

Johnson have said to Montaigne's tower? But Montaigne's tower was the centre of his whole scheme of existence; it made his house a symbol of his creed; to know him, we must begin by entering it.

'Every man,' he wrote, 'should have a back-shop all his own . . . in the which he can establish his true liberty, his chief refuge, his best solitude. And here it is that he must hold his ordinary intercourse with himself.'<sup>1</sup>

'Miserable, to my way of thinking, is he who hath no place where he can be at home to himself; where he can privily court himself; where he can hide himself. To me, it is much more bearable to be always alone than never.'<sup>2</sup>

So, on one side of his dwelling-house, he built himself a tower to which he could retire to live at ease; and here he spent most of his days. The average man, when he is bored by family existence, goes into the world, and distracts himself by politics or business. **Montaigne** said that he had used all his store of ambition for La Boétie, and had none left for himself. But the truth was that he was naturally indolent, and even had he not had a

<sup>1</sup> *Essais*, i. 39 : 'De la Solitude.'

<sup>2</sup> *Essais*, iii. 3 : 'De trois Commerces.'