5 – Henry James (1843–1916); Gustave Flaubert (1821–80).
6 – Charles Dickens (1812–70); Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832).
7 – 'Moments of Vision', the title of a poem and of a volume of poems by Hardy (Macmillan, 1917).
8 – Fanny Robin, Sergeant Troy and Bathsheba Everdene in *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), a novel originally serialised in Leslie Stephen's *Cornhill Magazine*.
9 – Gabriel Oak in *Far from the Madding Crowd*.
10 – Coggan, Fray and Poorgrass in *Far from the Madding Crowd*. George Eliot (1819–80).
11 – Eustacia Vye, Damon Wildeve and Diggory Venn in *The Return of the Native* (1878); Michael Henchard, Lucetta Le Sueur and Donald Farfrae in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), also Elizabeth-Jane Henchard, Michael Henchard's daughter, and Richard Newson, mariner (below); Jude Fawley, Sue Bridehead and Richard Phillotson in *Jude the Obscure* (1894–5).
12 – Edred Fitzpiers in *The Woodlanders* (1887); Clym Yeobright in *Return*.
13 – Jane Austen (1775–1817); for VW on George Meredith (1828–1909), see above; William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–63); Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910).
14 – Pierre Bezuhov and Natasha Rostov in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1865–9); Becky Sharp in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847–8).
15 – *Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman* (1891; Wessex Novels, Osgood, McIlvaine, vol. i, 1895), 'Phase the Second: Maiden No More', ch. xiv, p. 119, which has: 'dignity which was'; and *The Woodlanders* (Wessex Novels, Osgood, McIlvaine, vol. vii, 1896), ch. xlviii, p. 459, which has: 'almost like'.
16 – *Tess*, Preface, dated July 1892 (a view that VW said she shared: see *V VW Letters*, no. 2622); *Poems of the Past and the Present* (Harper & Bros, 1902), Preface, dated August 1901.
17 – *Tess*, 'Phase the First: The Maiden', ch. iv, p. 35, which has: 'stubbard-tree. Most' and 'a splendid one'.
18 – Cf. *III VW Diary*, 18 December 1928: 'He [Max Beerbohm] talked of Hardy, & said he couldnt bear Jude the Obscure: thought it falsified life, for there is really more happiness than sorrow in life, & Hardy tries to prove the opposite. And his writing is so bad.'
19 – Ajax, mythological Greek hero, cousin of Achilles, and King of Salamis, plays an important role in Homer's *Iliad*.

How Should One Read a Book?

In the first place, I want to emphasise the note of interrogation at the end of my title. Even if I could answer the question for myself, the

answer would apply only to me and not to you. The only advice, indeed, that one person can give another about reading is to take no advice, to follow your own instincts, to use your own reason, to come to your own conclusions. If this is agreed between us, then I feel at liberty to put forward a few ideas and suggestions because you will not allow them to fetter that independence which is the most important quality that a reader can possess. After all, what laws can be laid down about books? The battle of Waterloo was certainly fought on a certain day; but is *Hamlet* a better play than *Lear*? Nobody can say. Each must decide that question for himself. To admit authorities, however heavily furred and gowned, into our libraries and let them tell us how to read, what to read, what value to place upon what we read, is to destroy the spirit of freedom which is the breath of those sanctuaries. Everywhere else we may be bound by laws and conventions – there we have none.

But to enjoy freedom, if the platitude is pardonable, we have of course to control ourselves. We must not squander our powers, helplessly and ignorantly, squirting half the house in order to water a single rose-bush; we must train them, exactly and powerfully, here on the very spot. This, it may be, is one of the first difficulties that faces us in a library. What is 'the very spot'? There may well seem to be nothing but a conglomeration and huddle of confusion. Poems and novels, histories and memoirs, dictionaries and blue-books; books written in all languages by men and women of all tempers, races, and ages jostle each other on the shelf. And outside the donkey brays, the women gossip at the pump, the colts gallop across the fields. Where are we to begin? How are we to bring order into this multitudinous chaos and so get the deepest and widest pleasure from what we read?

