

Sappho

number five



Edl Watson

S A P P H O

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S A P P H O is published when the editors get damn good & read-
 for members of fapa and any others interested, who numberb too
 blessed few. All queries and contributions should be sent too
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VOLUME I - - - - - NUMBER 5

... AND LITTLE FISHES

Zounds! Were we to pattern this editorial along the prevailing mood of the fifth issue, 'twould be a pot-pourri of moonbeams and cork-likker, drunken mumbles and sly cynical drawlings, swing music and the danse macabre.

For here we are, tormented by Lea's kaleidoscope in swingtime, a poem that is purest imagism, and tickled by the caustic anonymi on pages eight and twelve. Too, depressed by Eliot's piece with its overtones of another day, dammit, implicated by Miss Nuttall's subtle verse forms and gentle tragic fatalism.

And bellowing our lungs out at Banks Mebane's heartfelt Prayer.

A special paragraph is devoted to Bill's cover job. His best at this writing, we feel. Sincerely. It has a certain strain of power and tangibility too uncommon to fantasy illustrating. It also has a very subtle meaning, which we doubt you will detect; info on this will be divulged next issue. Anyway, it moves us -- and by hook or crook, the original shall repose in our den.

Be warned, Willie.

Incidentally, the cut by Marijane Nuttall is by Marijane Nuttall and Avona's pic was drawn by Avona. None of Willie's doings. So there. (Needless to say the Meliano was done by the house cat which possesses an irritating tendency to walk barefooted over any loose stencils knocking about.)


Various fapans who commented on SAPPHO #5 remarked on the brilliancy of the cover and mayhap said something or other about one of the more cautious poems. They then steered a wide range around the rest, refraining from comment of any sort. To these gentry we suggest careful re-reading of all the poems in the last issue and this issue. Believe us, chums, when we say there's meaning behind the most contorted lyric in the mag.

Kepner, of course, who stuck his neck out, is excluded from the above category, and answered elsewhere in the issue.

Others who contributed their talents to this issue: Rusty Gray, and Ian Mudie, the latter via the very excellent Ausie magazine, PERTINENT. Ezra Pound, the old maestro, is also on the roll call with his somewhat viscerously inclined creation, which for no good reason reminds us of Lowndes' poem dedicated to Earl Singleton; the latter, we thing, appeared in an issue of FANFARE, before it went fapawards. 5th issue, as we recall.

