

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

and The Cotton Plant.

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Written for The Progressive Farmer.]

ALFALFA AGAIN.

II.—Some Further Inquiries Answered by Mr. Parker.

Messrs. Editors:—Some further inquiries in regard to alfalfa have come to me in addition to those answered in last week's Progressive Farmer and Cotton Plant.

Alfalfa in Tide Water Regions.

Mr. A. G. Walton, of Catherine Lake, Onslow County, describes his soils and wants to know about alfalfa succeeding there? He says his land is only a few feet above tide water. I have seen the statement that on well drained land alfalfa will succeed when the land is only some five or six feet above water level. If that is true, Mr. Walton should succeed in Onslow. He writes that he has both loamy and stiff soils underlaid with clay and wishes to know which would likely suit alfalfa better. As I have previously stated, I have had experience only on clay soil. But if I had both, as Mr. Walton has, I should try some on each, and in that way determine which suited it best.

The plant is of sufficient value to warrant experimenting with it in any and all sections of the State. That is the only way we can definitely determine where it will grow successfully. In a conversation recently with Prof. Duggar, of the Alabama Experiment Station, he told the writer that there were considerable lands in Alabama on which he had not succeeded in making a satisfactory growth, but a great deal of the land in that State grew the plant finely, and that the acreage was rapidly increasing each year.

Disking Alfalfa Land.

A letter has also been received from the Cottage Grove Farm, Greensboro, N. C., describing a plat of land that was put in alfalfa last spring, and wishing advice as to further treatment of the land. This plat was sown with thirty pounds of alfalfa seed on April 2d and had 400 pounds of inoculated soil brought from New York applied some weeks later. It would have been very much better if the soil had been applied just before the seed were sown, and harrowed in with the seed. Being put on later, at a time when it was impracticable to harrow the inoculated soil into the land already seeded to alfalfa, it is but natural that a great deal of the bacteria was destroyed from exposure to the sun

which to some extent destroyed the efficacy of the inoculated soil. The owner of this farm states that he has given the plat of land a top dressing of manure that has not been exposed to the weather and wishes to know if it will now be well to work that manure in with a disc or tooth harrow.

I have had no practical experience in disking land after it has been set in alfalfa, but intend disking some three acres next week. I shall do this upon the advice of Secretary F. D. Coburn, of the Kansas Department of Agriculture. He says the practice is very beneficial, causing the alfalfa to stool and make stronger plants than where they have not been disked. This is illustrated by the picture herewith which Mr. Coburn has lent The Progressive Farmer. He advises setting the discs nearly straight and weighting the harrow so it will cut some two inches into the soil, and disc the land thoroughly both ways. He further says that some practice disking the land after each cutting of alfalfa. However, I shall compromise on one disking, early in the spring, just as the alfalfa begins to grow. If I owned Cottage Grove Farm I should pursue the same course.

The plant sent for examination had ten branches, which is evidence of vigor and good growth. The alfalfa will doubtless be very much better this year than it was last year. I shall be glad to hear further from Cottage Grove Farm as to their experience with alfalfa.

Alfalfa Does Not Overrun Land.

O. W. W., of Branchville, S. C., writes that he has a small plat in alfalfa and wants to know if there is any danger of stock scattering it from one field to another. There is no danger whatever of getting it scattered in that way. He will need to cut it as soon as bloom begins to appear, so there will be no seed in the hay to get scattered.

I am glad to see this tendency of our farmers to investigate and experiment with new crops. It shows that we are trying to get out of the old ruts, and also that we are not wedded to cotton.

Concluding Observation.

