FRUIT CULTURE.—V.

THE PEACH.

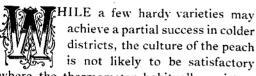WHILE a few hardy varieties may achieve a partial success in colder districts, the culture of the peach is not likely to be satisfactory where the thermometer habitually registers more than 10 degrees below zero. In Ontario the counties of Lincoln, Welland, Monck, Wentworth, Essex and Kent include the areas where peach growing is likely to be permanently profitable. A winter like the past, when, during February (1899), the thermometer in these districts several times touched a lower point than that mentioned, plainly demonstrates the truth of the statement.

PLANTING AND PRUNING.—The trees to be planted should be thrifty and straight, one year old from the bud. The process of planting has already been described. The mark, where the old stock was cut off and the bud grown from, should be at a level with or slightly below the surface of the ground. Before setting, the young tree should be carefully examined for the peach borer, which may often be found on nursery stock ; and for root galls, which are somewhat similar to those on the raspberry and apple. See Figs. 90 and 14. Trees with galls should be rejected. The head of the young trees should be started at from 2½ to 3½ ft. from the ground. If lower than this, there will be difficulty in cultivation, from the inevitable spread of the lower limbs ; and if higher, picking will be less easy, and a top-heavy tree will be the result, which will be put to a severe test in high winds and under a heavy load of fruit. There are two systems of pruning the peach, both of which have strong advocates. In the one case the previous year's growth is shortened in one-half every season, a bushy and comparatively low head being attained. In the other system the inner wood is thinned out and the head is more open, with the branches following their natural growth. Whatever system is followed, the pruning is the same the first year or two, while the head is being formed. Figs. 25 and 26 show the method of treating the tree when planting. Fig. 27 illustrates the second year's pruning, enough branches being left to form a spreading vigorous head. Occasionally a top will die back or fail to pro-