



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

Montaigne's Essays

In Three Books. With Notes and Quotations. And an Account of The Author's Life ; With a short Character of the Author and Translator, by the late Marquis of Halifax; With the Addition of A Complete Table to each Volume

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de

London, 1743

Chap. 38. Of Solitude.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53388](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-53388)

*Ocius ergo animus quam res se perciet ulla,
Ante oculos quarum in promptu natura videtur* *.

No Motions seem so brisk, and quick as those
The working Mind does to be done propose.
Which once propos'd, her violent Motions are
Swifter than any Thing we know by far.

And therefore, while we would make one continued Thing
of all this Succession of Passion, we deceive ourselves.
When *Timoleon* laments the Murther he had committed
upon so mature and generous Deliberation, he does not
lament the Liberty restor'd to his Country, he does not
lament the Tyrant, but he laments his Brother: One Part
of his Duty is perform'd, let us give him Leave to per-
form the other.



C H A P. XXXVIII.

Of Solitude.

LET us pass over that old Comparison, betwixt the
active and the solitary Life, and as for the fine
Saying, with which Ambition and Avarice palliate their
Vices, *That we are not born for our Selves, but for the Pub-
lick*, let us boldly appeal to those who are most interested
in publick Affairs, let them lay their Hands upon their
Hearts, and then say, whether, on the contrary, they do
not rather aspire to Titles and Offices, and that Tumult
of the World, to make their private Advantage at the
publick Expence. But we need not ask them the Question;
for the corrupt Ways by which they arrive at the Height
to which their Ambitions aspire, do manifestly enough

* *Lucret. l. 3.*

declare

declare that their Ends cannot be very good. Let us then tell Ambition, that it is she herself that gives us a Taste of Solitude; for what does she so much avoid as Society? What does she so much seek as Elbow-room? A Man may do well, or ill every where: But if what *Bias* says be true, that the greatest Part is the worse, or what the Preacher says, that there is not one good of a Thousand;

*Rari quippe boni numero vix sunt totidem quot
Thebarum portæ vel divitis ostia Nili †.*

Because the Number of the Good's as few
As *Thebes* fair Gates, or rich *Nile* Mouths do spew.

The Contagion is very dangerous in the Crowd: A Man must either imitate the Vicious, or hate them: Both are dangerous, either to resemble them, because they are many, or to hate many, because they are unressembling. And Merchants that go to Sea are in the Right, when they are cautious that those who embark with them in the same Bottom, be neither dissolute Blasphemers, nor vicious otherways; looking upon such Society as unfortunate. And therefore it was, that *Bias* pleasantly said to some, who being with him in a dangerous Storm, implor'd the Assistance of the Gods, *Peace, speak softly*, said he, *that they may not know you are here in my Company*: And of more pressing Example, *Albuquerque* Vice-Roy in the *Indies* for *Emanuel* King of *Portugal*, in an extreme Peril of Shipwreck, took a young Boy upon his Shoulders, for this only End, that in the Society of their common Danger, his Innocency might serve to protect him, and to recommend him to the divine Favour, that they might get safe to Shore: 'Tis not that a wise Man may not live every where content, either alone, or in the Crowd of a Palace: But if it be left to his own Choice, he will tell you, that he would fly the very Sight of the latter; he can endure it if need be; but if it be referred to him, he will chuse

† *Juven. Sat. 13.*

the first. He cannot think himself sufficiently rid of Vice, if he must yet contend with it in other Men: *Charondas* punish'd those for ill Men, who were convict of keeping ill Company. There is nothing so unfociable, and fociable as Man, the one by his Vice, the other by his Nature. And *Antisthenes*, in my Opinion, did not give him a satisfactory Answer, who reproach'd him with frequenting ill Company, by saying, *That the Physicians liv'd well enough amongst the Sick*: For if they contribute to the Health of the Sick, no doubt, but by the Contagion, continual Sight of, and Familiarity with Diseases, they must of Necessity impair their own. Now the End I suppose is all one, to live at more Leisure, and at greater Ease: But Men do not always take the right Way; for they often think they have totally taken Leave of all Business when they have only exchange'd one Employment for another. There is little less trouble in governing a private Family, than a whole Kingdom: Wherever the Mind is perplex'd, it is in an entire Disorder, and domestick Employments are not less troublesome, for being less important. Moreover, for having shak'd off the Court and publick Employments, we have not taken Leave of the principal Vexations of Life.

— *Ratio & prudentia curas,
Non locus effusi late maris arbiter aufert* §.