... George Ebey & Willie Watson

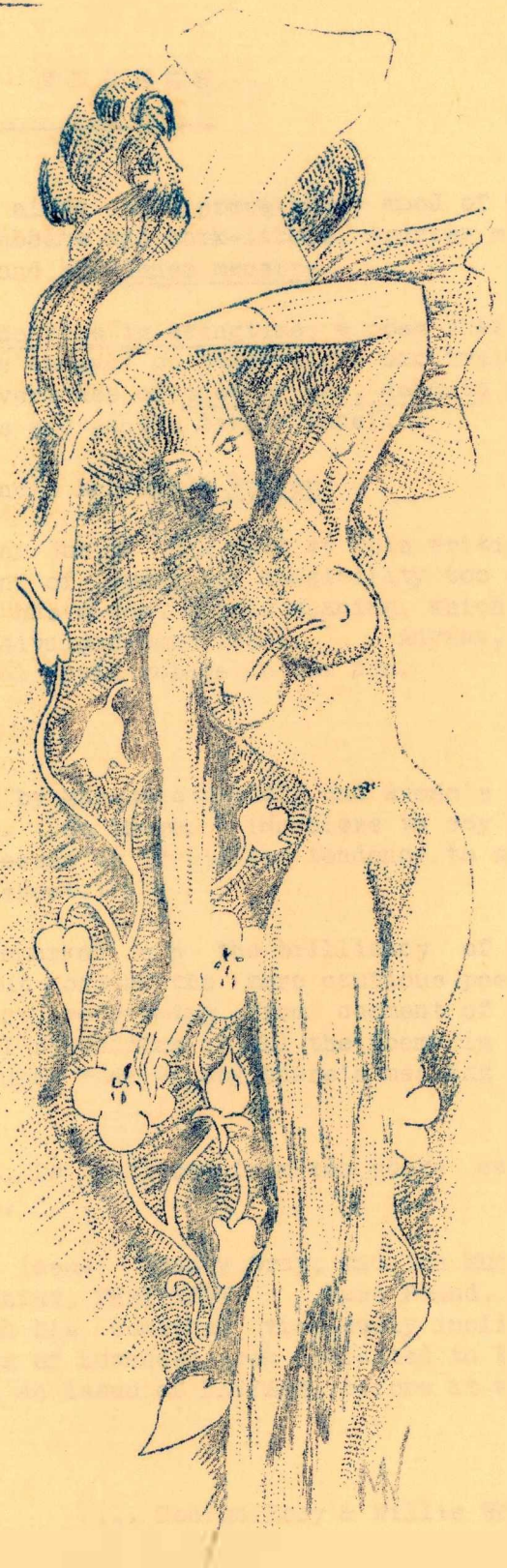
WATER TO WASHINGTON AND - COUNTRY



- to -
CINDY

WATER TO WASHINGTON AND - COUNTRY
WATER TO WASHINGTON AND - COUNTRY

be all I dreamed thee
in my dream ...



S U C C U B U S

Veiled
You steal
Through all my wishful dreams
Beckoning - -
And call me forth
Beyond the pale
Dead dreariness of earthly clay

With trembling fingers
I would lift the veil
That sets thee forth, apart.
I plead with thee
Do not betray
My searching heart.

Be all I dreamed thee
In my dream ...
... Be nothing earth has ever seen;
Part of sunset's glowing fire;
Lilith - -
Such as unprovoked desire
Can make of mist
And rainbow-splintered ray.

Be this - -
And I
Will gladly give
My soul away ...

... M J Nuttall

k a l e i d o s c o p e i n s w i n g t i m e

hot smoke heavy smoke

gibber

jangle of discords

mood indigo and spatter

of scalding noxes in

fretwork to

talk talk talk talk

hear !

this coldcream melody

strung with pit-pat-plucked-string

footsteps

midget dots of flinching

ecstasy

buffoon laughter bubbling from

deathmask of do re mi

mumble fades

... Lea



conceited dreams,
these scarred fragments of a bitter shattered world
that whirled,
concentric, madly, to fall broken
into the bleak abyss of dissolution:
these, my unspoken
thoughts of you

... Anonymous

... THE PEOPLE PERISH

When you, the nation's visionless,
walk the house-filled streets
you see only fences, chimnies,
bricks and mortar, pubs, houses,
motor cars, suburbs, shops.

You never see
ghost shadow of yacca
in the city street,
gun-ghost grow from bitumen,
kennedya's red in woman's frock,
billabong-glint in pavement mirage,
war-spear in flagstaff,
nor hear the long chant
of increased ceremony
in the city's roar.

You are the blind and deaf;

visionless, you perish.

You are the dead;

you are the dead.

... Ian Mudie
reprinted from Pertinent

T O S Y L V I A

The cool depths of a laurel glade in May
Are in your eyes, and through your laughter trills
The elfin whisper of the forest rills
That tinkles through the air at break of day.
Allure from Arcady is in your glance,
Your dance is to the throb of panic reeds,
Your song brings solace to the heart that bleeds
For Elysium, and the olden, lost romance.

O nymph, your dance is just beyond the hill
That beckons from afar; your song is played
Within the marvel-mirrored shadow glade
That I shall find upon the morrow. Fill
Your cup with Lethe's balm, my Hebe; wait
My coming on the blessed morrow's date.

... Banks ~~Hebe~~

FIGMENTS

Maybe we

Are only ...

Detailed dreams

Outlined

In the convolutions

Of an Adam's mind

Who lives on ...

Forever ...