It is simple enough to say that since books have classes – fiction, biography, poetry – we should separate them and take from each what it is right that each should give us. Yet few people ask from books what books can give us. Most commonly we come to books with blurred and divided minds, asking of fiction that it shall be true, of poetry that it shall be false, of biography that it shall be flattering, of history that it shall enforce our own prejudices. If we could banish all such preconceptions when we read, that would be an admirable beginning. Do not dictate to your author; try to become him. Be his fellow-worker and accomplice. If you hang back, and reserve and criticise at first, you are preventing yourself from getting the fullest possible value from what you read. But if you open your mind as

widely as possible, then signs and hints of almost imperceptible fineness, from the twist and turn of the first sentences, will bring you into the presence of a human being unlike any other. Steep yourself in this, acquaint yourself with this, and soon you will find that your author is giving you, or attempting to give you, something far more definite. The thirty-two chapters of a novel – if we consider how to read a novel first – are an attempt to make something as formed and controlled as a building: but words are more impalpable than bricks; reading is a longer and more complicated process than seeing. Perhaps the quickest way to understand the elements of what a novelist is doing is not to read, but to write; to make your own experiment with the dangers and difficulties of words. Recall, then, some event that has left a distinct impression on you – how at the corner of the street, perhaps, you passed two people talking. A tree shook; an electric light danced; the tone of the talk was comic, but also tragic; a whole vision, an entire conception, seemed contained in that moment.

But when you attempt to reconstruct it in words, you will find that it breaks into a thousand conflicting impressions. Some must be subdued; others emphasised; in the process you will lose, probably, all grasp upon the emotion itself. Then turn from your blurred and littered pages to the opening pages of some great novelist – Defoe, Jane Austen, Hardy.[2] Now you will be better able to appreciate their mastery. It is not merely that we are in the presence of a different person – Defoe, Jane Austen, or Thomas Hardy – but that we are living in a different world. Here, in *Robinson Crusoe*,[3] we are trudging a plain high road; one thing happens after another; the fact and the order of the fact is enough. But if the open air and adventure mean everything to Defoe they mean nothing to Jane Austen. Hers is the drawing-room, and people talking, and by the many mirrors of their talk revealing their characters. And if, when we have accustomed ourselves to the drawing-room and its reflections, we turn to Hardy, we are once more spun round. The moors are round us and the stars are above our heads. The other side of the mind is now exposed – the dark side that comes uppermost in solitude, not the light side that shows in company. Our relations are not towards people, but towards Nature and destiny. Yet different as these worlds are, each is consistent with itself. The maker of each is careful to observe the laws of his own perspective, and however great a strain they may put upon us they will never confuse us, as lesser writers so frequently do, by introducing two different kinds of reality into the same book. Thus

to go from one great novelist to another – from Jane Austen to Hardy, from Peacock to Trollope, from Scott to Meredith[4] – is to be wrenched and uprooted; to be thrown this way and then that. To read a novel is a difficult and complex art. You must be capable not only of great fineness of perception, but of great boldness of imagination if you are going to make use of all that the novelist – the great artist – gives you.

But a glance at the heterogeneous company on the shelf will show you that writers are very seldom 'great artists'; far more often a book makes no claim to be a work of art at all. These biographies and autobiographies, for example, lives of great men, of men long dead and forgotten, that stand cheek by jowl with the novels and poems, are we to refuse to read them because they are not 'art'? Or shall we read them, but read them in a different way, with a different aim? Shall we read them in the first place to satisfy that curiosity which possesses us sometimes when in the evening we linger in front of a house where the lights are lit and the blinds not yet drawn, and each floor of the house shows us a different section of human life in being?[5] Then we are consumed with curiosity about the lives of these people – the servants gossiping, the gentlemen dining, the girl dressing for a party, the old woman at the window with her knitting. Who are they, what are they, what are their names, their occupations, their thoughts, and adventures?

