THE LIBRARY IS OFTEN THE PLACE WHERE you can find the spirit of the monk: in silence, the lustre of old woodwork, the smell of ageing paper, reading, retreat from the world, rules and authorities, tradition, volumes of wisdom, catalogues for contemplation.

In an age of information technology, monks of the library are being put out on the streets, no longer finding a home there. Where will they go?

A home library, if only five volumes on a piece of special wood, might give the monk a place of refuge and serve the souls of all who live there.