Reason and Prudence, our Affections ease,
Not remote Voyages on unknown Seas.

Our Ambition, our Avarice, Irresolution, Fears, and inordinate Desires, do not leave us when we forsake our native Country:

Et post equitem sedet atra cura *.

And who does mount his Horse to this, will find,
He carries Black-brow'd Madam Care behind.

§ *Hor. lib. 1. Epist. 11.*
VOL. I.

T

* *Hor. lib. 3. Ode 1.* She

She often follows us even to Cloisters, and philosophical Schools; nor Deserts, nor Caves, Hair-shirts, nor Fasts, can disengage us from her :

————— *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo* *.

The fatal Shaft sticks to the wounded Side.

One telling *Socrates*, that such a one was nothing improv'd by his Travels. *I very well believe it*, said he, *for he took himself along with him.*

*Quid terras alio calentes
Sole mutamus? patria quis exul
Se quoque fugit †.*

To change our native Soil, why should we run
To seek out one warm'd by another Sun?
For yet what banish'd Man could ever find,
When farthest sent, he left himself behind?

If a Man do not first discharge both himself and his Mind, of the Burden with which he finds himself oppress'd, Motion will but make it press the harder, and fit the heavier, as the Lading of a Ship is of less Incumbrance, when fast, and bestow'd in a settled Posture; you do a sick Man more Harm than Good, in removing him from Place to Place; you fix and establish the Disease by Motion, as Stoops dive deeper into the Earth by being mov'd up and down in the Place where they are design'd to stand. And therefore it is not enough to get remote from the Public; 'tis not enough to shift the Soil only, a Man must fly from the popular Dispositions that have taken Possession of his Soul, he must sequester and ravish himself from himself.

————— *Rupi jam vincula, dicas,
Nam luctata canis nodum arripit, attamen illa
Cum fugit, à collo trahitur pars longa catenæ §.*

* *Virg. Æn. l. 4.*
§ *Perseus Sat. 5.*

† *Hor. lib. 2. Ode 16.*

Thoult

Thou'lt say perhaps, that thou hast broke the Chain,
 Why, so the Dog has knaw'd the Knot in twain
 That ty'd him there, but as he flies, he feels
 The pond'rous Chain still rattling at his Heels.

We still carry our Fetters along with us; 'tis not an absolute Liberty; we yet cast back a kind Look upon what we have left behind us; the Fancy is still full of our old way of Living.

— *Nisi purgatum est pectus, quæ prælia nobis,
 Atque pericula tunc ingratis insinuandum?
 Quantæ conscindunt hominum cupidinis acres
 Sollicitum curæ, quantique perinde timores?
 Quidve superbia, spurcitia, at petulantia quantas
 Efficiunt clades, quid luxus, desidiæque*.*

Unless the Mind be purg'd, what Conflicts streight
 And Dangers will it not insinuate?
 The lustful Man how many bitter Cares,
 Do gall, and fret, and then how many Fears?
 What horrid Mischiefs, what dire Slaughters too
 Will not Pride, Lust, and Petulancy do?
 And what from Luxury can we expect,
 And Sloth; but all the Ill, Ill can effect?

The Mind itself is the Disease, and cannot escape from itself;

In culpa est animus, qui se non effugit nunquam.*

Still in the Mind the Fault does lye,
 That never from itself can fly.

and therefore is to be call'd home, and confin'd within it self; that is the true Solitude, and that may be enjoy'd

* *Lucret. l. 5.*

† *Hor. l. 1. Ep. 14.*

even in populous Cities, and the Courts of Kings, though more commodiously apart.

