The Ontario Society for Crippled Children, aided by 150 service clubs, sees that every crippled child in Ontario in need of attention gets it. Here a patient chats with his sponsor, Robert Thompson and Lindsay Scott, chairman of the crippled children's committee of the Hamilton Shriners. The Society's Easter Seals appeal for funds continues until April 9. Donations may be sent to Timmy, Toronto.

When They Opened The Erie Canal

Finally, the Erie Canal . . . astonished the world, for it was an undertaking of such magnitude that the like of it had hitherto been accomplished only by the greatest empires of the Old World and by means of the labor of slaves.

It is but natural, therefore, that the unique spectacle of the celebration of the opening of the great waterway, upon a stage stretching from Buffalo to New York, before an audience composed of a large part of the population of the state, should appeal to English artists in search of American views, and that their sketches should be used to decorate the pottery of Staffordshire. It is with pride, mingled with wonder and no little amusement, that one reviews the story of the opening celebration, as it is recorded in the old china illustrations.

The celebration began at Buffalo, the junction of the canal and Lake Erie, continued at each little hamlet and city along the banks, culminating at last in a blaze of glory and patriotism as the waters from the Great Lakes were mingled with the Atlantic in New York harbor. No resplendent Doge of Venice, standing upon the prow of his gayly bedecked Bucentaur and casting the jewelled ring into the waters of the Adriatic, thereby symbolizing the marriage of Venice to the sea, was ever more proud than was Governor Clinton as, standing upon a primitive canal boat draped with the Stars and Stripes, he poured a barrel of Lake Erie water into the Atlantic Ocean thereby accomplishing the union of our West and East.

The first illustration presents a view of the harbor entrance of the canal at Buffalo, with sail boats in the bay, low warehouses on the dock, and a packet boat upon the canal, which sailors are tying to the wharf . . . With something akin to awe, one listens to the sound of that reverberating cannon shot, which fired at Buffalo and repeated in succession by cannon stationed along the entire length of the canal, proclaims in one hour and 20 minutes to the people of New York City that the little fleet is under way. Four gaily bedecked horses then proudly prance along the tow-path drawing the canal boat, Seneca Chief, which bears Governor Clinton and his associates followed by the canal boats Superior, Commodore Perry and Buffalo. At the end of the procession is Noah's Ark, from the "unbuilt City of Ararat," having on board a bear, two eagles, two fawns, birds and fish, besides two Indian boys in native costume—all taken along to gratify the curiosity of the effete New Yorkers in regard to the wild West.

One smiles at the allegorical picture, painted in honor of the occasion, which hangs in the cabin of the Seneca Chief, for in it may be seen Hercules resting upon his favorite club after his labor of finishing the canal, Governor Clinton in a Roman toga standing by his side, gazing upon the placid water and inviting Neptune and his Naiads, who coyly hang back as if hesitating to approach domains not theirs by right, to enter through the open lock. Upon the deck stand two brightly painted kegs marked "Lake Erie"—the water from the lake which is to be used in the celebration in New York.

—From "The Blue China Book," by Ada Walker Camehl.

Cigarette Lighters—A Milestone In History of Conquest of Darkness

Most people don't realize what a wonderful thing the modern cigarette lighter is. It is almost a magical trick, when you come to think of it. You whip out a little metal gadget, press the top, and a flame appears for your cigarette. This familiar, everyday gadget, which we casually use and take for granted, represents an interesting milestone in the long history of the conquest of darkness by Man.

Strangely enough, the most primitive methods of illumination were still in use 150 years ago, and the tremendous acceleration in the discoveries which led to the modern forms of gas and electric lighting corresponded with the Industrial Revolution. Even the Eddystone Lighthouse was maintained by candles at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Oil lamps of various kinds appear to have been used, roughly, from the year 2,500 B.C.; lamps of hollow stone or sea-shells have been found in many parts of the world. The Greeks and Romans knew almost as much about lighting as was known in the eighteenth century.

We know how primitive Man produced fire by rubbing flints and sticks together. An ancient Persian legend describes its discovery. "A great hero named Hushenk hurled a mighty stone at a snake. The snake escaped, but the stone struck a rock. Light shone through the dark pebble, the heart of the rock flashed out in the quarry, and fire was seen for the first time in the world."

Inventive processes in the mind of early Man are difficult to trace, but it is easy to imagine a cave-dweller watching a twig or fibre burning in fat dropped from a roasting carcass and proceeding from that observation to build a primitive lamp. The production of fire by striking a flint in such things as the tinder-box and flintlock rifle came very much later.

Various kinds of oil lamps have been used in the intervening years, but the first recorded use of illumination by gas dates back to 1765, when a man named Spedding, who loved near Lord Lonsdale's coal-mines at Whitehaven, piped coal gas to his offices, where he used it for illumination. He tried to obtain permission to build gas reservoirs to light the streets of his village, but this was refused by the local magistrate.

