

TELEMACHUS.

BOOK XXIII.

ARGUMENT.

IDOMENEUS, fearing the departure of his guests, proposes several embarrassing affairs to Mentor, and assures him that without his assistance they cannot be adjusted. Mentor lays down general principles for his conduct, but continues steady to his purpose of departing with Telemachus for Ithaca. Idomeneus tries another expedient to detain them: he encourages the passion of Telemachus for Antiope, and engages him and Mentor in a hunting party with his daughter; she is in the utmost danger from a wild boar, but is delivered by Telemachus; he feels great reluctance to leave her, and has not fortitude to bid Idomeneus farewell: being encouraged by Mentor, he surmounts his difficulties, and embarks for his country.

IDOMENEUS, who dreaded the departure of Telemachus and Mentor, formed many pretences to delay them. He told Mentor, that he could not, without his assistance, determine a dispute which had arisen between Diophanes, a priest of Jupiter Conservator, and Heliódorus, a priest of Apollo, concerning the omens that were to be drawn from the flight of birds, and the entrails of victims. »

« And why, » said Mentor, « should you concern yourself about sacred things? Leave questions of religion to be decided by the Etrurians, who have preserved the most ancient oracles by tradition, and who are by inspiration interpreters of the gods to men. Employ your authority only to suppress these disputes in the beginning; act with perfect neutrality while they continue; and content yourself with supporting the decision, when it shall be made. Remember that kings ought to submit to religion, and not make it: religion is from the gods, and above regal authority. If kings

TELÉMACO.

LIBRO XXIII.

SUMARIO.

IDOMENEO, temiendo la Salida de sus huéspedes, propone á Mentor muchos negocios dificultosos, asegurandole que no podra arreglarlos sino con su socorro. Mentor le declara como debe portarse, y se mantiene firme en llevarse á Telémaco. Procura Idomeneo todavía detenerlos animando la pasión de este hácia Antiope: los lleva á una partida de Caza, á la qual quiere que asista su hija. Un jabali despedazaria á esta, si Telémaco no le salvará la vida. Le cuesta despues mucho trabajo el dexar á la princesa, y despedirse de su padre: pero animado por Mentor, vence su sentimiento, y se embarca para su patria.

IDOMENEO, que temia la salida de Telémaco y Mentor, no pensaba si no en retardarla. Representó á Mentor que no podia arreglar sin el una disputa que se habia levantado entre Diosfanes, sacerdote de Júpiter conservador, y Heliódoro, sacerdote de Apolo, sobre los agüeros que se sacan del vuelo de las aves y de las entrañas de las victimas.

¿ Porque, le respondió Mentor, os habeis de meter en cosas sagradas? Dexad que lo decidan los Etruscos, que tienen la tradicion de los oráculos mas antiguos, y son inspirados para ser intérpretes de los dioses; emplead solamente vuestra autoridad para ahogar esas disputas en su mismo nacimiento. No se os conozca parcialidad ni preocupacion; contentaos con confirmar la decision quando se haya hecho: acordaos que debe un Rey sujetarse á la religion, sin pretender jamas arreglarla: de los dioses sale la religion, y es superior á los Reyes. Si quieren estos arreglarla, en lu-

concern themselves with religion, they do not protect it as a divine institution, but degrade it to a mere instrument of state policy. The power of kings is so great, and that of others so little, that religion would be in danger of becoming just what the sovereign would wish to make it, if he should undertake to determine any question about its doctrines or duties. Leave, then, the decision of these questions, implicitly, to the friends of the gods; and exert your authority only against those who will not conform to their determination when it is made.»

Idomeneus then complained of the perplexity he suffered, from the great number of causes between private persons; which he was pressed, with great importunity, to decide.

«Decide,» said Mentor, «all new questions of right, by which some general maxim of jurisprudence will be established, or some precedent given for the explanation of laws already in force: but do not take upon you to determine all questions of private property: they would overwhelm and embarrass you, by their variety and number; justice would necessarily be delayed for your single decision; and all subordinate magistrates would become useless. You would be overwhelmed and confounded; the regulation of petty affairs, would leave you neither time, nor thought, for business of importance; and, after all, petty affairs would not be regulated. Avoid, therefore, a state of such disadvantage and perplexity; refer private disputes to subordinate judges; and do nothing yourself, but what others cannot do for you: then, and then only, fulfil the duties of a king.»

«But,» said Idomeneus, «there are many persons of high birth about me, who have followed my fortunes, and lost great possessions in my service; these persons seek some kind of recompence for their losses, by obtaining certain young women of great wealth in marriage: they urge me, with incessant importunity, to interpose in their behalf, and a single word from me would ensure them success.»

