

:-: "Red Acre Farm" --- A Rest Cure for Horses :-:

Equine Wrecks Find Comfortable Home and Medical Attention at Miss Bird's Sanitarium.



HAPPINESS—the wish most dear to every human heart has been realized at last by the tired, overworked twentieth century horse. Do not our equine brothers seek the same goal and feel the same gratitude for its attainment?

If any doubt it let them visit Red Acre Farm, a charitable home and rest-cure for horses, and see the delight that dumb animals can express. They will find a score of worn-out and disabled horses safely ensconced for the Winter in big box-stalls and ideal paddocks with servants dancing attendance upon them, giving alcohol rubs, extra blankets and bedding, specially prepared foods to tempt the most capricious equine appetite, and offering full freedom of the grounds in which to roll and roam about at will.

Imagine, if you can, a rest cure with no rules or red tape—just a picturesque spot in which horses may take solid comfort and live the days of their colthood all over again. Such a place is Red Acre Farm. It affords a shelter that many a man in workaday New York would like to enjoy, if he could step out of the race long enough, and who will say that the horse does not deserve such a haven of rest after years of faithful servitude?

Miss Harriet G. Bird, a young New England woman, has made this home possible by offering her country place for the horses and devoting her entire time to their welfare. Miss Bird is of a very practical turn of mind and well adapted to her work. Although possessing breeding and culture that would insure a brilliant social career in the most exclusive set in Back Bay, she has turned her back upon society in Boston, her former home, and lives in the country in order to give personal care to the animals whose good fortune it is to find her. A training in Red Cross surgery has doubly fitted Miss Bird for the lifework she has chosen. She often performs slight operations herself, but never consents to surgery when the horse can escape it by taking longer treatment.

Red Acre Farm is a beautiful secluded spot twenty-three miles from Boston, near the little village of Stow, and a mile or more from South Acton, Mass. Its ninety acres afford an abundance of room for paddocks, pastures, and stables. In a rambling old house with a quaint and artistic interior Miss Bird makes her home, with her mother, and looks after things in general about the farm. There is an immense stable with big box stalls that measure twelve feet and the most luxurious furnishings that horse-flesh could desire. Only a few feet from the stable is a little lodge where John Cashman (whose official title is that of foreman) sleeps with one eye open lest the horses might need attention, keeps a warm fire through the cold Winter nights, and sits up with an equine patient if occasion requires. There are secret panels in this interesting little lodge where alcohol and medicines are kept, and here a generous flask of brandy is tucked away, beyond the reach of employes and always in readiness for a sick horse. An exercising shed and a hospital comprise the remaining buildings. No horse is admitted to the stable until he has passed probation in the hospital and is found to be free from contagious disease.

The objects of the farm are as follows:

1.—To provide the best care, food, and treatment, or, as the case may require, a merciful release by death for such old, worn-out, lame, sick, or otherwise disabled horses as may be bought by the farm or by charitable persons or as may be sent to the farm by their owners.

2.—To provide board, pasturage, care, and such medical or surgical treatment as they may need, for horses owned by cabmen, expressmen, peddlers, and others who cannot afford to pay for their keeping when not at work, or who can afford to pay only a small sum. As the work of the farm enlarges it may be possible in such cases to lend horses in place of those that are resting and recuperating.

3.—To provide a comfortable home, with such pet-

ting and indulgences as they have been in the habit of receiving, for old favorites, "family" horses and others, whose owners desire to pension them here.

