KEY TO PRINCIPAL GENERA OF AGARICACEAE

1.—Fleshy Fungi

Stem central:	SPORE COLOUR				
	WHITE	PINK	BROWN	PURPLE	BLACK
With ring and volva	Amanita			Chitoniella	
With volva	Amanitopsis	Volvaria	Locellinia	Clarkeinda	
With definite ring:					
Gills free	Lepiota	Annularia		Psalliota	Annelaria
Gills adnexed to decurrent	Armillaria		Pholiota	Stropharia	
Ring filamentous, fugacious:					
Terrestrial, stem fleshy	Hiatula		Cortinarius		Gomphidius
Lignicolous, rather fibrous			Flammula	Hypholoma	
Stem cartilaginous				Psilocybe	
No ring or volva, stem fleshy:					
Exuding milk	Lactarius				
Stem thick, brittle	Russula				
Gills mealy	Laccaria				
Gills waxy	Hygrophorus				(Gomphidius)
Gills free	(Hiatula)	Pluteus	Pluteolus	Pilosace	
Gills sinuate	Tricholoma	Entoloma	Hebeloma	(Hypholoma)	
Gills decurrent, thin	Clitocybe	Clitopilus			
Gills decurrent, thick and branched	Cantharellus				
No ring or volva, stem cartilaginous:					
Gills free to adnate, cap fleshy	Collybia	Leptonia	Naucoria	(Psilocybe)	Panaeolus
Gills free to adnate, cap submembranaceous	Mycena	Nolanea	Galera	Psathyra	Psathyrella
Gills decurrent	Omphalia	Eccilia	Tubaria		
Stem eccentric or absent	Pleurotus	Claudopus	Crepidotus		

2.—Tough Leathery Fungi

Stem central, dried plants reviving if rewet, spores white ..... **Marasmius**
Stem lateral or absent:
Gill edge split longitudinally, spores white ..... **Schizophyllum**
Gill edge serrate, spores white ..... **Lentinus**

3.—Fragile Putrescent Fungi

Spores brown ..... **Bolbitius**
Spores purple ..... **Coprinus**

Some Notes on Agarics

GRETA B. CONE

Agarics are notoriously difficult for a botanist to deal with for a variety of reasons. The characters by which different genera are distinguished are not always clearly delimited, though practice in dealing with fungi helps one to recognise differences. The main features by which the genera are recognised are set out in the accompanying key. Broadly, agarics fall into main groups distinguished by spore colour. When fresh fungi are laid gill downwards on black or white paper, they shed a thick layer of spores, and the colour of this mass of spores can be seen plainly, although microscopically or in thin layers they are usually colourless. The tint of the gills does not correspond with this spore colour, though old specimens usually show the gills coated with spores and thus shows the spore colour.

The attachment of the gills to the stem is important though it varies within some genera, e.g., **Hygrophorus.** The presence or absence of ring and volva on the stem varies with age, so that young and fresh specimens must be examined. The texture of the stem, fleshy or cartilaginous, is often a vexed question: a truly cartilaginous stem is stringy when mashed between the fingers, but there are many gradations between truly fleshy and truly cartilaginous. However, most agaric genera are well defined. One finds in practice that the combination of characters defining a genus makes it fairly plain, though individual points may be doubtful.

Apart from technical difficulties there are other problems in knowing agarics. They fruit sporadically, mainly in autumn and winter, some seasons in abundance and other seasons poorly. A few species occur regularly in the same place year after year, but some others have been found only once in a life-time. The fruit body grows fast and reaches maturity within a few days of first showing as a button or small ball. It is attacked immediately by insects, other mould fungi and bacteria,