Now since we will attempt to live alone, and to wave all Manner of Conversation amongst Men, let us so order it, that our Contentation may depend wholly upon ourselves, and dissolve all Obligations that ally us to others: Let us obtain this from ourselves that we may live alone in good Earnest, and live at our Ease too. *Stilpo* having escap'd from the Fire that consum'd the City where he liv'd, and where he had his Wife, Children, Goods, and every Thing he was Master of, destroy'd by the Flame; *Demetrius Poliorcetes* seeing him, in so great a Ruin of his Country, appear with so serene and undisturb'd a Countenance, ask'd him, if he had receiv'd no Loss? To which he made Answer, No; and that, Thanks be to God, nothing was lost of his; which also was the Meaning of the Philosopher *Antisthenes*, when he pleasantly said, that Men should only furnish themselves with such Things as would swim, and might with the Owner escape the Storm; and certainly a wise Man never loses any Thing, if he has himself. When the City of *Nola* was ruin'd by the *Barbarians*, *Paulinus* who was Bishop of that Place, having there lost all he had and himself a Prisoner, pray'd after this Manner, O Lord, defend me from being sensible of this Loss; for thou knowest, they have yet touch'd nothing of that which is mine; The Riches that made him rich, and the Goods that made him good, were still kept entire. This it is to make Choice of Treasures, that can secure themselves from Plunder and Violence, and to hide them in such a Place, into which no one can enter, and that are not to be betrayed by any but ourselves. Wives, Children, and Goods must be had, and especially Health, by him that can get it; but we are not so to set our Hearts upon them, that our Happiness must have it's Dependance upon any of these; we must reserve a Back-shop, a With-drawing-Room, wholly our own, and entirely free wherein to settle our true Liberty, our principal Solitude and Retreat. And in this, we must for the most Part entertain ourselves with ourselves, and so privately, that no Knowledge or Communication, of any exotick Concern, be admitted there, there to laugh and to talk, as if without Wife, Children, Goods, Train,

or Attendance; to the End, that when it shall so fall out, that we must lose any, or all of these, it may be no new thing to be without them. We have a Mind pliable of itself, that will be Company; it has wherewithal to attack, and to defend, to receive and to give: Let us not then fear in this Solitude, to languish under an uncomfortable Vacancy.

In solis sis tibi turba locis.

In solitary Places be
Unto thyself good Company.

Virtue is satisfied with herself, without Discipline, without Words, without Effects. In our ordinary Actions, there is not one of a Thousand that concerns ourselves: He that thou seest scrambling up the Ruins of that Wall, furious and transported, against whom so many *Musket* Shot are levell'd; and that other all over Scars, pale, and fainting with Hunger, and yet resolv'd rather to die, than to open his Gate to him, dost thou think that these Men are there upon their own Account? No, peradventure in the Behalf of one whom they never saw, and that never concerns himself for their Pains, and Danger, but lyes wallowing the while in Sloth and Pleasure: This other blear-ey'd, slovenly Fellow, that thou seest come out of his Study after Midnight, dost thou think he has been tumbling over Books, to learn how to become a better Man, wiser and more content: No such Matter, he will there end his Days, but he will teach Posterity the Measure of *Plautus's* Verses, and the Orthography of a Latin Word: Who is it that does not voluntarily exchange his Health, his Repose, and his very Life for Reputation, and Glory? The most useles, frivolous, and false Coin that passes current amongst us: Our own Death does not sufficiently terrify, and trouble us, let us moreover charge ourselves with those of Wives, Children, and Family: Our own Affairs do not afford us Anxiety enough, let us undertake those of our Neighbours and Friends, still more to break our Brains, and to torment us.

*Vab quemquamne hominem in animum instituere aut
Parare, quod sit charius, quam ipse est sibi * ?*

Alas ? What Mortal will be so unwise
Any Thing dearer than himself to prize ?

Solitude seems to me to have the best Pretence in such as have already employed their most active and flourishing Age in the World's Service; by the Example of *Thales*. We have lived enough for others, let us at least live out the small Remnant of Life for our Selves; let us now call in our Thoughts and Intentions to our Selves, and to our own Ease, and Repose: 'tis no light Thing to make a sure Retreat, it will be enough to do without mixing other Enterprises and Designs, since God gives us Leisure to prepare for, and to order our Remove, let us make ready pack up our Baggage, take Leave betimes of the Company; let us disentangle ourselves from those violent Importunities that engage us elsewhere, and separate us from ourselves: We must break the Knot of our Obligations, how strong soever, and hereafter love this, or that; but espouse nothing, but ourselves: That is to say, let the Remainder be our own, but not so join'd and close, as not to be forc'd away without slaying us, or tearing Part of the whole Piece. The greatest Thing in the World is for a Man to know, that he is his own: 'Tis Time to wean ourselves from Society, when we can no more add any Thing to it; and who is not in a Condition to lend, must forbid himself to borrow. Our Forces begin to fail us, and are of no more Use for foreign Offices; let us call them in, and lock them up at Home; He that can within himself cast off, and disband the Offices of so many Friendships, and that Tumult of Conversation he has contracted in the busy World, let him do it: In this Decay of Nature, which renders him useles, burthensom, and importunate to others, let him have a Care of being useles, burthensom, and importunate to himself: Let him sooth, and caress himself, and above all Things be sure to govern himself with Reverence to his Reason and

* *Ter. Adel. Act. 1. Sc.*

Conscience.