«It is true,» said Mentor, «a single word from you would be sufficient; but that single word would

gar de protegerla la esclavizaran. Son tan poderosos los Reyes, y los demas hombres tan flojos, que estara todo á pique de que lo trastornen aquellos á su arbitrio, si se les dexa meterse en las cuestiones que tocan á las cosas sagradas. Dexad pues que los amigos de los dioses decidan con entera libertad; y bastéos contener á los que no obedecieren á su sentencia, despues de declarada.

Despues Idomenéo se quexó del apuro en que se hallaba tocante á un gran numero de pleytos entre varios particulares, que querian que sentenciara á toda priesa.

Decidid, le respondió Mentor, todas las cuestiones nuevas que tiran á establecer maximas generales de jurisprudencia, y interpretar las leyes: pero no os encargéis jamás de juzgar las causas particulares: ellas vendrian desde luego á sitiarnos. Seriais el unico juez de vuestro pueblo, todos los demas jueces subalternos se harian inutiles; os hallariais oprimido por negocios de corta importancia, abandonando á los mayores, sin poder acabar con las menudencias de los pequeños. Guardaos pues de entrar en semejante laberinto; dirigid los negocios particulares á los jueces ordinarios: no hagais sino lo que otro no puede hacer para aliviaros; entónces cumplireis con las verdaderas obligaciones de un Rey.

Tambien me atormentan, decia Idomenéo, para ciertos casamientos. Los sujetos de distinguido nacimiento que me han seguido en todas las guerras, y que han perdido muy grandes haciendas sirviendome, quisieran hallar cierta recompensa casandose con doncellas ricas: con decir una palabra, les proporcionare estos establecimientos.

Es verdad, respondió Mentor, que no os costaria sino una palabra; pero esta misma os saldria dema-

cost you too dear. Would you deprive fathers and mothers of the liberty and consolation of chusing their sons-in-law, and consequently, their heirs? This, surely, would reduce them to the severest and most abject slavery, and make you answerable for all the domestic evils of your people. Marriage, at the best, is not the couch of unmingled delight; and why should you scatter new thorns among the down? If you have faithful servants to reward, distribute among them some unappropriated lands; and give them, besides, rank and honours suited to their merits and condition: if more still is necessary, add to these pecuniary gratifications from your treasury; and make good the deficiency by retrenching your expence; but never think of paying your own debts with the property of others; much less, with property transferred in violation of the most sacred rights, by giving a daughter in marriage, without the consent of her parents.»

This difficulty being removed, Idomeneus immediately proposed another. «The Sibarites,» said he, «complain that certain districts, which we have given, as uncultivated lands, amongst the strangers whom we have drawn to Salentum, belong to them. Must I admit this claim? and shall I not encourage other nations, to make demands upon our territory if I do?»

«The Sibarites,» said Mentor, «should not be implicitly believed in their own cause: nor is it just to believe you implicitly in yours.» — «Upon whose testimony will you then depend,» said Idomeneus? «Upon that of neither of the parties,» replied Mentor: «some neighbouring nation, that cannot be suspected of partiality to either, must determine between you. The Sipontines are such a nation; they have no interest that is incompatible with your's.»

«But am I obliged,» said Idomeneus, «to submit to an umpire? Am I not a sovereign prince; and is a sovereign prince to leave the extent of his dominions, to the decision of foreigners?»

«If you resolve to keep the lands in question,» answered Mentor, «you must suppose that your claim to them is good: if the Sibarites insist upon a restoration, they must, on their part, suppose their right to

siado cara. ¿Quisierais quitar á los padres la libertad y el consuelo de escoger á sus yernos, y por consiguiente á sus herederos? Seria esto poner á todas las familias en la mas rigurosa esclavitud; os hariais responsable de todos los infortunios domesticos de vuestros ciudadanos. Bastantes espinas tienen los casamientos sin que se les añada todavía esta amargura. Si tenéis que premiar á servidores leales, dadles tierras incultas, con honores y grados proporcionados á su nacimiento y servicios, añadiendo, si es menester, algun dinero sacado de la propia economía: pero nunca debeis satisfacer vuestras deudas, sacrificando á las doncellas ricas, á pesar de sus padres.

Dexando esta pregunta Idoméneo pasó luego á otra. Los Sibaritas, decia el, se queixan de que hemos usurpado tierras suyas, para darlas, como incultas, á los extrangeros que, poco ha, hemos atraído aqui. ¿He de ceder á estos pueblos? Si lo hago, creará qualquiera que puede formar desde luego pretensiones contra nosotros.