Early experiments in gas illumination were extremely primitive, of course; the burners themselves were simply iron tubes with holes pierced in them, and the slightest obstructioin or rust resulted in a dim, over-cooled flame. The discovery fell into hands of a financial "tycoon," as we should now call him, named Winsor.

He was not particularly scrupulous about the claims he made for his discovery. When a newspaper man asked him whether it would be dangerous to take a lighted candle into a room full of coal gas, he replied that the gas would not ignite because "it is intermixed with the air of the room."

Asked whether it was harmful to the lungs, he replied, "Not in the least! On the contrary, it is more congenial to our lungs than vital air (oxygen), which proves too strong a medicine, because it only exists from one-fifth to one-fourth in the atmosphere, whereas inflammable air exists above two-thirds in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, in all our drink and victuals. It forms a part of ourselves."

Despite these shady beginnings, the Pall Mall was illuminated by gas five years later, and, by 1811, several large cotton mills were lit by this method.

A year earlier, Sir Humphrey Davy demonstrated the electric arc between two carbons to the Royal Institution in London. Electric lighting developed at a slower pace than gas. New kinds of improved gas-burners were introduced, and in 1885—after an interval of over a hundred years—Carl Van Welsbach invented the incandescent gas mantle.

It was he, too, who discovered that cerium and iron fused together resulted in a hard substance which emitted a brilliant spark on being struck with a wheel. He thus produced the first "flint" But it is important to remember that this substance bears no relaion to the genuine flints, the geological deposits used in the tinder-box and flint-lock rifle.

It was not until the First World War that the flint was incorporated in a primitive form of cigarette lighter consisting of braided tow enclosed in a small metal cylinder (sometimes a cartridge-case). This was surmounted by a fine-toothed wheel and flint.

Friction between the two produced a spark, and this ignited the tow, which when blown upon, created a red glow sufficient to light a cigarette.

From this developed the modern cigarette lighter, though some years passed before the cigarette lighters were perfectly satisfactory and could be accepted as a respectable mechanical gadget.

Easy Money

An American had an invitation to a private shoot. Addressing the old gamekeeper, he said: "I'm one of the crack shots in the States. Tomorrow you will be loading for me, and for every bird I miss I'll give you a shilling."

The following evening the gamekeeper met a friend and told him the story.

"If I'd had another blank cartridge," he said, "I'd have made just a pound."

Midget Mummy Up For Exams—Ivan P. Goodman, holds the 14-inch figure which he believes to be the mummy of a miniature prehistoric man. The "mummy" was found by a group of workers in 1934 in a formation of solid granite inside a sealed cave. Goodman bought the figure from a man who believed it brought bad luck. Scientists are studying the piece to determine if it really was the body of a man.

He's Laughing Out Loud (At the Drop of a Buck)

Dick Collier, who is probably the world's only professional laugher, started in business with a guffaw and worked his way down to a titter.

And today, at the drop of a buck, he's ready to titter, giggle, snicker, guffaw, shriek, howl, snort, chuckle, gurgle and otherwise convulse himself for all comers. He'll laugh any place, any time, anywhere, if the pay is right.

Collier's vocal talents alone are sufficient, since he has a truly infectious laugh and has proved same through appearances on the radio and on records. But when you throw in his physical appearance (which is a big job, because he's well over 200 pounds) you've really got something.

Dick Collier looks like a laugh. In fact, he looks like a walking belly-laugh, with a built-in chortle. As such, he's an up-and-coming television performer and has his laughing eyes focused avidly on the fertile fields of Hollywood.

* * *

He laughs for a living for two reasons. First, he's a down-to-earth, commercially-minded guy and, as he says. "Take a look at my puss. Doesn't it make you laugh? Sure, it does. So why shouldn't I cash in on it?"

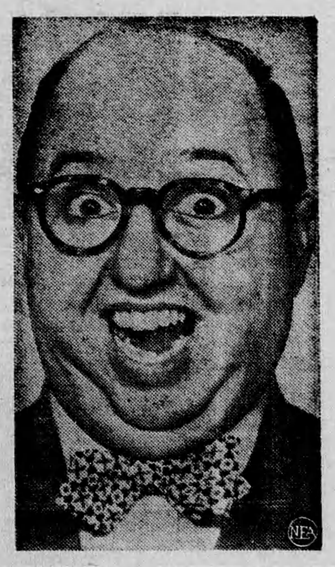
Secondly, he's a happy character. He traces his happiness to the war, when he was badly hurt. For a time, there was some question of his coming out of it all right. But he did.

"I found out that just being alive," he says, "is the most wonderful thing. So now I get a kick out of a rainy day."

During the war, he'd been a one-man show for Army special services. He spent 17 months in Persia, giving shows at remote camps. He'd play the piano, sing songs, tell jokes and look funny. The GI's liked him.