Conscience, to that Degree, as to be ashamed to make a false Step in their Presence. *Rarum est enim, ut satis se quisque vereatur* ||. For 'tis rarely seen that Men have Respect, and Reverence enough for themselves. Socrates says, that Boys are to cause themselves to be instructed, Men to exercise themselves in well doing, and old Men to retire from all Civil and military Employments, living at their own Discretion, without the Obligation to any certain Office. There are some Complexions more proper for these Precepts of Retirement, than others, such as are of a soft and faint Apprehension, and of a tender Will, and Affection, as I am, will sooner encline to this Advice, than active and busy Souls, who embrace all, engage in all, and are hot upon every Thing, who offer, present, and give themselves up to every Occasion. We are to serve ourselves with these accidental and extraneous Things, so far as they are pleasant to us, but by no Means to lay our principal Foundation there. This is no true one, neither Nature nor Reason can allow it so to be, and why therefore should we contrary to their Laws, enslave our own Contentment, by giving it into the Power of another? To anticipate also the Accidents of Fortune, and to deprive ourselves of those Things we have in our own Power, as several have done upon the Account of Devotion, and some Philosophers by Discourse; a Man to be his own Servant, to lye hard, to put out his own Eyes, throw Wealth into the River, and to seek out Grief, (the one by the Uneasiness and Misery of this Life, to pretend to Bliss in another; the other by laying himself low, to avoid the Danger of falling) are Acts of an excessive Nature. The stoutest and most obstinate Natures, render even their most abstruse Retirements glorious and exemplary.

—*Tuta, & parvula laudo,
Cum res deficiunt, satis inter vilia fortis:
Verum ubi quid melius contigit, & unctius idem
Hos supere, & solos aio bene vivere, quorum
Conspicitur nitidis fundata pecunia villis* *.

|| Pythag.

* Hor. l. 1. Epist. 15.

T 4

Where

Where Plenty fails,
 A secure Competency I like well,
 And love the Man Disaster cannot quell :
 But when good Fortune with a liberal Hand
 Her Gifts bestows ; those Men I understand
 Alone happy to live, and to be wise,
 Whose Money does in neat built Villa's rise.

A great deal less would serve my Turn well enough. 'Tis enough for me under Fortune's Favour to prepare myself for her Disgrace, and being at my Ease to represent to myself, as far as my Imagination can stretch, the Ill to come ; as we do at Jufts, and Tiltings, where we counterfeit War in the greatest Calm of Peace. I do not think *Arcefilaus* the Philosopher, the less temperate and reform'd for knowing that he made Use of Gold, and Silver Vessels, when the Condition of his Fortune allow'd him so to do : But have a better Opinion of him, than if he had deny'd himself what he us'd with Liberality and Moderation. I see the utmost Limits of natural Necessity, and considering a poor Man begging at my Door oft-times more jocund and more healthy than I myself am, I put myself into his Place, and attempt to dress my Mind after his Mode ; and running in like Manner over other Examples, though I fancy Death, Poverty, Contempt, and Sickness treading on my Heels, I easily resolve not to be affrighted ; though a less than I am takes them with so much Patience, I am not willing to believe that a less Understanding can do more than a greater ; or that the Effects of Precept cannot arrive to as great a Height, as those of Custom : And knowing of how uncertain Duration these accidental Conveniencies are, I never forget, in the Height of all my Enjoyments, to make it my chiefest Prayer to Almighty God, that he will please to render me content with myself, and the Condition wherein he has placed me. I see several young Men very gay, and frolick ; who nevertheless keep a Provision of Pills in their Trunk at home, to take when the Rheum shall fall, which they fear so much the less, because they think they have Remedy at Hand : Every one should do the same, and moreover if they find themselves

themselves subject to some more violent Disease, should furnish themselves with such Medicines as may numb and stupify the Part: The Employment a Man should chuse for a sedentary Life, ought neither to be a laborious, nor an unpleasing one, otherwise 'tis to no Purpose at all to be retir'd: And this depends upon every one's Liking and Humour; mine has no Manner of Complacency for Husbandry, and such as love it, ought to apply themselves to it with Moderation.

Conantur sibi res, non se submittere rebus.*

A Man should to himself his Business fit,
But should not to Affairs himself submit.

Husbandry is otherwise a very servile Employment, as *Sallust* tells us; though some Parts of it are more excusable than the rest, as the Care of Gardens, which *Zenophon* attributes to *Cyrus*, and a Mean may be found out betwixt sordid and homely Affection, so full of perpetual Solitude, which is seen in Men who make it their entire Business and Study, and that stupid and extreme Negligence, letting all Things go at Random, we see in others.

