

I believe Mr. Dorsett and Mr. Shamel are writing you all about the oranges, so it will be better for me to confine my attention to other things in this letter. While as yet we have had practically no time to investigate fruits and food plants of this region, we have made a few general observations, and hope later on to go into the subject more thoroughly. In coming to a new country, I am always interested in seeing what the people eat; here we find several new dishes, one of which seems to be almost peculiar in this locality, and is, to my notion, an excellent thing. This is Vatapa, said to have come over here with the blacks from Africa. The name itself is African, according to our authorities. Vatapa has as one of its principal ingredients the oil of the dende palm, *Elaeis guineensis*. It also contains mandioca flour, at times peanuts or cashew nuts, and, I imagine, almost anything else one happens to have about the house. Vatapa seems to be analogous to Indian curry; it is a thick sauce served with fried fish, dried shrimps, beef, chicken, or Gloucester codfish, a standard article in these parts. To my taste it is as far ahead of curry as good American pie is of an English jam tart, and that is a long way, as Mr. Dorsett will testify.

Mandioca flour is a standard article of diet. In the market there are many venders with huge baskets of a paste made from mandioca flour called *cariman* (a Tupi word) which seems to be a staple with the poorer classes. Then there is a coarser meal, something on the order of corn meal, which seems to be a favorite with everyone. It is browned in a pan, with a little butter, and then becomes *farofa*, served with meats, and used to stuff turkeys in place of our sage dressing.

Someone ought to start a campaign in Florida to encourage the use of tropical fruits for sherbets and cooling drinks. They have this down to a fine art here. We have already tried five kinds of sherbets, and they are all good. They even use the avocado for this purpose; it makes a rather peculiar sherbet, of a light green color and very peculiar flavor. Milk is 43 cents a quart, so they do not go in very strong for ice cream, all the sherbets we have tried being made with sugar and water only. The mango makes an excellent one; this should certainly be used in Florida. Pitanga, *Eugenia uniflora*, is also good, and the jelly made from this fruit is excellent. The pitanga is very common as a hedge plant around Bahia, and makes a most beautiful and compact hedge. We hope to get enough seeds to enable plants to be distributed for planting a few hedges in Florida and California.