Biographies and memoirs answer such questions, light up innumerable such houses; they show us people going about their daily affairs, toiling, failing, succeeding, eating, hating, loving, until they die. And sometimes as we watch, the house fades and the iron railings vanish and we are out at sea; we are hunting, sailing, fighting; we are among savages and soldiers; we are taking part in great campaigns. Or if we like to stay here in England, in London, still the scene changes; the street narrows; the house becomes small, cramped, diamond-paned, and malodorous. We see a poet, Donne,[6] driven from such a house because the walls were so thin that when the children cried their voices cut through them. We can follow him, through the paths that lie in the pages of books, to Twickenham; to Lady Bedford's Park, a famous meeting-ground for nobles and poets; and then turn our steps to Wilton, the great house under the downs, and hear Sidney read the *Arcadia* to his sister;[7] and ramble among the very marshes and see the very herons that figure in that famous romance; and then again travel north with that other Lady Pembroke, Anne Clifford,[8] to her wild moors, or plunge into the city and control our merriment

at the sight of Gabriel Harvey in his black velvet suit arguing about poetry with Spenser.[9] Nothing is more fascinating than to grope and stumble in the alternate darkness and splendour of Elizabethan London. But there is no staying there. The Temples and the Swifts, the Harleys and the St Johns beckon us on;[10] hour upon hour can be spent disentangling their quarrels and deciphering their characters; and when we tire of them we can stroll on, past a lady in black wearing diamonds, to Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith and Garrick;[11] or cross the channel, if we like, and meet Voltaire and Diderot, Madame du Deffand;[12] and so back to England and Twickenham – how certain places repeat themselves and certain names! – where Lady Bedford had her Park once and Pope lived later, to Walpole's home at Strawberry Hill.[13] But Walpole introduces us to such a swarm of new acquaintances, there are so many houses to visit and bells to ring that we may well hesitate for a moment, on the Miss Berrys' doorstep, for example, when behold, up comes Thackeray; he is the friend of the woman whom Walpole loved;[14] so that merely by going from friend to friend, from garden to garden, from house to house, we have passed from one end of English literature to another and wake to find ourselves here again in the present, if we can so differentiate this moment from all that have gone before. This, then, is one of the ways in which we can read these lives and letters; we can make them light up the many windows of the past; we can watch the famous dead in their familiar habits and fancy sometimes that we are very close and can surprise their secrets, and sometimes we may pull out a play or a poem that they have written and see whether it reads differently in the presence of the author. But this again rouses other questions. How far, we must ask ourselves, is a book influenced by its writer's life – how far is it safe to let the man interpret the writer? How far shall we resist or give way to the sympathies and antipathies that the man himself rouses in us – so sensitive are words, so receptive of the character of the author? These are questions that press upon us when we read lives and letters, and we must answer them for ourselves, for nothing can be more fatal than to be guided by the preferences of others in a matter so personal.

But also we can read such books with another aim, not to throw light on literature, not to become familiar with famous people, but to refresh and exercise our own creative powers. Is there not an open window on the right hand of the bookcase? How delightful to stop reading and look out! How stimulating the scene is, in its

unconsciousness, its irrelevance, its perpetual movement – the colts galloping round the field, the woman filling her pail at the well, the donkey throwing back his head and emitting his long, acrid moan. The greater part of any library is nothing but the record of such fleeting moments in the lives of men, women, and donkeys. Every literature, as it grows old, has its rubbish-heap, its record of vanished moments and forgotten lives told in faltering and feeble accents that have perished. But if you give yourself up to the delight of rubbish-reading you will be surprised, indeed you will be overcome, by the relics of human life that have been cast out to moulder. It may be one letter – but what a vision it gives! It may be a few sentences – but what vistas they suggest! Sometimes a whole story will come together with such beautiful humour and pathos and completeness that it seems as if a great novelist had been at work, yet it is only an old actor, Tate Wilkinson, remembering the strange story of Captain Jones;[15] it is only a young subaltern serving under Arthur Wellesley and falling in love with a pretty girl at Lisbon;[16] it is only Maria Allen[17] letting fall her sewing in the empty drawing-room and sighing how she wishes she had taken Dr Burney's good advice and had never eloped with her Rishy. None of this has any value; it is negligible in the extreme; yet how absorbing it is now and again to go through the rubbish-heaps and find rings and scissors and broken noses buried in the huge past and try to piece them together while the colt gallops round the field, the woman fills her pail at the well, and the donkey brays.

But we tire of rubbish-reading in the long run. We tire of searching for what is needed to complete the half-truth which is all that the Wilkinsons, the Bunburys and the Maria Allens are able to offer us. They had not the artist's power of mastering and eliminating; they could not tell the whole truth even about their own lives; they have disfigured the story that might have been so shapely. Facts are all that they can offer us, and facts are a very inferior form of fiction. Thus the desire grows upon us to have done with half-statements and approximations; to cease from searching out the minute shades of human character, to enjoy the greater abstractness, the purer truth of fiction. Thus we create the mood, intense and generalised, unaware of detail, but stressed by some regular, recurrent beat, whose natural expression is poetry; and that is the time to read poetry when we are almost able to write it.

