

MEN WHO HAVE SUCCEEDED—V

J. H. HALE

THE EXTRAORDINARY PERSONAL STORY OF THE MAN WHO FIRST PLANTED LARGE PEACH ORCHARDS IN CONNECTICUT AND GEORGIA, AND WHOSE WORK HAS BEEN AN IMPULSE TO PEACH-GROWING THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AS TOLD BY HIMSELF IN "THE WORLD'S WORK"

BORN and reared on a little Connecticut farm, with a love of fruits inherited from ancestors on both sides, I have among my earliest recollections the seedling peach trees along the fence row. The little Red Rare-ripe peaches that clustered on these bushy old trees every September were beautiful as



FIG. 2562. J. H. HALE.

a Crimson Rambler rose to-day. One old tree, more sturdy than the rest, and fruiting every year, strongly attracted me, especially after I had learned that it was over seventy years old. If a tree could fruit like that under such conditions, what might not be hoped for with better varieties and better culture?

My father died in early boyhood, and mother and children were kept hustling to get a living and keep up the interest on the

mortgage. A shovel, a spade, and a little old hand-cart were our only implements. The question of how to start a peach orchard had to give way to the more pressing question of how to get enough to eat from day to day. At twelve years of age I went to work by the month for a neighboring farmer, and one September day, cutting cornstalks near the beautiful valley of the Connecticut, I came across a seedling peach tree, right there in the corn field, loaded down with ripening fruit; rosy red peaches, sweet and delicious. Tired and exhausted from the heavy work of handling the cornstalks, I sat a long time under the tree, eating peaches and dreaming of the peach orchard I would have if ever I got money enough to buy the trees; and I believe the joy in the thought put such life into me that the extra work I did that afternoon more than made up for the time lost under the peach tree.

Continuing to work out by the month on farms, the fall I was fifteen found me with nearly one hundred dollars in cash. The winter following my last at school, I had been reading everything I could get on horticulture, and by spring I was ready to invest my cash in fruit trees and plants. As quick returns must be had, the start was made with strawberries and raspberries. Some cash came in the following June, and then the quarter-acre of my beginning was increased to an acre, and later to four or five acres. Keeping in view my peach dream, the first peach orchard of a few hundred