* * *

When he was discharged, he decided to give show business a whirl, despite the fact that he had spent five years at Boston College, studying psychology. He built his act around his laugh, a piercing shriek that had been a big hit with the boys in service.



Dick Collier—He laughed the best paid laugh ever laughed.

He studied laughter, and developed a routine that encompasses (he says) more than 200 different kinds ranging from the timid laugh (used "when the little woman issues her orders for the day") to the shaking laugh ("peculiar to pleasingly plump people").

A Broadway producer hired him to sit in the audience of a new musical comedy and laugh in the right places. His laughter made others laugh, and the play became a hit. Then comedians took up the idea, and Collier made a nice living laughing in radio studios, night clubs and theaters.

But his code of ethics makes him refuse to laugh unless something is funny.

On one television program, Collier got paid $100 for laughing for five seconds. He says that's the best-paid laugh ever laughed. That one helped him develop what he calls his crowning achievement—the last laugh.

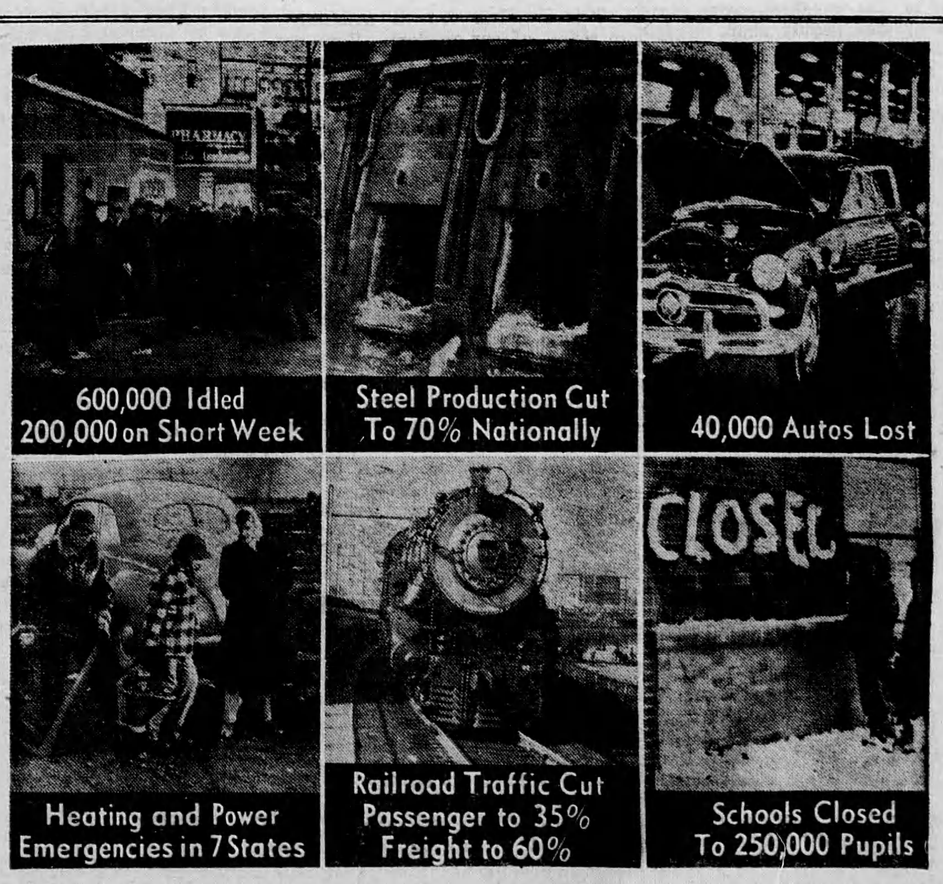
Machine Solves Chess Problems

Chess players will either be delighted or furious—it all depends on how they feel about the game—by the invention of Mr. T. Nemes, Chief Engineer of the Hungarian Posts Research Station. It's a chess-problem-solving machine, an ingenious, fearsome looking contrivance of thermionic valves, photo-electric cells and cathode-ray tubes amid a mass of wires, lights, dynamos and other intricate gadgets.

All the player has to do is to feed his problem into the machine, which works at lightning speed through all the possible combinations of three legal moves—one by Black and two by White. After a brief space, out comes the solution. If there is no solution the machine tells the player so!

Mr. Nemes is not content with producing a problem-solving machine. He is now at work on another more intricate affair which will play a game of chess and which, he says, "may surpass the schemes of thought of the great masters." What a jolly evening the chess player can have by letting the machine play—and win—his games for him while he gets on with something more urgent!

An indolent Vicar of Bray,
His roses allowed to decay.
His wife, more alert,
Bought a powerful squirt
And said to her spouse, "Let us spray."



Cost Of The Coal Strike—Here is what the month-long general strike by 372,000 United Mine Workers and the resulting coal shortage cost in industrial lay-offs and other hardships. The Newschart gives highlights of a nationwide survey on effects of the strike.

BOUFORD

By MELLORS