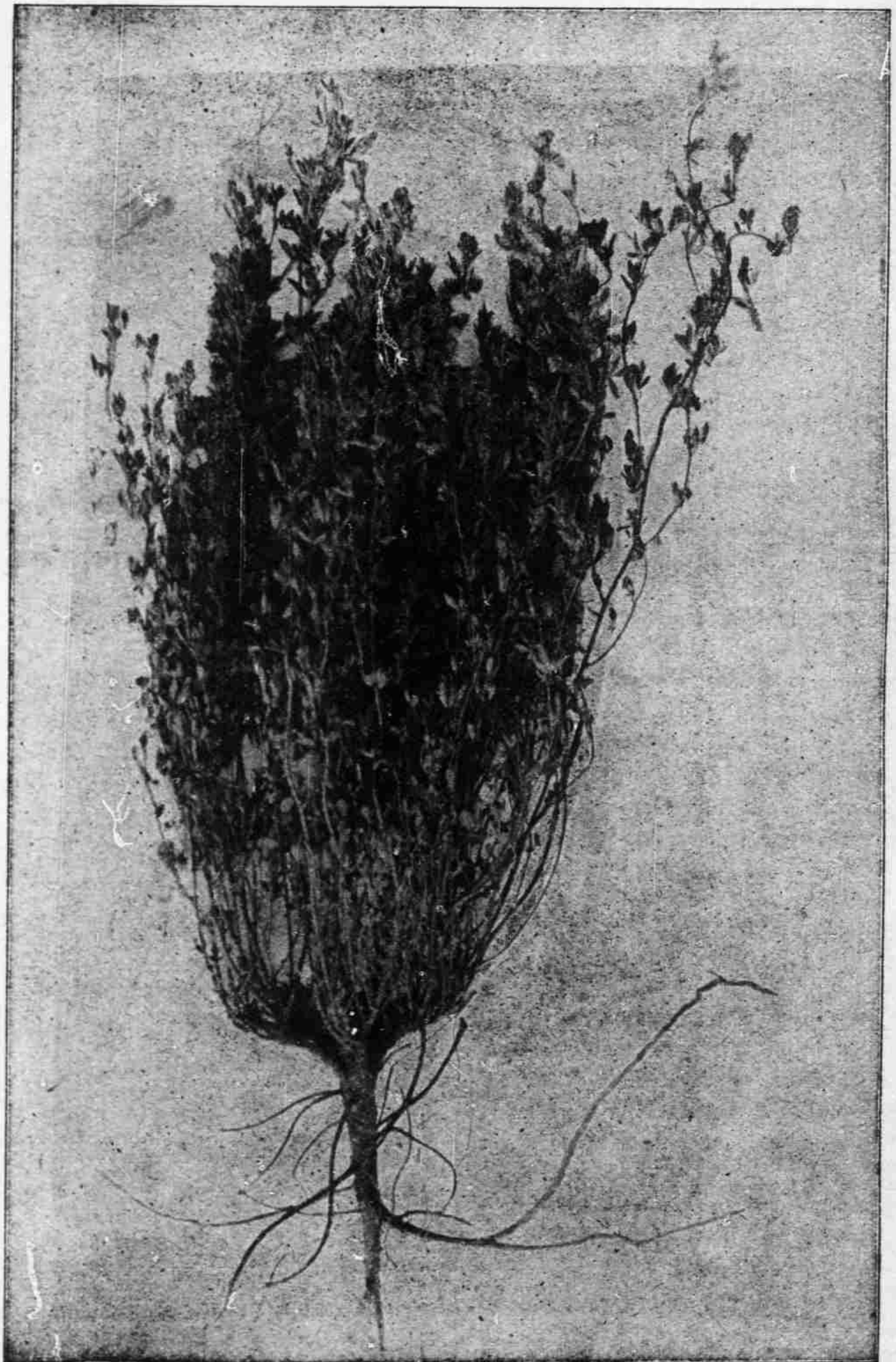
Prof. Kilgore, of our own Experiment Station, told me last week that alfalfa was a success at the Experimental Farm in Edgecombe County. At first it was feared crab grass would overrun it, but at last the alfalfa seems to have asserted its superiority over the crab grass and seems to have taken possession of the land. I also saw a letter in the Southern Planter where some gen-

tleman in Sampson County is succeeding admirably with it.

I mention these experiments in growing it from the Eastern counties because there seems to be an idea that it will be more difficult to succeed with it there than in the clay sections of the State.

It is the purpose of the writer to

Seed can be procured in any quantity, and I can procure bacteria at \$2 for enough to inoculate an acre. For the convenience of many who are wanting to try just a small plat for experimental purposes, I am arranging to get inoculating material and treat seed and send out in that way. Alfalfa seed, nitro-culture, inocu-



Alfalfa plant on upland, four years old; seventy stalks from one root. Height of plant, thirty-six inches. Shows effect of disk-harrow in splitting crown. Taken May 28. (Cut loaned by Kansas Agricultural College.)

continue his investigations in regard to alfalfa, and will assist any one interested in any way he can. I am having inquiries for small quantities of seed, and for small quantities of bacteria. Some persons have gotten the impression that I am sending out free samples of each. In this connection I wish to emphasize the fact that I do not send out any samples at all.

lated seed, inoculated soil, are all offered in the advertising columns of The Progressive Farmer.

Any one contemplating planting alfalfa this spring should lose no time in preparing their land so as to have it ready when the time to sow arrives, which will be about the time of early corn planting.

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