlike forms, where discouragement and disease were by wise men's care being transmuted into glowing health. The dark came quickly to the canyon road, but as I stumbled along seeking my way, my thoughts were bright, my heart was warm, for my fingers held tightly a little vase. It was a thing of much importance to me, for it had molded a girl into happiness as surely as her fingers had formed and given it color.

The plan of furnishing occupation and a means of self-support for invalids and semi-invalids might be advantageously extended to all manner of sanatoriums and institutions, and thus rob them of the deadly blankness that often characterizes them.

One serious phase of disease, physical, mental or moral, is the opportunity to brood that naturally comes to those who have no interests beyond their physical condition, or their wrongs if they are incarcerated for punishment. Nowadays most insane asylums are planned to acquire for the interior all the sunlight and air possible, and to furnish opportunity for mild forms of amusement. But this is not enough, for beyond a short period of work in the morning, the patients' work or play is not especially organized. If some light form of craftwork were provided, the benefit would be inestimable, and might in some cases even effect a cure.

The present prison reform movement may also lead to something of this nature. It is to be hoped so, for perhaps along this way lies the solution to the problem of curing moral disease at the same time that it would relieve the public of a heavy burden of taxation.

SUMMER SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

A BULLETIN has been issued by the Extension Service of the Massachusetts Agricultural College descriptive of the sixth annual Summer School of Agriculture and Country Life, July 1-29. Extended courses will be offered to benefit those who wish a general knowledge of theoretical and practical agriculture and who can conveniently use the College in summer, also giving special attention to the needs of teachers.

Courses in practical agriculture and horticulture, elementary sciences, agricultural education and economics, domestic economy and household science, organized play and recreation, and a group of courses for rural social workers will be given. William Chauncy Langdon, President of the American Pageant Association, will lecture on pageantry and will conduct round-table discussions on its practical details, and there will be demonstrations of organized play and folk dancing.

The Extension Service further announces a summer camp for boys, whose aim will be to create interest in agriculture and rural life, to make the boy a responsible member of society and to teach him clean, wholesome sports and recreation. Under military discipline and managed by experts, the camp will provide instruction in agriculture, hygiene and citizenship, arrange organized play, recreation, games and tramps in the hills and hold evening campfires.

The Conference for Rural Community Leaders follows the Summer School, July 29–August 2. Definite instruction will be given during the morning, with special and general conferences and demonstrations of organized play and folk dancing in the afternoon, and in the evening music and lectures on rural sociology, economics and education.