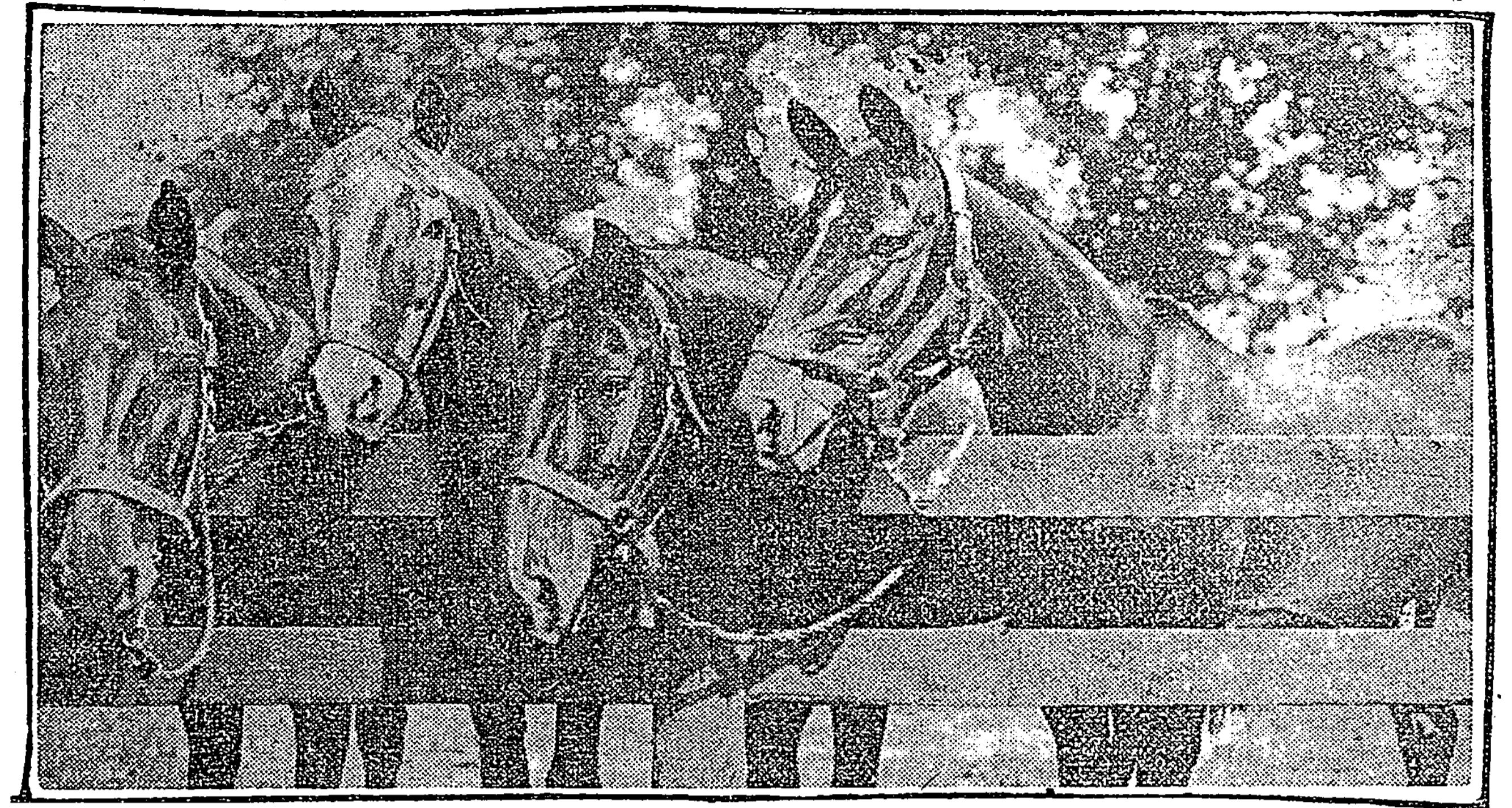
4.—To find good homes and masters for horses still fit for work, whose owners have no use for them and are unwilling to sell them. In nine cases out of ten it is far better to kill such horses than to give them away; but it is possible by taking great pains to lend them in good homes, under inspection, and thus to insure their welfare.

5.—To assist poor or ignorant owners to understand their horses and the proper care and treatment of them. (The farm acts as a friend and adviser for the neighborhood in cases of lameness, sickness, or accident among horses.)

