



elmmurmurings

n  
u  
m  
b  
e  
r

three

Published in  
August, 1944  
at the  
Sign of the Moth-Eaten Fifty

Elmurmurings No. 3, being an amateur journal of comment published by Elmer Perdue, 1218 South Cedar Street, Casper, Wyo., and distributed through FAPA.

Look fellas, I know it's the custom to comment on everything in the mailing, regardless of whether each item justifies it. This time we have objections voiced by several, saying that it does nothing but make 30 percent meat, 70 percent comments. And, say they, this wastes lots and lots of goo. Which it does.

And yet, this would cut out those magnificent open conversations on dreams and war and the superman and math and drinking—conversations that are not mere compliment like swell work old man, but that are fun to listen to, enlarge on what has been said, are as carefully presented as a debate. Throw them out?

# NEVER!

So I shall, with your permission, just take the lads who gave me most furiously to think, and neglect the rest. Apologies to you who are omitted—either I agreed with you, making a written seconding superfluous; or you were out of reach, and I couldn't dig you, Jackson; or perhaps my what-the-hell attitude was uppermost whilst reading, and I gave you an undeserved mental blow-off. To all you unmentioned others, then, love, best wishes, I like your 'zine and hope to give a lengthy rebuttal nexttime. Another reason for no comment. Take DeeBee in PHANNY. Jeez. The gentleman writes so well, so clearly presents his facts and opinions, that I am scared off but good. Lordy, I should blither vaguely and stupidly in reply to Mr. Thompson? If I should, it would be insulting to the time that he spent in making his arguments so concise. Kindly consider this as a quadruplicatedly exclamation-pointed commendation, and an inadequate expression of a somehow wistful envy....

Before I forget: please, when commenting, won't you mention the basic idea? 'Twould save no end of time now spent in referring to the quondam mailing.

Love to everybody.

*Elmer.*

## Elmurmurs.....



Softly as in a morning sunrise in the pink little rosebud ears of the sodality, saying life was easy life was fine; but anticipate warring confusions in this the notes and comments department, for he has just read two hundred pages of commentary on surrealism. Fifty of those pages were in French; like a dope he read on at normal speed; although the framework was clear, the keywords weren't: a hundred or so semantic blanks shooting through his head each minute. Lordy, what an experience. And on surrealism yet; an art form fun to watch, fun to read, but whose chief function seems to be that of providing the background for the books written explaining it. And to think li'l Elmer paints the stuff! I weep. But inspiration has come and the jive is mellow; sorry people but there'll be a page of surreal verse later that you may skip.



To Mr. Speer, with a quotable quote particularly applicable to Mr. Chauvenet:

"Poems always have great white margins, great margins of silence where eager memory consumes itself in order to re-create an ecstasy without a past."  
—Paul Eluard.



This quarter's medal, quartered rockets on a field quills rampant, goes to Mr. Wollheim for most enjoyed item in the mailing.



Idle thought: at last count, Degler's rapid-clicking pedometer had turned over thirteen thousand miles, more or less. Which, claims he, makes him most travelled im. Methinks that five or more could better that. . . . Juffus, Milt, and I with eleven thousand each that I know of. Consider Charles Derwin Hornig. When the epidemic fever of parapogotropism started, Charlie was among those afflicted. Memory has it as five round-trips between N. Y. and L. A. There's three times superfan's self-awarded record on just those five trips.

## Elmurmurs on.....



To Harry and Doc (who agree that music makes no pictures) saying you're quite right if pictures in the program-note sense of the word are meant. If pictures are seen it's either intoxication (alcoholic or narcotic) or wish-fulfillment on the observer's part. The wish-fulfillment I've seen, and be warned the headache from creating is a                    on wheels. No knowledge of the other type: I've never been drunk long enough at a stretch to get the d. t.'s. Perhaps some one of you gentlemen can describe? Milty, music runs through your head continuously—were any of those pictures set to music, when the doctor's codein was killing pain?



And now if I might whisper in Mr. Evans' ear, with regards to the alcohol question, a mighty shout of concurrence with Mr. Laney's views on the matter; and more, to abet the latter with this: There is adequate authority for the use of alcohol and other physical escape mechanisms. The law recognized the right of a physician so to prescribe, during the prohibition era. My doctor has me riding the ben—two ten-grain benzedrine sulphate tablets daily until psychiatric treatment can be begun. Benzedrine is an artificial crutch, the medic's usual substitute for alcohol; curing nothing, but giving a mental lift over despondent periods. A quote, Mr. Evans? The Doctor said as he wrote: "This will be hard on the heart. Death would be harder on it." Conclusion to be drawn: do not use alcohol as an escape; but when using the lush, do it with the object of jarring the mind out of a spiral approaching zero as a limit.



