

Spiritual Sunshine

TO the blind of China this number is dedicated. In the following pages are to be found two articles by blind students who have achieved remarkable records in the academic world and whose experience should be an inspiration to countless others deprived by nature of the physical ability to see. Of the two Mr. Homer S. Wong is not unknown to readers of this journal. As a student in the Comparative Law School of China he has distinguished himself in scholastic accomplishments; as a writer he now boasts of the editorship of *The Great Youth*, a monthly magazine devoted to serious subjects of interest to the younger generation. It is through him that the idea was originally conceived of publishing a special issue on the problems of the Chinese blind.

As we go to press, it is gratifying to learn that a Bag Day is to be observed on Saturday in the cause of the blind. The coincidence, if not ordained by Providence, is at least most remarkable. While the two articles here presented may not exhaust the subject under study, they will serve a dual purpose admirably. On the one hand they may further arouse public interest in the magnificent work which is being done for the blind; on the other they will prove to the skeptical that education of the blind is as fruitful of good results as that for those to whom the physical world is visible. For this reason, the articles have been little edited, anxious as we are to preserve them in their natural state. It may be added parenthetically that they were handed to us on typewritten copy done by the authors themselves—a feat which seems most astounding in view of the few typographical errors encountered.

From these two articles one cannot help feeling optimistic about the future of the blind in China. Once a burden upon their families they are now able, if circumstances permit, to become self-supporting with the aid of society. Mr. Wong's own life story is highly illustrative of what may be accomplished with the generous care and assistance of single individuals. Surely many there must be who, by the most meager contributions, may render a lasting service to a fellowman to whom sight has been denied. No plea is more eloquent than the record which Mr. Wong has established. When one thinks of the hundreds of modern students who while away their time and squander their parents' money while opportunities await them at their door, and then of the ambitious blind youths who stretch out their hands for help and who, finding no response, have to content themselves with fortune-telling and other ignoble vocations, the inequity of it all is self-evident.

The expense which the public has to stand in order to keep government schools in existence is disgracefully wasted on students who have neither ambition nor talent but only a pair of eyes to crave for the material things of life and who ape the social satellite to whom such things alone do count. It were infinitely better to eliminate from government schools students who are either

habitually delinquent or innately disqualified for the pursuit of an academic career and devote the savings thus effected to the education of the deserving blind.

The education for the blind, it must be noted, is not a luxury but a necessity. With the masses in China still ignorant of the rudiments of personal hygiene, the number of youths who are born to be or become sightless is indeed alarming. Unless they are trained for definite vocations in life, they are bound to be burdens on society. It is no longer true, moreover, that blind students with adequate education are no more useful than those without it. As the two articles well point out, many venues are open to educated blind not only for self-sustenance but also for service to the country.

Not the least significant is the suggestion that the blind be educated in the theories of the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen and employed to expound them to the countryside. Therein lies a wide field in which the average blind students with an ordinary education can make themselves most apt as apostles of national unity. Removed from the world of mischief and living in a world of their own, they are better able, with the help of mental eyes, to perceive their duties and to be loyal to them than other fortunate members of society whose life is consumed, in a large measure, in seeing what is not worth seeing or who may have sight but no vision.

In yet many other ways may the blind be equipped to fight the battles of life. All they demand of society and all that society needs to undertake to provide is just a fair opportunity for them to acquire an education, a trade or a vocation. Certainly this demand is not extravagant, and assuredly it is not impossible of fulfilment. The schools for the blind are scattered throughout the country, and Shanghai may justifiably pride itself, if one may be guided by Mr. Wong's observations, upon having the best of all. Public organizations and good-hearted individuals have not hesitated to give of their resources in the past, but in these times of depression these institutions are in greater need of support than ever. More are becoming dependent upon their assistance, and more of the usual donors may no longer be in position to continue to demonstrate their spirit of generosity. The responsibility which remains unchanged irrespective of economic stringency has to be distributed over a wider circle of supporters, and every tag which may be worn on Saturday will mean a little more happiness to our unseeing but not unappreciative fellowmen.

To the unselfish workers who have labored to help the blind overcome the disabilities which nature has inflicted on them, a sympathetic response from the public will be an unending source of encouragement so much needed in the prosecution of a gigantic program with so little at their disposal. On Saturday, whether cheered with bright sunshine or rendered pensive by inclement weather, let us provide abundant spiritual sunshine for those who cannot see the beauties of sunshine.