> Western wind, when wilt thou blow?
> The small rain down can rain.

Christ, if my love were in my arms,
And I in my bed again![18]

The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself. What profound depths we visit then – how sudden and complete is our immersion! There is nothing here to catch hold of; nothing to stay us in our flight. The illusion of fiction is gradual; its effects are prepared; but who when they read these four lines stops to ask who wrote them, or conjures up the thought of Donne's house or Sidney's secretary; or enmeshes them in the intricacy of the past and the succession of generations? The poet is always our contemporary. Our being for the moment is centred and constricted, as in any violent shock of personal emotion. Afterwards, it is true, the sensation begins to spread in wider rings through our minds; remoter senses are reached; these begin to sound and to comment and we are aware of echoes and reflections. The intensity of poetry covers an immense range of emotion. We have only to compare the force and directness of

I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only remembering that I grieve,[19]

with the wavering modulation of

Minutes are numbered by the fall of sands,
As by an hour glass; the span of time
Doth waste us to our graves, and we look on it;
An age of pleasure, revelled out, comes home
At last, and ends in sorrow; but the life,
Weary of riot, numbers every sand,
Wailing in sighs, until the last drop down,
So to conclude calamity in rest,[20]

or place the meditative calm of

whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,

Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be,[21]

beside the complete and inexhaustible loveliness of

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside –[22]

or the splendid fantasy of

And the woodland haunter
Shall not cease to saunter
When, far down some glade,
Of the great world's burning,
One soft flame upturning
Seems, to his discerning,
Crocus in the shade,[23]

to bethink us of the varied art of the poet; his power to make us at once actors and spectators; his power to run his hand into character as if it were a glove, and be Falstaff or Lear; his power to condense, to widen, to state, once and for ever.

'We have only to compare' – with those words the cat is out of the bag, and the true complexity of reading is admitted. The first process, to receive impressions with the utmost understanding, is only half the process of reading; it must be completed, if we are to get the whole pleasure from a book, by another. We must pass judgment upon these multitudinous impressions; we must make of these fleeting shapes one that is hard and lasting. But not directly. Wait for the dust of reading to settle; for the conflict and the questioning to die down; walk, talk, pull the dead petals from a rose, or fall asleep. Then suddenly without our willing it, for it is thus that Nature undertakes these transitions, the book will return, but differently. It will float to the top of the mind as a whole. And the book as a whole is different from the book received currently in separate phrases. Details now fit themselves into their places. We see the shape from start to finish; it is a barn, a pig-sty, or a cathedral. Now then we can compare book with book as we compare building with building. But this act of

comparison means that our attitude has changed; we are no longer the friends of the writer, but his judges; and just as we cannot be too sympathetic as friends, so as judges we cannot be too severe. Are they not criminals, books that have wasted our time and sympathy; are they not the most insidious enemies of society, corrupters, defilers, the writers of false books, faked books, books that fill the air with decay and disease? Let us then be severe in our judgments; let us compare each book with the greatest of its kind. There they hang in the mind the shapes of the books we have read solidified by the judgments we have passed on them – *Robinson Crusoe*, *Emma*, *The Return of the Native*.[24] Compare the novels with these – even the latest and least of novels has a right to be judged with the best. And so with poetry – when the intoxication of rhythm has died down and the splendour of words has faded, a visionary shape will return to us and this must be compared with *Lear*, with *Phèdre*,[25] with *The Prelude*; or if not with these, with whatever is the best or seems to us to be the best in its own kind. And we may be sure that the newness of new poetry and fiction is its most superficial quality and that we have only to alter slightly, not to recast, the standards by which we have judged the old.