Much too wise

To have ever

Been snared

By the evil

Evil Eve's

Disguise - -

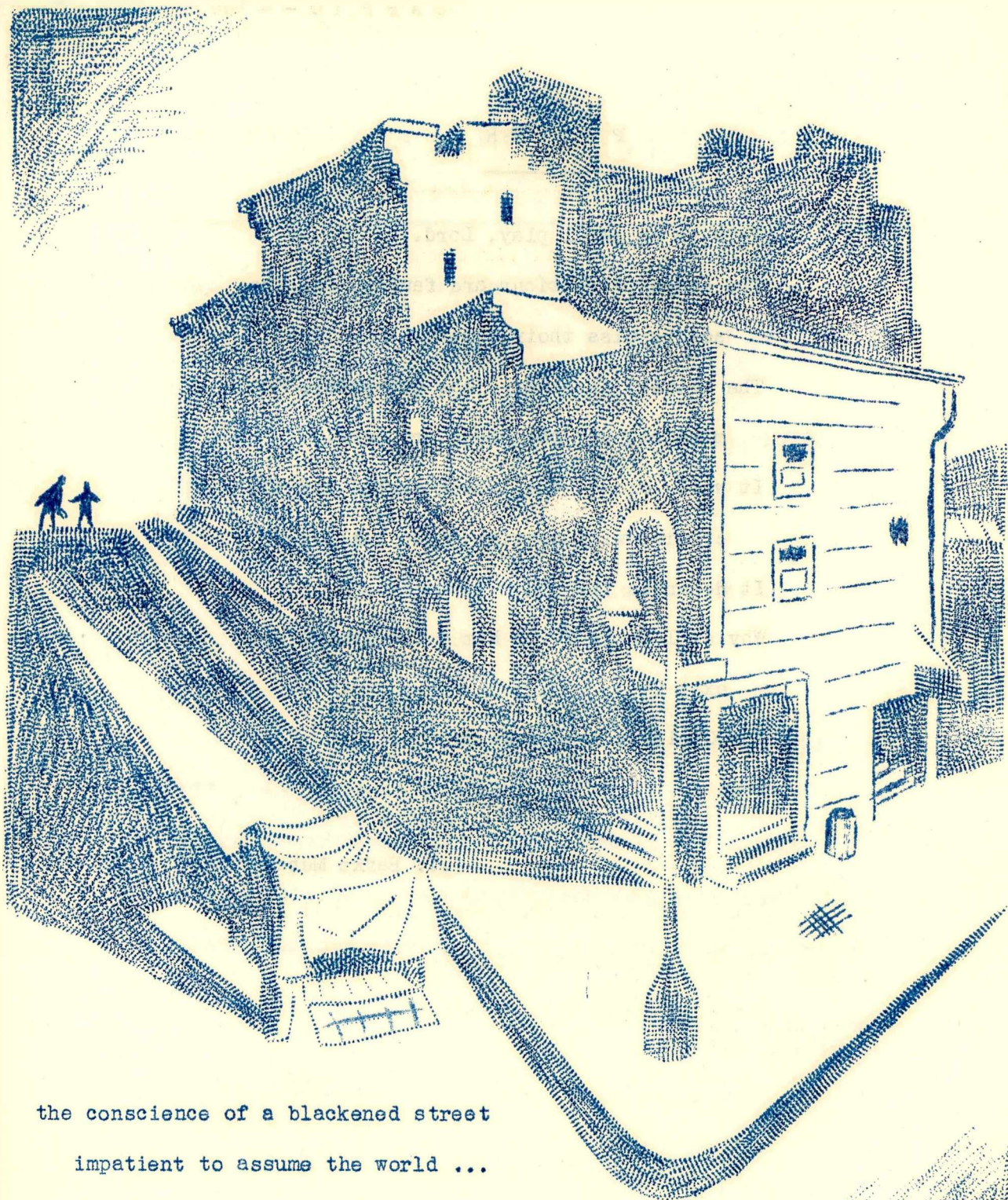
... M J Nuttall

P R E L U D E S I V

His soul stretched tight across the skies
That fade behind a city block,
Or trampled by insistent feet
At four and five and six o'clock;
And short square fingers stuffing pipes
And evening newspapers, and eyes
Assured of certain certainties,
The conscience of a blackened street
Impatient to assume the world.
I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.
Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
The worlds revolve like ancient women
Gathering fuel in vacant lots.

