

Mr. Hale believes that he has, to some extent, avoided this danger by his methods of pruning. He prunes annually, shortening in the first year about two-thirds of the young growth, aiming to produce trees with low spreading tops, and with open heads, but, after they have reached the bearing age, he trims for fruit without so much regard to the symmetry of the tree. He does this work in the spring of the year, just as the fruit buds begin to swell, because at this time he can discern the live buds, and the great point is to so prune as to avoid cutting them off.

He believes in thinning peaches. He sets boys and men at work taking off the surplus, leaving no peaches nearer together than six inches; he frequently removes one-half the fruit. In this way he believes that he gets just as many baskets of peaches, and much larger samples; for instance, instead of two hundred small peaches in baskets, he gets them of such a size that from sixty to one hundred fill a basket. The trees in this way are less exhausted, it being a well-acknowledged fact that the production of seeds exhausts the tree of its strength more than the production of fruit.

In cultivating his peach orchard his method is to plough shallow in early spring, and keep the orchard cultivated until the first of August, after which he ceases this work in order to allow the wood to mature well before the cold weather.

In harvesting his peaches, he does not believe in gathering them green, before they have attained their full color and excellence of flavor. As fast as they are picked from the trees they are taken to the packing-house, and Mr. Hale attaches great importance to the proper method of doing this work. Indeed, he attributes his success largely to his honest methods of packing his fruit. He makes three classes of his fruit, and labels them with tags of three colors, red for extras, white for first-class, and blue for seconds. In the extras, peaches are rejected measuring less than $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches; in first quality, those measuring less than 2 inches; while the third quality are marketable peaches, below the latter size. The work is done by young ladies of taste, whom he pays liberally. The instructions are, that no better fruit is to be put on the top of the basket than may be found in the bottom, and this is guaranteed to all buyers.



FIG. 511.—J. H. HALE.
A typical Connecticut Yankee.

When the crop is ready for sale he visits the leading fruit merchants of the various cities of his State, especially those who cater to a fancy trade, he explains the system upon which his peaches are graded, that they are to be sold at a price