It would be foolish, then, to pretend that the second part of reading, to judge, to compare, is as simple as the first – to open the mind wide to the fast flocking of innumerable impressions. To continue reading without the book before you, to hold one shadow-shape against another, to have read widely enough and with enough understanding to make such comparisons alive and illuminating – that is difficult; it is still more difficult to press further and to say, 'Not only is the book of this sort, but it is of this value; here it fails; here it succeeds; this is bad; that is good'. To carry out this part of a reader's duty needs such imagination, insight, and learning that it is hard to conceive any one mind sufficiently endowed; impossible for the most self-confident to find more than the seeds of such powers in himself. Would it not be wiser, then, to remit this part of reading and to allow the critics, the gowned and furred authorities of the library, to decide the question of the book's absolute value for us? Yet how impossible! We may stress the value of sympathy; we may try to sink our own identity as we read. But we know that we cannot sympathise wholly or immerse ourselves wholly; there is always a demon in us who whispers, 'I hate, I love',[26] and we cannot silence him. Indeed, it is precisely because we hate and we love that our relation with the poets and

novelists is so intimate that we find the presence of another person intolerable. And even if the results are abhorrent and our judgments are wrong, still our taste, the nerve of sensation that sends shocks through us, is our chief illuminant; we learn through feeling; we cannot suppress our own idiosyncrasy without impoverishing it. But as time goes on perhaps we can train our taste; perhaps we can make it submit to some control. When it has fed greedily and lavishly upon books of all sorts – poetry, fiction, history, biography – and has stopped reading and looked for long spaces upon the variety, the incongruity of the living world, we shall find that it is changing a little; it is not so greedy, it is more reflective. It will begin to bring us not merely judgments on particular books, but it will tell us that there is a quality common to certain books. Listen, it will say, what shall we call *this*? And it will read us perhaps *Lear* and then perhaps the *Agamemnon*[27] in order to bring out that common quality. Thus, with our taste to guide us, we shall venture beyond the particular book in search of qualities that group books together; we shall give them names and thus frame a rule that brings order into our perceptions. We shall gain a further and a rarer pleasure from that discrimination. But as a rule only lives when it is perpetually broken by contact with the books themselves – nothing is easier and more stultifying than to make rules which exists out of touch with facts, in a vacuum – now at last, in order to steady ourselves in this difficult attempt, it may be well to turn to the very rare writers who are able to enlighten us upon literature as an art. Coleridge and Dryden[28] and Johnson, in their considered criticism, the poets and novelists themselves in their unconsidered sayings, are often surprisingly relevant; they light up and solidify the vague ideas that have been tumbling in the misty depths of our minds. But they are only able to help us if we come to them laden with questions and suggestions won honestly in the course of our own reading. They can do nothing for us if we herd ourselves under their authority and lie down like sheep in the shade of a hedge. We can only understand their ruling when it comes in conflict with our own and vanquishes it.

If this is so, if to read a book as it should be read calls for the rarest qualities of imagination, insight, and judgment, you may perhaps conclude that literature is a very complex art and that it is unlikely that we shall be able, even after a lifetime of reading, to make any valuable contribution to its criticism. We must remain readers; we shall not put on the further glory that belongs to those

rare beings who are also critics. But still we have our responsibilities as readers and even our importance. The standards we raise and the judgments we pass steal into the air and become part of the atmosphere which writers breathe as they work. An influence is created which tells upon them even if it never finds its way into print. And that influence, if it were well instructed, vigorous and individual and sincere, might be of great value now when criticism is necessarily in abeyance; when books pass in review like the procession of animals in a shooting gallery, and the critic has only one second in which to load and aim and shoot and may well be pardoned if he mistakes rabbits for tigers, eagles for barndoor fowls, or misses altogether and wastes his shot upon some peaceful cow grazing in a further field. If behind the erratic gunfire of the press the author felt that there was another kind of criticism, the opinion of people reading for the love of reading, slowly and unprofessionally, and judging with great sympathy and yet with great severity, might this not improve the quality of his work? And if by our means books were to become stronger, richer, and more varied, that would be an end worth reaching.[29]

Yet who reads to bring about an end, however desirable? Are there not some pursuits that we practise because they are good in themselves,[30] and some pleasures that are final? And is not this among them? I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards – their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble – the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, 'Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.'[31]