... T S Eliot
reprinted from Blast

S A P P H O - - the magazine of verse



the conscience of a blackened street
impatient to assume the world ...

maliciaño ...

P R A Y E R

This is an awful play, Lord.

The stage directions are faulty, and the
actors miss their cues.

The scenery is tawdry, the characters are
miscast, and the lines are dull.

It will close the first night, and the
critics will consign it to hell.

It deserves it.

Why am I in it ? To ham a few lines, and
exit ?

For Christ's sake take me out.

Amen !

... Banks Mobane

DOGMATIC STATEMENT ON THE GAME
AND PLAY OF CHESS

Red knights, brown bishops, bright queens
Striking the boards, falling in strong "L's" of colour
Reaching and striking in angles,

Holding lines of one colour:

This board is alive with light
These pieces are living in form,

Their moves break and reform the pattern:

Luminous green from the rooks

Clashing with "x's" of queens,

Looped with the knight-leaps.

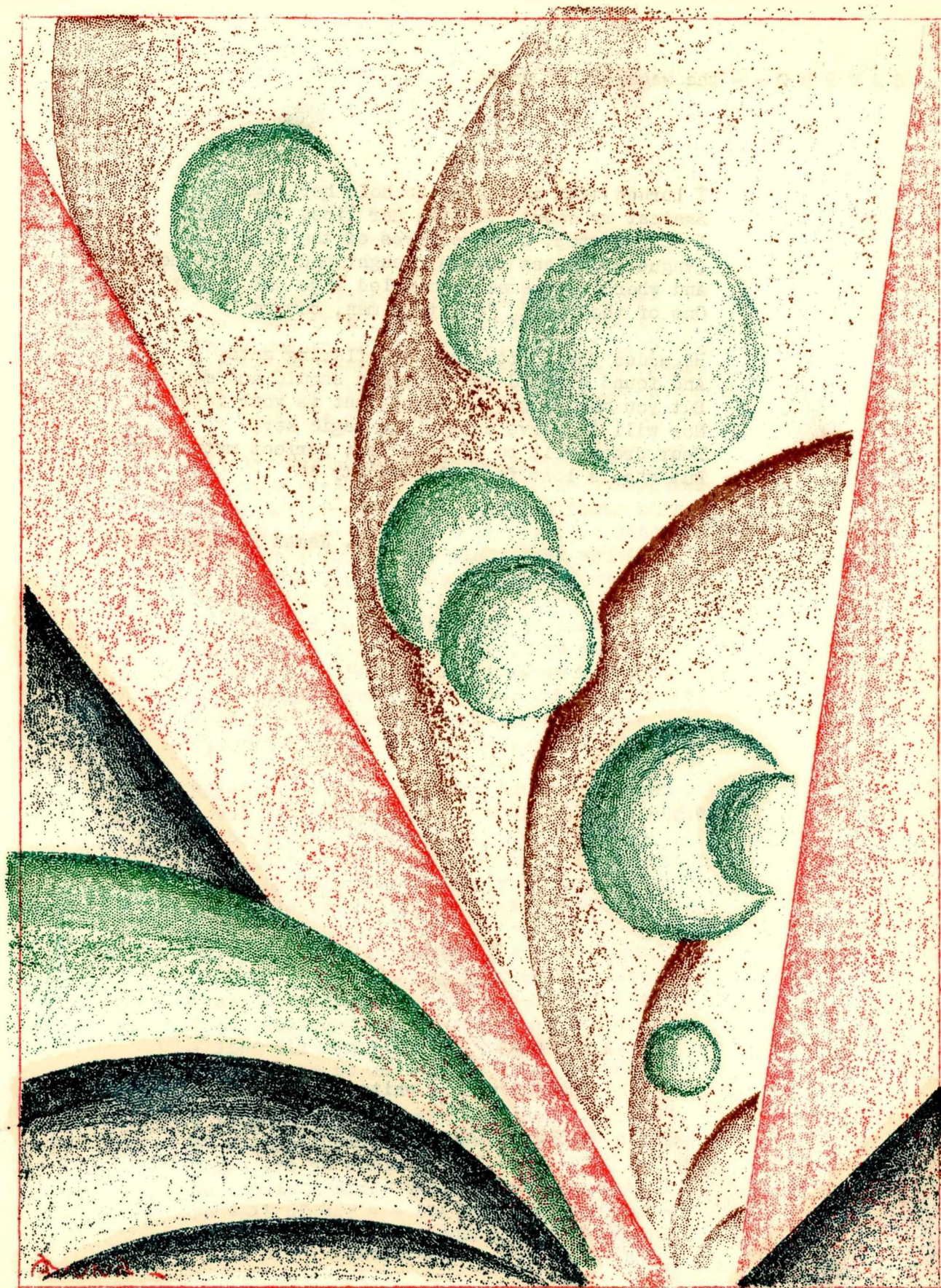
"Y" pawns, cleaving, embanking

Whirl; centripetal, mate, King down in the vortex:

Clash, leaping of bands, straight strips of hard colour,

Blocked lights working in, escapes, renewing of contes.

... Ezra Pound
reprinted from Blast



IN MEMORIAM: A MERRITT

Star-tossed, a web of dreams, to snare the soul
And bathe all memories with a lambent dew
Of faery fire, and cloud the dreamer's view
With flickering forms that beckon and cajole.
Star-born, that net, and with a variable light,
Now cold with sheer austerity of gleam,
Now warm with heart-blood's ever-throbbing theme;
Star-born - - and deepening into blacker night.

How is it there, O lonely sentinel ?
Thou who hast seen where faeries merely dream,
Where even angels may not go, supreme,
And mortal hearts would burst before its spell;
Thou who hast trod the ultimate, dim vale
And yet returned to tell the wond'rous tale !

... Banks Mebane

"BUNKO!" CRIES THE SAGE

To those individuals who skitter about tossing bright coins in the air, imagining themselves to be budding young aesthetes, appreciating the higher things of life, the admittedly grotesque rhythmic of Shirley Chappier are nothing but amorphous attempts at something designed only to be striking and intense.