But don't get stinking drunk. Use the lush as an anodyne for temporary hurts; as an anaesthetic until the big, big hurts have faded to bearable size. Use it as an aid to conviviality; drink has only one equal as an aloofness-breaker and abettor of fluent conversation. Use it to moisten a throat dry from too many cigarettes.

One doesn't have to go into insensibility for King Alcohol to rest his soothing baby hands on the forehead, easing the worried mind. . .

And that is Elmer's alcohol philosophy condensed to two paragraphs.

## *Poetry Department*

When apple-trees, like naked girls,  
Dance through my heart and soul;  
And water swirls in foamy curls  
My rapture-song beyond control  
—My barcarolle!  
Whose notes unroll the singing scroll of love.

When crunchy ice, like popcorn balls,  
Covers the country-side:  
When winter squalls with moaning calls,  
Allure my soul to run and slide  
With giant stride—  
Then you deride and gently chide, my love.

Although the months, like monkeys' tears,  
Stealthily come and go;  
I still admire your passion-fire  
Whose buried sweetness I well know,  
Dear cameo!  
Seraglio in embryo: my love.



# Question Department

This lengthy ramble, asking a question whose answer I really would like to know, has its genesis in an item edited out of this issue of *Elmurmurings*—the department of amazing resemblances, which plotted Cobb's FAITH, HOPE, & CHARITY beside Bester's VOYAGE TO NOWHERE. (The thing was blue-pencilled, by the way, because I later found Bester's account in *Story* behind the story, saying the plot was taken from that story by Cobb.)

What I want to know is: where does coincidence stop and plagiarism begin? Can one author pirate the creatures of another without recourse on the part of the piratee, as when someone killed Taurasi's characters Bob and Koso? And in law, is plagiarism a crime per se, or is copyright violation the only crime that it recognizes? Lordy, such a lot of questions! And now, the matter of the auctorial rights to a plot. Just because I write, publish, and copyright a love story, in which girl chooses between rich old goat and handsome young jitterbug—the copyright naturally can't give me the right to exclusive use of that stock situation. But a thought-variant, with detailed plotting. Are both word-use and plot defended in law?

But then the thought-variant is such just when first used. Draw a comparison between Corbett's BEYOND INFINITY and Cross's THE DEVOURING TIDE. (One may note here in parentheses that both seem to be pseudonyms of the same author.) The first saw print in 1936; the second in 1944. I would guess that only the actual copying of words is taboo; that a decimal classification identical to ten places calls for nothing but raised eyebrows.

Now consider another question for me, please. I believe that a copyright violation is a civil matter—not a criminal. It would appear from that that an author could plagiarize himself ad infinitum—unless the power to sue is vested in the publisher instead of the writer.

Formula plots sicken. An idea should be permitted to die when its welcome is dead. Two who are ready for the shroud: a Cummings battle of the virgins; a Palmer alliterative name for a slapstick protagonist.

And I wonder whether the author retains any proprietary rights in his creation after publication thereof. Does a sale to a magazine transfer title, or is sale to be considered as the granting of a license good for one printing only? (One wonders, by the way, how many knew that Mr. Wollheim's THE HATERS was reprinted by the publishers....)

# Rotogravure Section



I'd like you to meet the piano trio.

That's li'l Elmer in the foreground. Center is Vernell Glenn of Chicago and Denver, best known as Mac. Played at Elmer's Lounge in Chi; the Embassy, the Five Points and (with his own band) the Chez Paris in Denver; Fanny Bell's and the Southern Mansions here. Piano-player, dancer, singer, and entertainer. Now in Omaha. At far right is Servaudo Cervantes de Ayala, known as Bud. Fine piano player; left hand rhythms that evolve, cross, intertwine. Eight years on the road as professional dancer. Loveliest speaking voice I've ever heard in a man.

We're at Bud's Kurtzman studio grand in this picture; but when we jived together we ordinarily worked two pianos, once or twice three—gad and what bashes those were! Each style was so darn different that the kicks just never quit. And I was by far the weakest in the trio.

For your picture collection, Mr. Speer.



Breathless

with stupid wings

*glittering as they* FALL

Stars break proudly

7

14

if at all

21

28

SHAKING THE DUST OF EVENING

IN CHROMIUM AND

GOLD!

thus then

thus now

thus.....ever?

???

NOT!

**W**HO  
HAT  
HERE  
HEN  
HY

THE

HERRING SWAM

DEAD DRUNK

*Stars swallow swifts*

do it in trumps

why not??