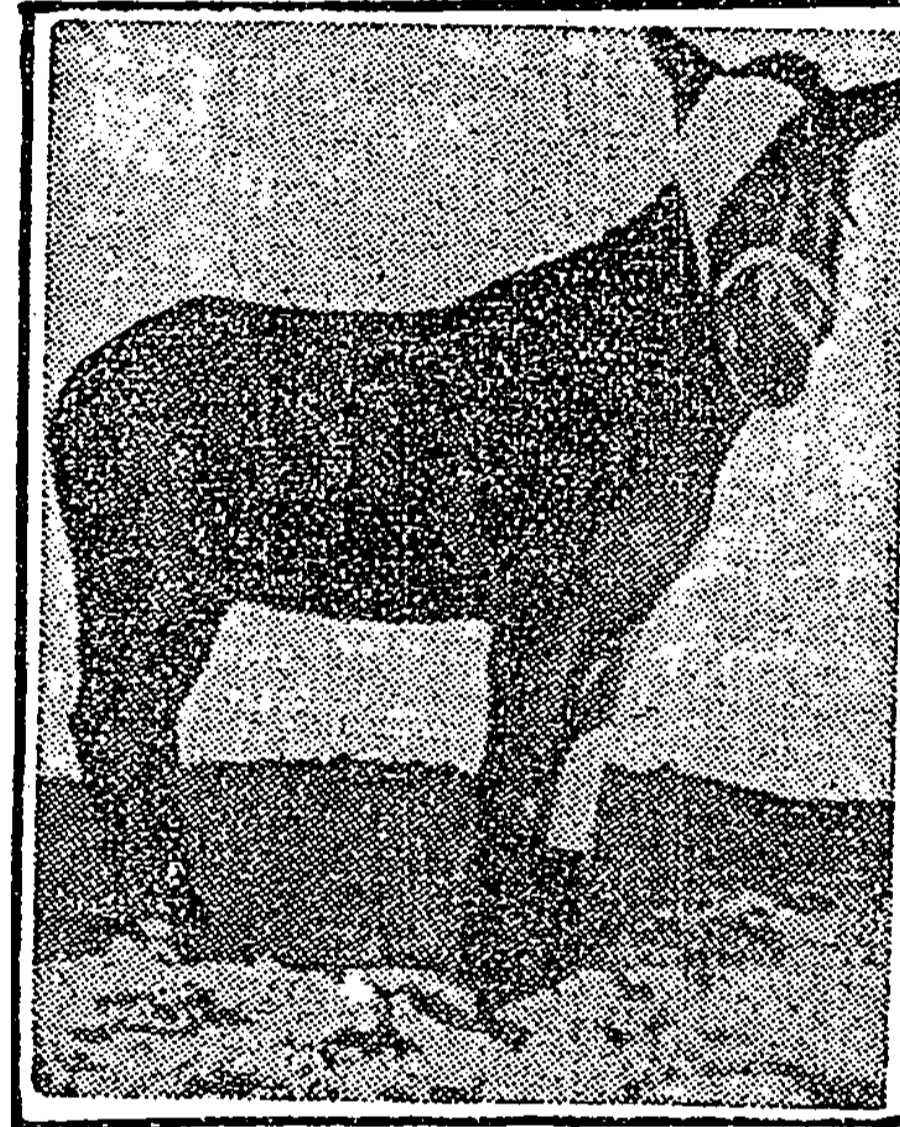
6.—By itself, and through its friends, to do everything possible to lessen the traffic in old and broken-down horses with all its attendant drugging, "doctoring," and other forms of cruelty.

No horses are ever sold or given away by Red Acre Farm; but the horses that have been restored to health are, if serviceably sound, loaned for light work in the neighborhood of the farm, where they can be kept under frequent inspection by its officers or agents.

