

*RAMIE.*

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We are having prepared especially for this publication reports on the present condition of the fibre industry, particularly with reference to the cultivation of Ramie and other valuable fibrous plants which are well known to Hawaii. The results of an exhaustive investigation conducted by Mr. L. G. Blackman into the comparative value of the fibres indigenous or suited for introduction to Hawaii, appeared in Vol II, Part I of the Occasional Papers of the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum and should be in the hands of all prospective fibre growers. It discusses the merits of over twenty plants and gives an account of their general culture and a table of the comparative strength of their fibres. The subject of the article appearing in the present number is Ramie. This wonderful fibre, after many years of neglect, is, with the advent of machinery able to cope with its peculiarities, now commencing to take a prominent place in the European markets. Hawaii offers conditions of growth second to no other country, and great possibilities await enterprising planters. It is well-known that Ramie flourishes in Hawaii, small quantities of it having already been grown. There are still patches flourishing in various districts of these Islands; but in the absence of actual demonstration of the practicability of financial success, the enterprise is to be recommended only to small companies and to men of some means who can meet the expense of establishing

small plantations and await the receipt of the proceeds of their crops. Attention is specially directed to the fact that the degumming process is conducted after the fibre has been marketed, and has not to be performed by the planter. With the proof of success established by such undertakings operating their own machinery, the establishment of central mills will open the way for the growth of Ramie as a regular crop by a number of small planters. Articles in subsequent numbers will deal with Sisal, Manila Hemp and Coir.

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