

**RAMIE** (Malay name), *Bahmeria nivea*;  
sometimes called in trade CHINA GRASS. A



RAMIE.

nettle-like but nonstinging East Indian shrub of the family Urticaceæ. The upright stems produced by the perennial rootstock furnish one of the most durable of vegetable fibres. It is stronger than hemp and almost equals silk in fineness and lustre. The fibre is highly valued for making cordage, nets, various fabrics, and paper which is especially esteemed for banknote making. The plant requires a hot, moist, equable climate and a rich damp soil. It is propagated by seeds, cuttings, layers, and division. When the leaves can be readily stripped off the stems are harvested and the fibres removed by machinery or, either before or after boiling in chemicals, by hand—either process being costly or otherwise unsatisfactory. The crop can be raised in the southern United States, but the cost of obtaining the fibre is against the establishment of the industry and foreign fields are relied upon to supply American needs. Rhea, *Bahmeria tenacissima*, is a very similar fibre plant. Consult: S. H. Slaught, *Promotion of Ramie Industry* (Washington, 1908); H. A. Carter, *Ramie (Rhea) China Grass: The New Textile Fibre* (New York, 1910). See BÆHMERIA; and Colored Plate of FIBRE PLANTS, accompanying article HEMP.