

A CANDY CHRISTMAS

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Illustrated by Maud McLaren

manufacture of sweetmeats was taken out of the hands of druggists and established as a separate industry. In making this change, England led the world. By 1851 she had evolved confections of a complexity and lusciousness that amazed the manufacturers from France, Germany, and other European countries, who visited the International Exhibition held that year in Great Britain.

Efforts to imitate and excel the English "boiled sweets" as they were first called, gave a great impetus to the candy trade not only in France, where the making of chocolate bonbons has become an art, but also throughout Europe and America. Since then the crude form of the industry established at Boston in 1816 has grown to an enormous business that gives employment to forty thousand persons within a radius of twelve miles of the city.

In the last decade, catering to the Canadian sweet-tooth has become more and more our own industry. Especially since the war when the decrease in imports of candy and chocolate, which in the latter case has been practically cut in two, is giving greater scope to the Canadian manufacture. Toronto, with at least eighteen firms employed exclusively in the production of candy, probably has the best claim to being the sweetest city in the Dominion; and a visit to a few of its foremost factories is quite a revelation to the mere consumer.

One big concern, which confines itself to making chocolate and cocoa, objected to being classed as a candy factory. But with chocolates and candy so closely associated in the public mind, it would be harder than split-hairs to separate them. Starting on the top floor of this huge building the visitor follows the evolution of the cocoa bean from the green state in which it enters the roasting ovens to the moment when the finished chocolate bar is being wrapped and labelled, without human intervention, by a machine of uncanny dexterity. En route the chocolate edition of the "man from Cook's" has been showing you wonderful processes, and pouring into your ear a flood of information.

THERE are five or six varieties of cocoa bean, and it is from the artful blending of these that the perfect chocolate is produced. Cocoa butter, another and more valuable product of the bean, is the only fat known to science that does not turn rancid. It always remains sweet, except under extreme provocation. That is one reason why chocolate, of which it forms a large and necessary ingredient, is

one of the most popular gifts we send to our soldiers. It is also an important factor in the cost of chocolates, as only large cocoa consuming countries like Holland, Belgium and the United States, can afford to manufacture cocoa butter, and other nations are dependent on them for their supply.

Milk chocolate contains one additional ingredient, condensed milk. So there is really nothing in high grade chocolate to cause even the most confirmed dyspeptic a pang, premonitory or otherwise. When adulteration creeps in, such as the substitution of paraffine wax for the more expensive cocoa butter, then chocolate deserves to look like the black sheep of the candy family. Fortunately for the national digestion, a paternal government whose long nose is continually sniffing at the people's food stuff, has a disconcerting habit of exposing such tricks of the trade, and rendering them futile.

LEAVING the factory with a package of its "Active Service" chocolate tucked fondly under one arm, the next visit was paid to one of the homes of the chocolate de luxe. Here may be seen three hundred varieties of the chocolates that are different, but never indifferent. The building houses a complete industry from the top floor where the boxes are made and fashioned into artistic creations, down past the sugar mill, the chocolate presses, the rooms in which human hands and machinery are turning out delicious confections, to the packers who, sitting on either side of a moving table, add their contribution to the empty boxes as they pass by, until weighed and found to be an absolute pound, they receive the final wrapping. From here comes the chocolate aristocrat that sells for two dollars and a half a pound. "Huh," snorts the indignant paterfamilias. "No candy on earth is worth that much." Perhaps not, but time is money, Mr. Stern Parent, so if you want candy coated with a chocolate whose smooth, creamy deliciousness is achieved by rolling for two long weeks in a cradle-like machine known as the conge, you must pay the price.

The pleasant but penetrating odour of hot chocolate has become very familiar by the time you enter the third temple of sweetness. Although one of the oldest factories in the city it is strictly up-to-date. Magnificent boxes, sufficient in themselves to set the mouth watering, are designed and made on the premises, along with the contents whose variety and price suit all tastes and purses. From the "chewey" caramels with lasting quali-

ties that endear them to the youthful purchaser, to the lordly gold and purple box containing nine trays of bonbons fine enough for a royal princess, they cater to the sweet-tooth of everyone. Here, too, machinery does all sorts of wonderful things. It dips the hard centered chocolates, stamping on names or designs as a finishing touch; wraps the smallest of individual candies, and even turns out smart machine-made bows. "A result of the war?" asked the frivolous damsel, as she regarded this last; adding in response to the guide's bewildered expression, "I suppose we should be glad to have even that kind with nearly all our men gone to the front."

In the basement of this factory, during the summer season, the employees spend busy days putting down strawberries, raspberries, cherries, etc., to be used in making the real fruit centres that are this firm's speciality. These fruits are very useful, too, during the "close season" for nut centres. Perhaps you didn't know there was one; but as a matter of fact hot weather and nuts form a combination on which no candy manufacturer cares to risk his reputation.

So as you go from factory to factory, in each one you find some novel effort to catch the fancy of a candy-eating public. The fork dipped choco-

"London bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down,
London bridge is falling down,
My fine lady."

WHICH would you rather have, a barrel of gold or a barrel of candy? was the favourite question that followed the announcement of this catastrophe. And twice out of every three times the "fair lady" who wore very short skirts and her hair in pig-tails, chose the barrel of candy. That is one reason why to-day the candy industry is among the most prosperous in the world, next to the manufacture of war supplies. The latter, we hope, will not continue to hold the centre of the stage; but the popularity of candy is unlikely to suffer a relapse. Like the much-advertised patent medicine, "everyone uses it." It sweetens social intercourse, smooths the path of the love-lorn young man, delights the small child, and provides a "ready-made" gift suitable for almost every occasion.

As no fond mother was present to chronicle the event, we do not know exactly when humanity cuts its first sweet-tooth. Classical writers such as Herodotus, Seneca, and their contemporaries, refer to sugar, which they describe poetically as "honey made by human hands." We have, also, historical authority for believing that the sugar industry, the first step on the road to candy, originated in Bengal. At any rate, the secret of transforming the cane into sugar crystals was brought from India to China, where as far back as 780 B.C. the little boys and girls could sweeten their rice in the approved manner of to-day.

It may be news to many that the earliest historical reference to the use of sweets dates back to the days when Greek and Roman physicians devised the pleasing plan of giving their bitter medicines in a cup with a honey-smeared rim. Subsequently, when the candy industry became the druggist's perquisite, this crude method of concealing the true inwardness of prescriptions gave way to our familiar friend the sugar-coated pill.

Nothing more alluring than lozenges of fine sugar mixed with dissolved gum, variously flavoured, coloured, and cut into different shapes, was offered to an epicurean public until, at the beginning of the 19th century, the

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