Such intensification on the part of a poetess can be misunderstood, particularly when the reader is undiscerning, and mindful only of the printed words confronting him. Analyzation is difficult. Nevertheless, one would certainly expect the critic to study the works he intends to tear down before he does so.

It is apparent that Miss Chappier's judges thought the procedure unnecessary.

Gorham B Munson had the correct idea in mind in his discussion of major and minor poetry. The difference does not exist in either dogmatic detail or craftsmanship, but rather in the pattern in which the details are set and the purpose for which the craft is employed.

The latter, I believe, is the most important function, where Miss Chappier's verse is concerned. What is her purpose. To create a series of impressions? To leave the reader spellbound at her closely connected adjectives and adverbs? I doubt it. Rather, dissection.

In the deliberate sterility, the acid cleanliness of her creations, lies the answer. She apparently obtains a certain amount of satisfaction in merely wiping soiled words clean, a difficult task in any man's language, no matter who the linguist.

"With her a word is a word most when it is separated out by science, properly treated to remove the smudges, washed, dried, and places right side up on a clean surface. Now one may say that this is a word. Now it may be used -- and how?

"It may be used not to smear it again with thinking (the attachments of thought) but in such a way that it will remain scrupulously itself, clean, perfect, un-nicked beside other words in parade. There must be edges."

Too, one must notice that Miss Chappier is often grandiose, but never emotional.

This, itself, is an important factor. Like Gaudier-Brzaska's sculptures, her verse appears to be finely chiseled, with practically no violations of the imagination. Free-flowing, there are no obstructions to mar the definite pattern she inevitably achieves, and because of this her poetic forms might be termed "grandiose". Unfortunately, the tendency towards exaggeration is often misunderstood -- and its purpose misconstrued.

O Z Y M A N D I A S

cover quote

Two trunkless legs of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,

Tell that its sculpture well these passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.

... Percy Bysshe Shelley