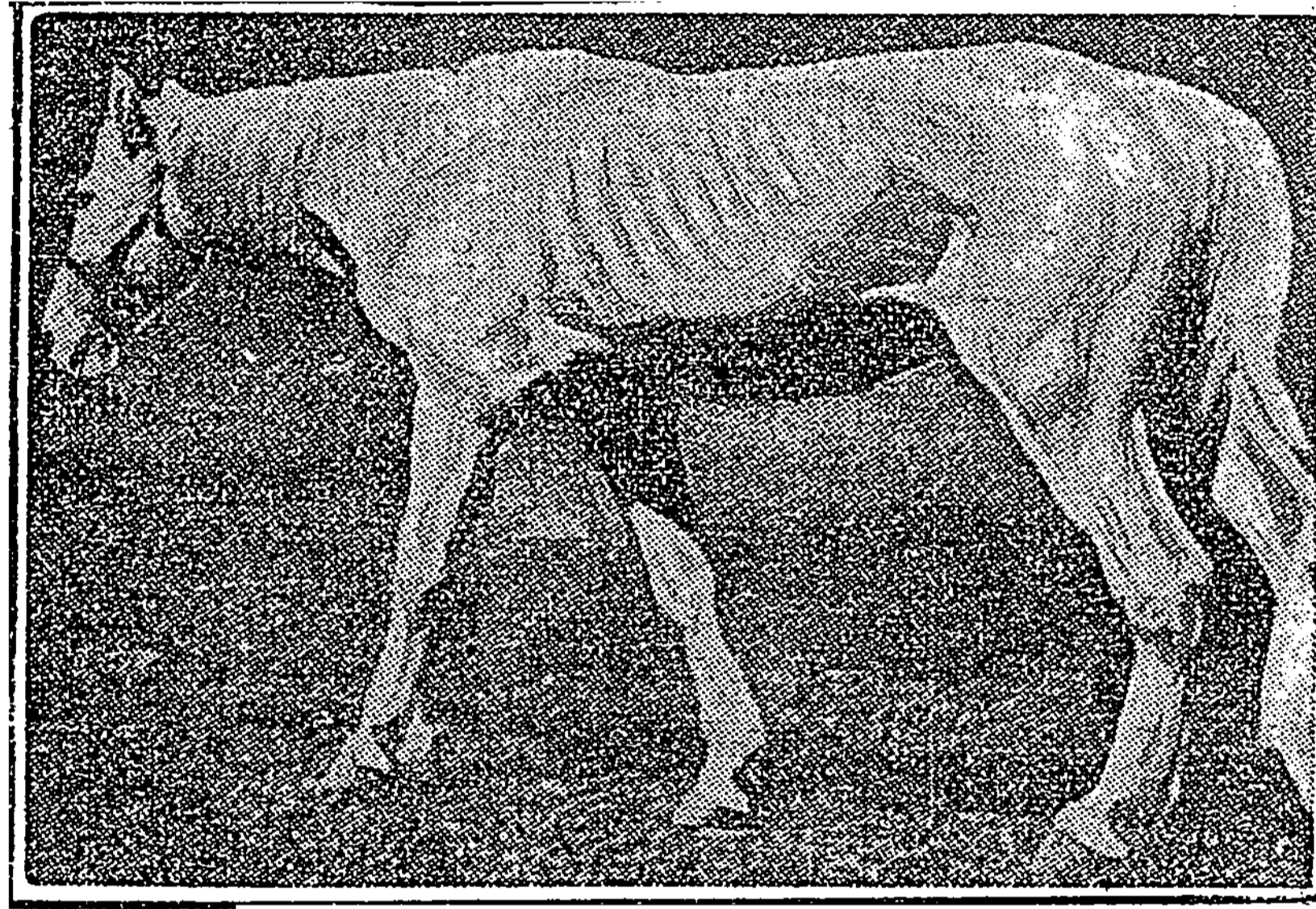
When a tired or disabled horse arrives at the farm and finds what a soft berth awaits him he lies down at once and refuses to get up for two or three days.



PENSIONERS AT RED ACRE.



"BOOHO," A TEARFUL MULE.



A NEW COMER IN BAD SHAPE.

Perhaps it is just as well that this newcomer is oblivious to his surroundings, for he little guesses how he will be received by the other horses. When he finally approaches a group of fellow-guests to make their acquaintance he is unmercifully snubbed. There would seem to be social lines and snobbishness even among horses. They dislike the stranger's bony, mud-stained, dejected appearance and promptly punctuate their opinions with a few kicks, after which they ignore him completely, forgetting that they, too, looked equally bad at the time of their debut at Red Acre Farm. For into this veritable Garden of Eden the tempter has found his way. It would not be an Eden without one. However, after being bathed, groomed, and fattened up a bit the new horse gets into the good graces of the others in time to unite with them in snubbing the next arrival.

