

## A Different Kind of School

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This is the story of a school where the children were taught to sympathize with and help each other. The writer had heard a lot about Miss Beam's School. They said that she was using new methods of teaching to make the children better citizens. The writer wanted to see it all himself. So he had gone to visit Miss Beam's School. As the author entered the school, he saw a girl whose eyes were covered with a bandage. She was being led carefully between the flower-beds by a little boy.

The author, then, came to Miss Beam who told him that her teaching methods were simple. However, there was only one thing which was different. "The real aim of this school", she said, "is not so much to teach thought as thoughtfulness and kindness to others". The author looked out of the window and he was a little pained. He saw that although there were in the open field so many happy children, they were not all so healthy and active looking. He saw two more girls with their eyes bandaged. Then, there was the third with a crutch watching others at play. The author was surprised when Miss Beam told him that the girl with the crutches was not lame. Again, the girls with their eyes bandaged were having no trouble in their eyes. That was an important part of their teaching system.

To make children appreciate and understand misfortune, the school made them share in misfortune. The children are bandaged or made lame so that they understand what this misfortune really is. Then, others are told to help them so that they learn to help those who are in misfortune. So, each term every child had one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one injured day and one dumb day. This was the 'game' that every child in the school had to play.

Miss Beam led the author to a bandaged girl and left him with her for some time. The author found that the girl appreciated the help she got from others but was determined to be better helper when it would be her chance to do so. She told the writer that the blind day was the hardest. It was so because the movement became difficult. The blind always worried about getting hurt. They would dodge things that were not there. The author led the girl for a short walk. After that short walk, he found that he had already become ten times more thoughtful than before. He also realised the pleasure of describing things and people. These things had become more interesting for him by doing so.