**CHOCOLATE**

 *CHOCOLATE* is probably the world’s favorite food. You can drink it hot or cold, or eat it as a snack or part of a meal. It is made into pies, cakes, cookies, candy, ice cream and even breakfast cereal. It is nourishing, energy-giving and satisfying.

 Chocolate came to us from Mexico, by way of Europe. When the Spanish explorer Cortez arrived at court of Montezuma, the Aztec Emperor, he found him drinking a cold, bitter drink called Chocolatl. It was made from seeds of the cacao tree, ground in water and mixed with spices. Montezuma gave Cortez the recipe and some cocoa and vanilla beans. Cortez took them back to Spain, where the Spanish king and queen quickly improved the drink by adding sugar and having it served hot. For about a hundred years, chocolate was exclusively a royal Spanish treat. But once the secret leaked out, the upper classes in most of the European capitals were soon sipping hot chocolate. The Dutch settlers brought chocolate to the American colonies, and in 1765 a man named Baker started a chocolate mill near Boston.

 A hundred years later a man in Switzerland found a way to make solid sweet milk chocolate, and a great candy business was born. Chocolate companies like Nestle and Hershey need a lot of cocoa beans. About one-third of the supply, over 350 thousand tons, is imported each year from the African country of Ghana. Ghana is the world’s largest supplier of cocoa beans. For many years, chocolate was made by hand. Now, machines do most of the work.

 **THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY** has been specializing in the finest chocolate products for over 50 years. Stop in and sample some of our outstanding chocolate delights.