No es justo, respondió Mentor que á los Sibaritas se les dé credito en la propia causa; pero tampoco á vos. ¿A quien se ha de dar pues, replicó Idoméneo? A ninguno, prosiguió Mentor. Pero se ha de tomar por árbitro á un pueblo vecino de que no desconfie uno ni otro; tales son los Sipontinos, que no tienen ningun interés contrario al vuestro.

¿Pero estoy yo obligado, respondia Idoméneo, á remitirme á algun arbitro? ¿No soy Rey? ¿Esta obligado un soberano á someterse á unos extrangeros, quando se trata de la extension de sus dominios?

Siguió así Mentor: una vez que os manteneis firme, os parecerá que vuestro derecho es inconcuso: por otra parte, no quieren ceder nada los Sibaritas; pretenden ellos que es cierto su derecho. En medio de aquellos

be incontestible. Your opinions being thus opposite, the difference must either be accommodated by an umpire mutually chosen, or decided by force of arms: there is no medium. If you should enter a country, inhabited by people who had neither judge nor magistrate, and among whom, every family assumed a right of determining differences with a neighbouring family by violence, would you not deplore their misfortune, and think with horror of the dreadful confusion which must arise from every man's being armed against his fellow? Can you then believe, that the gods would look with less horror upon the earth, of which all the inhabitants may be considered as one people, if every nation, which is but a more numerous family, should assume the right of determining, by violence, all differences with a neighbouring nation? An individual, who possesses his field as an inheritance from his ancestors, depends wholly upon the authority of the laws, and the judgment of the magistrate, for the security of his property; and would be severely punished, as guilty of sedition, if he should endeavour to secure, by force, what was given him by right: do you then believe that kings are at liberty to support their pretensions by violence, without having first tried what could be done by expedients, more consonant to reason and humanity? Is not justice yet more sacred and inviolable, as an attribute of kings, when it has whole nations for its objects, than as a private virtue in an individual, when it relates only to a ploughed field? Is he a villain and a robber who seizes only a few acres, and his he just, is he a hero, who wrests whole provinces from their possessor? If men are subject to prejudice, partiality, and error, with respect to the trifling concerns of private property, is it probable that they should be less influenced by such motives, in affairs of state? Should we rely upon our own judgment, where it is most likely to be biassed by passion? and should not error be most dreaded, where its consequences will be most fatal? The mistake of a prince with respect to his own pretensions, is the cause of ravage, famine, and massacres, of irreparable loss to the present generation; and of such depravation of

pareceres tan opuestos, es menester que un arbitro escogido por ambas partes ajuste la disputa, ó que se decida por la suerte de las armas; no hay medio. Si entrarais en una republica en donde no hubiese magistrados ni jueces, y a cada familia le pareciese tener derecho de sostener con violencia sus pretensiones contra sus vecinos, llorariais la desgracia de semejante nacion, y os causaria horror aquel terrible desorden, en que se armarian unas contra otras todas las familias. ¿Pensais acaso que los dioses miran con menos horror el mundo entero que es la republica universal, si cada pueblo, que no es sino una familia grande, creyera tener derecho suficiente para hacerse violentamente á si mismo justicia en todas sus pretensiones contra los demas pueblos vecinos? Un particular que poseé un campo, como herencia de sus mayores, no puede mantenerse en él sino por la autoridad de las leyes y por sentencia de un magistrado: el seria castigado muy severamente como sedicioso, si quisiera conservar por la fuerza lo que la justicia le ha dado. ¿Pensais que los Reyes puedan valerse desde luego de la violencia para sostener sus pretensiones, sin haber probado primero todos los medios suaves y humanos? ¿No es todavia mas sagrada é inviolable la justicia para los Reyes quando se trata de paises enteros, que para los particulares relativamente a algunos campos cultivados? ¿Será injusto y robador el que no tome sino algunas yugadas de tierra? ¿Será justo, será heroe el que tome provincias? ¿Si se apasionan, si se lisonjean, si se ciegan en los pequeños intereses de los particulares, no deben temer todavia mas semejantes engaños en los grandes intereses del estado? ¿Se dará uno crédito á si mismo, en una materia en que hay tantos motivos para desconfiar de si propio? ¿No temeran engañarse en casos en que el error de un hombre solo tiene resultas horribles? El error de un Rey que se lisonjea en sus pretensiones ocasiona muchas veces estragos, hambres, matanzas, depravaciones de costumbres, cuyas funestas conseqüencias se extienden hasta los siglos mas remotos. ¿Un Rey que junta siempre al rededor de su persona tantos adulares, no temerá que le adulen en tales ocasiones? Si se refiere á algun

manners, as may extend calamity to the end of time. A king knows that he is always surrounded by flatterers; should he not therefore suppose, that, upon such occasions, he will be flattered? If he leaves his differences to arbitration, he shows himself candid, equitable, and dispassionate; he states the reasons upon which his claim is founded; the umpire is an amicable mediator, not a rigorous judge; and though his determinations do not compel implicit obedience, yet the greatest deference should be paid to them: he does not pronounce sentence like a judge, from whose authority there is no appeal: but he proposes expedients; and, by his advice, the parties make mutual concessions, for the preservation of peace. If war is, at last, inevitable, notwithstanding the king's utmost endeavours to avoid it, he will, at least, have secured the testimony of a good conscience, the esteem of his neighbours, and the protection of the gods. » Idomeneus felt the force of this reasoning; and consented, that the Sipontines should mediate between him and the Sibarites