————— *Democriti pecus edit agellos,
Cultaque, dum peregre est animus sine corpore velox †.*

*Democritus's Cattle spoils his Corn,
Whilst he from thence on Fancy's Wings is born.*

But let us hear what Advice the younger *Pliny* gives his Friend † *Cornelius Rufus*, upon the Subject of Solitude; I advise thee, in the plentiful Retirement wherein thou art, to leave to thy Hinds and inferior Servants the Care of thy Husbandry, and to addict thyself to the Study of Letters, to extract from thence something that may be entirely and absolutely thine own. By which, he means Reputation; like *Cicero*, who says, that he would employ his Solitude

* *Hor. Ep. 1.* † *Hor. Ep. 12.* ‡ *Caninius Rufus.*
and

and Retirement from publick Affairs, to acquire by his Writings an immortal Life.

*Usque adeo ne
Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter*?*

Is all thy Learning nothing, unless thou,
That thou art knowing, make all others know?

It appears to be Reason, when a Man talks of retiring from the World, that he should look quite out of himself. These do it but by Halves. They design well enough for themselves, 'tis true, when they shall be no more in it; but still they pretend to extract the Fruits of that Design from the World, when absented from it, by a ridiculous Contradiction. The Imagination of those who seek Solitude, upon the Account of Devotion, filling their Hopes with Certainty of divine Promises in the other Life, is much more rationally founded. They propose to themselves God, an infinite Object in Goodness and Power. The Soul has there wherewithal, at full Liberty, to satiate her Desires. Afflictions and Sufferings turn to their Advantage, being undergone for the Acquisition of an eternal Health, and everlasting Joys. Death is to be wished and longed for, where it is the Passage to so perfect a Condition. And the Tartness of these severe Rules they impose upon themselves, is immediately taken away by Custom, and all their carnal Appetites baffled and subdued, by refusing to humour and feed them; they being only supported by Use and Exercise. This sole End therefore of another happy and immortal Life, is that which really merits, that we should abandon the Pleasures and Conveniencies of this. And who can really and constantly enflame his Soul with the Ardour of this lively Faith and Hope, does erect for himself in this Solitude a more voluptuous and delicious Life, than any other Sort of Living whatever. Neither the End then, nor the Means of this Advice of *Pliny* pleases me, for we often fall out of the Frying-pan into the Fire. This Book-Employ-

* *Per. Sat. 1.*

ment is as painful as any other, and as great an Enemy to Health, which ought to be the first Thing in every Man's Prospect; neither ought a Man to be allured with the Pleasure of it, which is the same that destroys the wary, avaricious, voluptuous and ambitious Men. The Wise give us Caution enough to beware of the Treachery of our Desires, and to distinguish true and entire Pleasures from such as are mixed and complicated with greater Pain. For the greatest Part of Pleasures (say they) wheedle and caress only to strangle us, like those Thieves whom the *Ægyptians* called *Philiste*; and if the Head-Ach should come after Drunkenness, we should have a Care of drinking too much: But Pleasure to deceive us, marches before, and conceals her Train. Books are pleasant, but if by being over studious we impair our Health, and spoil our good Humour, two of the best Pieces we have, let us give it over; for I for my Part am one of those who think, that no Fruit derived from them can recompense so great a Loss. As Men who feel themselves weakned by a long Series of Indisposition, give themselves up at last to the Mercy of Medicine, and submit to certain Rules of Living, which they are for the future never to transgress; so he who retires, weary of, and disgusted with, the common Way of Living, ought to model this new one he enters into, by the Rules of Reason, and to institute and establish it by Premeditation, and after the best Method he can contrive. He ought to have taken Leave of all Sorts of Labour, what Advantage soever he may propose to himself by it; and generally to have shaken off all those Passions which disturb the Tranquillity of Body and Soul, and then chuse the Way that best suits with his own Humour:

Unusquisque sua noverit ire via *.

Every one best doth know,
In his own Way to go.

In Menagery, Study, Hunting, and all other Exercises,
Men are to proceed to the utmost Limits of Pleasure; but

* *Propert. lib. Eleg. 25.*

must take Heed of engaging farther, where Solitude and Trouble begin to mix. We are to reserve so much Employment only, as is necessary to keep us in Breath, and to defend us from the Inconveniencies, that the other Extreme, of a dull and stupid Laziness, brings along with it. There are some sterill, knotty Sciences, and chiefly hammered out for the Crowd; let such be left to them who are engaged in the publick Service: I for my Part care for no other Books, but either such, as are pleasant and easy, to delight me, or those, that comfort and instruct me, how to regulate my Life and Death.

