

hemp, and brown-skinned natives in their white suits. On it stands a small, pale-faced gentleman, whom we find to be Mr. Tappan, of Boston, the consular agent, and grandson of the minister who wrote the plaintive and pretty verses beginning,

"There is an hour of peaceful rest."

He takes us across the blazing sands of this holiday season to the cool arches of the collector's house. That gentlemanly official welcomes us to Progreso, the name of this new town.

Our gentlemanly collector leads us through his official rooms into the domestic apartments, and introduces us to his family. He is a Spaniard, his wife a Cuban, and his three adopted daughters are representatives of the three races, so called, that hold harmonious possession of this soil. They consist of a white young lady of Anglo-Saxon lightness of complexion, seemingly of a Northern European origin, her adopted parents being dark to her; another, slightly her junior, whose tint is of that Afric sort that Mrs. Kemble Butler deemed richer than any European, and whose opinion our former aristocracy confirmed by their conduct; and the third was a pure Indian belle, none the less beautiful in contour and complexion, a half-way house between these two extremes of human colors. We did not see the Pocahontas of the family, but the Cleopatra and Boadicea were among our agreeable entertainers. They were dressed just alike, in neat, light, brown-checked muslins, with girlish modesty of array and manner that was cultivated and charming. Our ignorance of Spanish put a barrier between us, but their bearing was sisterly and filial; and we accepted this index of the new America as a token of the superiority of Yucatan over the United States, and a proof of the fitness of the name of the town.

The host offered us the milk of the cocoa-nut in large goblets, and grapes preserved in their natural shape. One cocoa-nut makes a tumbler of limpid water sweet and agreeable. His open apartments let the cooling breezes blow through, and we rejoiced an hour in the shelter from the July heat of December, and the stimulus of a Long Branch July breeze.

Then comes a walk through Progreso. This city, like our new Western enterprises, is better laid out than settled. It has its straight, broad streets running through chaparral, its grand plaza, with scarcely a corner of it yet occupied, its corner-lots at fabulous prices. That corner opposite the custom-house they hold at two thousand dollars. Others a little outside of the centre you can buy as low as fifty dollars. That is better than you can do on the North Pacific, where on a boundless prairie they will stake out a lot twenty-five feet by a hundred, and charge you hundreds of dollars for the bit.

The market-place is a projecting thatched roof over the side of a one-story edifice. On mats sit brown old ladies with almost equally old-looking vegetables. Here are oranges, bananas, black beans, squash seeds boiled in molasses, a sort of

candy, and other esculents, to me unknown. Among them is one called *euchre*. Never having known what that too-familiar word means in the nomenclature of the States, I thought I would find out its meaning in Yucatan, so I invested a six-and-a-quarter cent bit in this game of chance. I received a piece of the root—for so I judged it to be—looking like a cross between a turnip and a carrot. It was white, of various shapes, round, square, long. My piece was about as large round as a child's wrist, and as long as its hand. I tasted it, and was satisfied with *euchre* as an article of diet.

The houses of Progreso are of one story, of mortar or thatch, covered with a high roof of thatch. This high roof is open inside, and makes them shady and cool. The sides are also often of thatch, and they look like a brown dwarf with a huge brown straw sombrero pulled over his eyes. Some of those bits of mortar have ornamental squares in the sides, where shells are carefully set in various shapes in the mortar, and which make a pleasing effect, the diamonds and other shapes giving the walls a variety that is really artistic. Why could it not be imitated in larger buildings at home? One house had the word "*Sepulcro*" in large letters chalked along its front. "What does that mean?" asks one of the party. The occupant was sick a long time, and the boys thought it was about time he had died, so they chalked that word along the door to express their conviction of his duty. He ought to be dead—dead he shall be called. A grave joke, that.

Here I first tasted the sort of chocolate of which Montezuma was so fond, and which he took so thick as almost to make it an edible. A brown, brawny woman made us a cup of the same in a bamboo-sided rush-roofed café. It was worthy Montezuma's praise: Parisian chocolate takes the second place hereafter, and a good way below the first. It is prepared in milk, and is a thick, soft liquid that melts on your tongue, and "goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak." That dame would make her fortune by such a café in New York. But, then, she probably wishes for no fortune, and her secret, the secret of all the dames of the country, may never be revealed outside the land itself. You must come to Mexico to know how "*chocolatte*" can taste.

The fields about Progreso have chiefly shrubs of the cactus order. Beautiful flowers of purple, yellow, and crimson abound. Here grows wild the heliotrope, the fragrant purple flower that is scattered so generally at funerals. The sweet-pea and other cultivated delights of the Northern hot-house and garden are blossoming abundantly.

The cocoa-palm throws out its long spines, deep green, thrust straight out from a gray trunk, that looks as if wrapped in old clothes against the cold. This gray bark is a striking off-set to the dark, rich leaves, which are the branches themselves. Where these leaves push forth from the trunk, from ten to fifty feet from the ground, a cluster of green balls, of various sizes and ages, are hanging. This green rind is