1 – Originally published in the *Yale Review*, October 1926, (*Kp4* C277; see *IV VW Essays*), this essay was very considerably revised for *CR2*. VW footnoted the title in *CR2*: 'A paper read at a School.' The essay derives from a lecture VW delivered at a private school for girls at Hayes Court in Kent on 30 January 1926. It seems that the *Yale Review* was thinking of reprinting the article, for VW wrote to Helen McAfee, the managing editor, on 27 July 1930: 'I cannot find my copy of the article on Reading which you want to reprint. My memory of it is that I thought there were a good many alterations needed – if they should be too many I might of course be unable to let you have it, as my time is very full. But I will let

you know as soon as I get the copy which you say you are sending' (*IV VW Letters*, no. 2213). She wrote in her diary on 6 July 1932 that 'the CR I confess is not yet quite done. But then – well I had to re-write the last article, which I had thought so good, entirely. Not for many years shall I collect another bunch of articles' (*IV VW Diary*). See 'The Love of Reading' above, an abridged version. See also 'Reading', 'On Re-reading Novels' and 'Byron & Mr Briggs', *III VW Essays*. For a transcript of a draft of the lecture, dated 18 November [1925], and a guide to the various drafts, see Beth Rigel Daugherty, 'Virginia Woolf's "How Should One Read a Book?"', *WSA*, vol. iv (1998), 123–85. Part of a draft dated 'Sunday | June 5th' 1932 (MHP, B 2e). Reprinted: *CE*.

2 – Daniel Defoe (1660?–1731); Jane Austen (1775–1817); Thomas Hardy (1840–1928); for VW on their novels, see above.

3 – For VW on Defoe, *The Life and . . . Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), see 'Robinson Crusoe' above.

4 – Thomas Love Peacock (1785–1866); Anthony Trollope (1815–82); for VW on Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832), see 'Scott's Character' and '*The Antiquary*' in *III VW Essays*, and 'Gas at Abbotsford' in *VI VW Essays*; George Meredith (1828–1909), for VW on his novels see above.

5 – Cf. 'Street Haunting: A London Adventure', *IV VW Essays*.

6 – For VW on John Donne (1572–1631), see above.

7 – See Philip Sidney (1554–86), 'The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia' above.

8 – See 'Donne After Three Centuries', p. 357.

9 – See 'The Strange Elizabethans' above.

10 – See 'Swift's *Journal to Stella*' above.

11 – Samuel Johnson (1709–84); Oliver Goldsmith (1730–74); David Garrick (1717–79), actor, theatre manager and dramatist.

12 – Voltaire (François Marie Arouet, 1694–1778); Denis Diderot (1713–84), philosopher and writer; Marie Anne de Vichy-Chamrond, marquise du Deffand (1697–1780).

13 – Alexander Pope (1688–1744); Horace Walpole (1717–97).

14 – Mary (1763–1852) and Agnes Berry (1764–1852); William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–63) became friends with the Miss Berrys late in their lives. Walpole's relationship with the Miss Berrys, particularly the elder, 'appears to have been one of amiable badinage and warm affection laced by a characteristic sexless flirtation on Walpole's side' (*ODNB*).

15 – Tate Wilkinson (1739–1803), actor and provincial theatre manager, who enjoyed some short-lived celebrity for his 'imitations' of the leading performers of his day. See *Memoirs of his Own Life* (1790) and 'Jones and Wilkinson', *IV VW Essays*.

16 – See Anon [i.e. Thomas Bunbury], *Reminiscences of a Veteran. Being Personal and Military Adventures in Portugal . . .* (3 vols, Charles J. Skeet,

