



FIG. 1993. YOUNG SPECIMEN  
MARASMIUS OREADES.  
(U.S. Dept. of Agr.)

junction of the stem and cap, is not so manifest as in some others. In old specimens the pileus is usually flat.

Fig. 1994 exhibits one of the most striking and important characteristics of this mush-

room, and that is that the gills are rather broad and wide apart, showing at the rim of the larger specimens not more than ten to twelve to the inch. I draw special attention to this characteristic, because associated with it on our college grounds is a poisonous species, *Marasmius ureus*, closely resembling it in shape and size but differing materially in the number and closeness of the gills,

having from twenty-five to thirty to an inch. They differ also in taste. The true fairy ring can be eaten raw and is quite agreeable to the taste, in fact it has been described as "sweet, nutty and appetizing," whereas the poisonous variety is rather acrid to the taste.

Another species, *Nan-coria semiorbicularis*, said to be found sometimes in company with *Marasmius oreades*, but I have not yet succeeded in obtaining it. Should any reader of the HORTICULTURIST desire specimens of *Marasmius oreades* and *Marasmius ureus* at the proper season, I shall be pleased to send them to them.

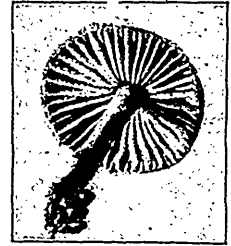


FIG. 1994. MARASMIUS  
OREADES SHOWING  
THE GILLS.  
(U.S. Dept. of Agr.)

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## FEEDING CROPS.

**F**OR hundreds of years the common practice in farming has been to feed the soil rather than the crops grown on the soil. So ancient is this practice that it has become a fixed law, and many intelligent farmers even to this day continue to enrich the soil without any considerable reference to the crops to be grown thereon. This is one of the most stubborn habits the scientific agriculturist has to contend with; still, it must be understood that the science of farming is so young that many of us well remember the rather startling propositions of Liebig and Lowes, and with what incredulity they were first received by the vast majority of even the more intelligent classes of farmers.

All this brings us back to the main point, the feeding of crops. Stated briefly, crops

should be fed (fertilized) with reference to the special needs of the crop. A soil in good general condition is not sufficient of itself, just as good farmers now know there is no good general purpose in anything on the modern farm. A soil black with humus, and in excellent tilth, may answer very well for certain crops, but these are the very crops so common on such soils, and which usually are but slightly profitable. The successful modern farmer is one who quickly learns what crops are to him most profitable, and learns also how to make his soil produce those very crops, whether they are common to his neighborhood or not.

The first thing to do in most cases is to *unlearn* all the old ideas as to manures, soil heart, etc., and to confine the idea of plant feeding to the bare fact, now unquestionably