BY W. T. L. TALIAFERRO.

season of 1902 has greatly emphasized pink color. A field in full bloom is a The Western Trade Journal, Chicago says: the need for the addition to our forage beautiful sight. The blossoms exhale a Those of our readers who may have been displants of some crop more drouth resist- delightful fragrance and furnish to the stock ordered of irresponsible nurseries, and ant than timothy and clover. The most busy bees large quantities of delicious who realize that the best only is good enough available seems to be Alfalfa, that won- honey. As much as two hundred pounds in this line, will thank us for calling attention derful plant which in our dry western of honey in a season have been taken goods we have found to be identically a states has proven such a boon to the from single hives in the alfalfa regions. To this trustworthy establishment, whose goods we have found to be identically a represented. It is worthy the patronage of the states have proven such a boon to the from single hives in the alfalfa regions.

The object of this bulletin is to stimu- pods. try alfalfa experimentally and to get | kept cultivated. the necessary data as to its adapta oility The growth of wheat, corn, potatoes, grade nursery company. to Maryland conditions, this Station, in etc., is limited strictly by the amount of Mr. John W. Startt represents the above co-operation with the U.S. Department nitrogen in the soil and available for firm and will be glad to correspond or call of Agriculture, distributed seed to farm- use. If it is not in the soil it must be upon any who may need trees or nursery ers in different parts of each county in supplied artificially or there can be no stock of any kind. He has had a long exthe state. In many cases gratifying re- crop. This is not the case with alfalfa. perience of more than twenty years and can sults have already been obtained and Being a legume it has under normal render you valuable assistance in making much valuable information has been gained, which will be embodied in this bulletin. As further developments occur and more definite information is tain about 220 pounds of nitrogen, the acquired, they will be given in a later larger part of which was gotten from

Alfalfa is a native of Western Asia whence it was early taken to Southern Europe. The Spaniards carried it with them to South America. In the arid was planted. This power of converting and semi-arid regions along the western atmospheric air into plant food is deslopes of the Andes it found a congenial pendent upon certain minute forms of home and is the principal forage crop. life called bacteria, which cause and in-From Chili it was taken to California habit little nodules or tubercles on the and thence spread through the drier roots of the plants. portions of the West. Everywhere it has added immensely to the stock carrying capacity of farm and ranch. Its made to extend the use of it, and there not growing at least experimentally.

Alfalfa is also called Lucern, that beof climate is thought to be too abrupt. time would seem to be the latter part of is remarkable for its ability to resist much harm. If the planting be late, or | \* thought that this will be peculiarly val- paration, the seed do not come up and

Character of the Plant. Alfalfa belongs to the botanical order Leguminosæ, or legume family, to which belong also the clovers, peas, beans and many other plants having pea-like blossoms and podded fruit. Like other members of the family, alfalfa is tap. rooted—that is, it has a long central root which it sends down into the soil sometimes to an incredible depth where the subsoil is light and open. This strong growing tap-root is one of the important characters of alfalfa, for by means of it the plant is able to draw upon supplies of water and plant food from depths far below the reach of ordinary field crops. Where the subsoil is hard and stiff the tap root is liable to be broken up into a number of branches which do not penetrate to the depth of the single root. Above ground, alfalfa sends first a

single stalk. When this becomes old or

is cut off, new stalks start near the surface of the ground. making a crown which enlarges as the plant gets older fifty stalks from a single crown and even a hundred are not unusual with

The flowers of alfalfa are borne to-The short hay crop in Maryland this wards the top of the stalk and are of a

farmer and stockman, clothing the semi- Where alfalfa is grown for seed it is all those who arid plains with richest verdue and necessary that bees be kept in order to honest representations and who would avoid yielding a harvest more valuable than pollenate the flowers, the plant richly There is more than the mere money exall the gold and siyer ever taken from repaying the industrious insects for their pended to be considered in making choice indispensable, if unknowing, service. That alfalfa may be successfully grown As a rule the first crop of alfalfa is not tion is discovered, and unless a responsible in some parts of Maryland is a well es- very productive of seed, the second crop house such as this is selected there is no

tablished fact. That it may be grown being usually devoted to that purpose. more generally is confidently believed. The seed are borne in spirally coiled thrown away. Hence the necessity of being late an already awakening interest in Alfalfa is a perennial—that is, it lives

alfalfa and to assist and encourage the for an indefinite period. It is said that safe in dealing with these nurseries, for In the preparation of the matter pre- for fifty years, but that is under excep- have never come upon pronounced more worth. The stock is first-class in every parsented in this bulletin information has tional conditions of soil and climate. worth. The stock is first-class in every parbeen sought wherever available from Five or six years will probably be found characterized all transactions. An imme the publications of the United States the limit of profitable production in stock and extensive variety to select from study and comparison on the spot of the conditions under which alfalfa is grow- out and weeds get in. It will be found which they do business. This point is worthy ing and has been grown in this State, best before renewing the field to put it of closest attention, for a variety that is both at he Experimental Station and by for at least two years into some clean valuable in New England may be worthless private individuals in a number of councillivated crop. To get rid of alfalfa it southern latitudes may be unfit for the ties. In order to encourage farmers to should be plowed in midsummer and North. This strong point added to the many

> the atmosphere. This much hay may be taken from an acre of land for several years and at the end of that time there remain in the soil more nitrogen 3 than was in the soil when the alfalfa

Until the tubercles develop, which occasionally does not happen, legumes are as dependent as other plants on soil great value as a feeding crop becoming able nitrogen should therefore always be furnished young alfalfa to tide it is probably no State now in which it is over the critical period of its youth, when it has not the power to help itself.

Time of Seeding. ing the name by which it is known in Alfalfa may be sown either in the \* France and Italy. Various attempts spring or in the fall. If in the fall it have been made in our Atlantic States should be early enough for the young \* preserving to grow it from French and Italian seed, plants to get well established before | \* but without known success The change | cold weather. In Maryland the best | \* It is the alfalfa which has been sub- August or first of September, preferably jected for generations to the hot dry in August if there are seasonable rains. climate of Spain and Chili that seems If the soil has been properly prepared best adapted to our conditions. Recently there will be few weed seeds in it at the U.S. Department of Agriculture has this time and such weeds as start will imported from Turkestan a variety that be cut down by frost before they can do great extremes of heat and cold. It is if, owing to a dry season or faulty prenable for the States of the Northwest. | grow promptly, there is great danger I that they will not survive the winter. The young alfalfa plants are very tender and sensitive to drouth and cold. They are also yery hable to be heaved out by frost, since they have only a single straight tap root with no laterals. For spring seeding the best time in

Maryland would appear to be the last of March or first of April if the weather be favorable and the ground well drained. The objections to spring seeding are the liability to be caught by a freeze when the plants are but two or three days old, which is apt to be disastrous; the liability to have the young plants drowned out by excessive rains, and the danger of their being smothered by weeds. Young alfalfa plants are extremely sensitive to wet. If they In the Circuit Court for Kent County, stand with wet feet but a few hours they stop growing and turn yellow, and if it

[To Be Continued.]

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