1861), vol. i, pp. 55–7; cf. pp. 209–12. Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington (1769–1852).
17 – Maria Allen, who married Martin Rishton, was Dr Burney's step-daughter by his second wife Mrs Allen; see 'Fanny Burney's Half-Sister' above.
18 – Anon, sixteenth century. *OBEV* has: 'O western wind, when wilt thou blow / That the small rain down can rain? / Christ, that my love were in my arms / . . .' (no. 27, p. 53).
19 – Francis Beaumont (1584–1616) and John Fletcher (1579–1625), *Beaumont and Fletcher*, ed. J. St Loe Strachey, *The Mermaid Series: The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists, Unexpurgated Edition* (2 vols, Vizetelly, 1887), vol. i, *The Maid's Tragedy* (1610), iv, i., p. 66, spoken by Amintor.
20 – John Ford (1585–1640?), *John Ford*, ed. Havelock Ellis, in *The Mermaid Series: The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists, Unexpurgated Edition* (Vizetelly, 1888), *The Lover's Melancholy* (1628), iv, iii., p. 72, spoken by Eroclea.
21 – William Wordsworth (1770–1850), *Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind: An Autobiographical Poem* (Edward Moxon, 1850), bk vi, 'Cambridge and the Alps', p. 160.
22 – Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), ll. 255–8; *OBEV*, no. 549, at p. 637.
23 – Ebenezer Jones (1820–60), 'When the World is burning', *OBEV*, no. 745, p. 883. Cf. *Mrs. Dalloway* (Hogarth Press, 1925), p. 50: 'Then, for that moment, she had seen an illumination; a match burning in a crocus; an inner meaning almost expressed.'
24 – Austen, *Emma* (1816); Hardy, *The Return of the Native* (1878).
25 – Jean Racine (1639–99), *Phèdre* (1677).
26 – Catullus (c. 84–c. 55 BC), *Carmina*, no. 85 ('Odi et amo'). See also *The Waves* (Hogarth Press, 1931), pp. 14, 149, 243, 271; and *Between the Acts* (Hogarth Press, 1941), pp. 60, 82, 109, 111, 252.
27 – *Agamemnon*, the first of the three surviving *Oresteia* plays by Aeschylus (525/4–456 BC).
28 – John Dryden (1631–1700).
29 – Cf. 'Reviewing', *VI VW Essays*.
30 – See G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge University Press, 1903), e.g., ch. vi, 'The Ideal', sec. 113, p. 166: 'By far the most valuable things, which we know or can imagine, are certain states of consciousness, which may be roughly described as the pleasures of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects. No one, probably, who has asked himself the question, has ever doubted that personal affection and the appreciation of what is beautiful in Art or Nature, are good in themselves . . .'
31 – Judith Sloman suggests that this passage is a rewriting of the final stanza of Dryden's 'Ode' (*OBEV*, no. 398, at pp. 466–7): see her 'The Opening and Closing Lines of "To . . . Mrs. Anne Killigrew": Tradition and Allusion', *Notes and Queries*, vol. xxvi (February 1979), pp. 12–13.

Leslie Stephen, the Philosopher at Home: A Daughter's Memories

By the time that his children were growing up the great days of my father's life were over. His feats on the river and on the mountains had been won before they were born. Relics of them were to be found lying about the house – the silver cup on the study mantelpiece; the rusty alpenstocks that leant against the bookcase in the corner; and to the end of his days he would speak of great climbers and explorers with a peculiar mixture of admiration and envy. But his own years of activity were over, and my father had to content himself with pottering about the Swiss valleys or taking a stroll across the Cornish moors.

That to potter and to stroll meant more on his lips than on other people's is becoming obvious now that some of his friends have given their own version of those expeditions. He would start off after breakfast alone, or with one companion. Shortly before dinner he would return. If the walk had been successful, he would have out his great map and commemorate a new short cut in red ink. And he was quite capable, it appears, of striding all day across the moors without speaking more than a word or two to his companion. By that time, too, he had written the *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, which is said by some to be his masterpiece: and the *Science of Ethics* – the book which interested him most: and *The Playground of Europe*, in which is to be found 'The Sunset on Mont Blanc' – in his opinion the best thing he ever wrote.[2]

He still wrote daily and methodically, though never for long at a time. In London he wrote in the large room with three long windows at the top of the house. He wrote lying almost recumbent in a low rocking chair which he tipped to and fro as he wrote, like a cradle, and as he wrote he smoked a short clay pipe, and he scattered books round him in a circle. The thud of a book dropped on the floor could be heard in the room beneath. And often as he mounted the stairs to his study with his firm, regular tread he would burst, not into song, for he was entirely unmusical, but into a strange rhythmical chant, for verse of all kinds, both 'utter trash,' as he called it, and the most sublime words of Milton and Wordsworth[3]

THE ESSAYS OF VIRGINIA WOOLF

Volume I: 1904–1912
Volume II: 1912–1918
Volume III: 1919–1924
Volume IV: 1925–1928

The Essays of Virginia Woolf

VOLUME V

1929–1932

EDITED BY

STUART N. CLARKE

The Hogarth Press
LONDON