*Tacitum sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Curantem quidquid dignum sapientem bonoque est*.*

Silently Meditating in the Groves
What best, a wise and honest Man behoves.

Wiser Men propose to themselves a Repose wholly spiritual, as having great Force and Vigour of Mind; but for me, who have a very ordinary Soul, I find it very necessary, to support myself with bodily Conveniences; and Age having of late deprived me of those Pleasures that were most acceptable to me, I instruct and whet my Appetite to those that remain, and are more suitable to this other Season. We ought to hold with all our Force, both of Hands and Teeth, the Use of the Pleasures of Life, that our Years, one after another, snatch away from us.

— *Carpamus dulcia, nostrum est,
Quod vivis, cinis, & manes, & fabula fiet †.*

Let us enjoy Life's Sweets, for shortly we,
Ashes, pale Ghosts, and Fables, all shall be.

Now as to the End that *Pliny* and *Cicero* propose to us of Glory; 'tis infinitely wide of my Account; for Ambi-

* *Hor. Ep. 44. lib. 1.*

† *Persius, Sat. 5.*
tion,

tion, is, of all other, the most contrary Humour to Solitude; and Glory and Repose are so inconsistent, that they cannot possibly inhabit in one and the same Place; and for so much as I understand, those have only their Arms and Legs disengaged from the Crowd, their Mind and Intention remain engaged behind more than ever.

Tun', vetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas ?.*

Doſt thou, old Dotard, at theſe Years,
Gather fine Tales for others Ears?

They are only retired to take a better Leap, and by a stronger Motion, to give a brisker Charge into the Crowd. Will you ſee how they ſhoot ſhort? Let us put into the Counterpoize, the Advice of two Philoſophers of two very different Sects, writing the one to *Idomeneus*, the other to *Lucilius*, their Friends, to retire into Solitude from worldly Honours, and the Adminiſtration of publick Affairs. You have, ſay they, hitherto lived Swimming and Floating, come now and die in the Harbour: You have given the firſt Part of your Life to the Light, give what remains to the Shade. It is impoſſible to give over Buſineſs, if you do not alſo quit the Fruit, and therefore diſengage yourſelves from all the Concerns of Name and Glory. 'Tis to be feared, the Luſtre of your former Actions will give you but too much Light, and follow you into your moſt private and obſcure Retreat: Quit with other Pleaſures, that which proceeds from the Approbation of another: And as to your Knowledge and Parts, never concern yourſelves, they will not loſe their Effect, if yourſelves be ever the better for them. Remember him, who being asked, Why he took ſo much Pains in an Art, that could come to the Knowledge of but few Perſons? A few are enough for me, reply'd he, I have enough of one, I have enough of never a one. He ſaid true, you and a Companion are Theatre enough to one another, or you to yourſelf. Let us be to you the whole People, and the whole People

* *Persius, Sat. 1.*

to you but one: 'Tis an unworthy Ambition, to think to derive Glory from a Man's Sloth and Privacy: You are to do like the Beasts of Chace, who put out the Track at the Entrance into their Den. You are to concern yourself no more how the World talks of you, but how you are to talk to yourself: Retire yourself into yourself, but first prepare yourself there to receive yourself: It were a Folly to trust yourself in your own Hands, if you cannot govern yourself; a Man may as well miscarry alone, as in Company, till you have rendred yourself as such, as before whom you dare not trip, and till you have a Bashfulness and Respect for yourself, *Observantur species honestæ animo* *; *Let just and honest Things be still represented to the Mind.* Present continually to your Imagination, *Cato, Phocion, and Aristides*, in whose Presence the Fools themselves will hide their Faults: Make them Controulers of all your Intentions. Should your Intentions deviate from Virtue, your Respect to those Men will again set you right; they will keep you in the Way of being contented with yourself to borrow nothing of any other but yourself; to restrain and fix your Soul in certain and limited Thoughts, wherein she may please herself, and having understood the true and real Goods, which Men the more enjoy, the more they understand, to rest satisfied, without Desire of Prolongation of Life or Memory. This is the Precept of the true and natural Philosophy, not of a boasting and prating Philosophy, such as that of the two former.

* *Cicero Tusc. Quæst. 1. 2.*