Any horse may become a guest at the farm and remain as long as he needs any rest or treatment. Some wonderful changes are wrought in a short time by care and kindness. Major, a worn-out horse who was rescued from a hen wagon, gained fifty pounds while a guest, and is now loaned to a neighboring family for driving to and from the Post Office.

An emotional mule is one of the "chief attractions" at Red Acre Farm, although he proved to be anything but a money-getter in the business world and was finally purchased from a trader upon the payment of \$2 or \$3 and brought to the farm to learn all the comforts of home. At that time he was in a pitiful plight and bore fifty-two scars and wounds, many from abuse. The mule was named Boo-hoo because he wept "real tears" copiously in his distress—a rare occurrence in equine history. First

there were tears because he was so sorry for himself; then tears of responsive sympathy after his wounds were dressed with loving hands, and now more tears when he realizes that the love he gets is all true and not a fleeting dream—but tears, nevertheless, early and often.

Nick, an important factor of three-horse truck in the Boston Fire Department, has been retired and sent to the home. He is a rare horse who knows his own strength and respects his own judgment. History has it that he pulled the tendons from the arm of his driver on a strenuous day. He has yet to find a stall that he cannot break through whenever so inclined. Nick is good-natured with it all and perfectly willing to go and plow for the neighboring farmers, but he reserves the right to get down and roll whenever the spirit moves him. He will not brook the slightest interference, but understands his harness and never breaks a strap. He rolls as far one way as he can with safety, and then turns and rolls in the other direction, and repeats this to his heart's content. He finally gets up and returns to his plowing as though nothing had happened.

Another immense fire horse from Boston long labored under the conviction that there could not be a fire without him. After reaching the farm Jim lolled contentedly in the shaded pastures until he heard the church bells begin to ring on Sunday morning. Thinking this meant a fire and that he simply had to be there, the horse leaped fences and tore madly back to the stable, where he jumped distractedly about, trembling with eagerness to be harnessed and driven to the fire. Excitement prevailed among the attendants, but, after great difficulty, the

horse was quieted and coaxed back to the pasture. This was at the beginning of his stay. Church bells are now more or less of a "false alarm" from Jim's point of view.

Worn-out fire horses in the Boston Fire Department have always been sold at auction to the highest bidder, and thus, in most cases, have passed in a moment from the highest state of equine happiness to the lowest state of equine misery; but now, through the interest of Fire Commissioner Wells, they are sent as guests to the Red Acre Farm. Seven fire horses have so far been received there during the brief period of its existence. Five of them, after taking a luxurious rest cure, have been loaned for light work in the neighborhood, and all are doing well.

Except for such small profit as may be derived from the board paid for several pensioned horses, the farm has no resources save for the voluntary contributions of generous persons. Miss Bird's morning mail sometimes contains several donations from \$1 up, and often she received nothing for several days, but she always manages to tide over these places, as there are no salaries for officers, only three employes, who care for the horses, being paid for their services. Of course there are veterinary bills to pay and general running expenses. The estate is given by Miss Bird, free from taxes or rent, and considerable hay is raised each year which otherwise would have to be bought.

One hundred dollars yearly will endow a free stall which the donor may keep filled at all times with any horses which he may select. Several stalls have been endowed during the last year.

Plain Words



REEMAN, the historian, it was said was apt to grow irritable over matters of intellectual difference. One day he was at the Macmillans', when the conversation turned upon the subject of Ireland. Mr. Macmillan said that, for his part, he was in favor of granting autonomy.

Whereupon Freeman began to growl at the use of a Greek word.

"Why can't you speak English?" demanded he, "and say home rule, instead of speaking Greek, which you don't know?"

One of the guests flushed with anger and ventured to reprove Freeman, calling his attention to the respect due their host, and at the same time paying tribute to Mr. Macmillan's remarkable abilities. But although Freeman did not apologize in so many words, he smoothed the matter over by a humorous repetition of his criticism. Later, someone mentioned gout. "There you go again!" exclaimed Freeman. "Why can't we call it toe-woe?"