The king, finding these expedients to prevent the departure of the two strangers ineffectual, endeavoured to detain them by a stronger tie. He had observed the attachment of Telemachus to Antiope: and he hoped, that, by strengthening this, he might accomplish his purpose. When he gave an entertainment, therefore, he frequently commanded his daughter to sing; she obeyed, from a sense of duty; but it was with such regret and confusion, as made it easy to perceive how much she suffered by her obedience. Idomeneus went so far, as to intimate his desire, that the subject of her song might be the victory which had been obtained over the Daunians and Adrastus; but she could not be prevailed upon to sing the praises of Telemachus: she declined it with modest respect, and her father thought fit to acquiesce. There was something in her voice inexpressibly tender and sweet; Telemachus felt all its power, and his emotion was too great to be concealed. Idomeneus remarked it with pleasure; but Telemachus appeared not to perceive his design: he could not quench the sensibility of passion,

arbitro para terminar la controversia, hace ver su equidad, buena fé y moderacion; el publica los solidos motivos sobre que se funda su causa. El arbitro escogido es mediador amigable, y no juez riguroso. No obedecen ciegamente a sus decisiones; pero merece su caracter la mayor atencion: el no sentencia como juez soberano; pero hace proposiciones, y por sus consejos se sacrifica algo para conservar la paz. Si llega la guerra á pesar de todos los cuidados que toma un Rey para conservar la paz, el tiene á lo menos á su favor el testimonio de su conciencia, el aprecio de sus vecinos, y la justa proteccion de los dioses. Movido Idoméneo de este discurso consintió en que los Sipontinos fuesen mediadores entre el y los Sibaritas.

Entonces el Rey, viendo que se inutilizaban todos los medios para hacer que se quedasen ambos extranjeros, probó detenerlos con un lazo mas fuerte. El habia notado lo que Telémaco queria á Antiope; y esperó vencerle por esta pasion. Con esta mira la hizo cantar muchas veces en los convites. Ella lo hizo para no desobedecer á su padre, pero con tanta modestia y tristeza, que bien se conocia lo que sufría obedeciendo. Llegó Idoméneo hasta querer que ella cantase la victoria ganada contra los Daunos y Adrasto: pero nunca pudo ella resolverse á cantar las alabanzas de Telémaco; lo negó con muy respetoso modo, y su padre no se atrevió á violentarla. Su voz dulce y sensible penetraba el corazon del joven hijo de Ulises; el se hallaba del todo conmovido. Idoméneo que tenia los ojos fixados en el, gozaba del gusto de observar su turbacion. Pero Telémaco disimulaba, y hacia como que no conocia las intenciones del Rey. No podia dexar de ser muy agitado en tales ocasiones; pero podia mas con el la razon que el sentimiento; y ya no era aquel Telémaco á quien otra vez tiranizó una pasion loca en

but reason precluded its effects. He was no longer that Telemachus, whom love, the tyrant of the mind, had once held captive in the island of Calypso, while Antiope sung, he was silent; and, as soon as the song was over, he turned the conversation to some other subject.

The king, being again disappointed, resolved to give his daughter the pleasure of a great hunting match. She declined the sport, and entreated with tears to be left behind; but the commands of Idomeneus were peremptory, and she was obliged to obey. She was mounted upon a fiery steed, which, like those that Castor had trained to war, disdained the ground, and was impatient of the rein; yet she governed him with such easy negligence, that he seemed to move by the secret impulse of her will. A train of virgins followed her with that ardour which is the distinction and felicity of youth; and she might have been taken for Diana with her nymphs. The king followed her incessantly with his eye; and while he gazed upon his child forgot the past misfortunes of his life: she fixed also the attention of Telemachus, who was more touched with her modesty, than with the graces of her person, or her dexterity in the field.

The dogs gave chase to a wild boar of an enormous size. He was more furious than that of Calydon; the bristles of his back were as rigid as iron, and as sharp and long as a dart; his eyes seemed to sparkle with fire, and to be suffused with blood; his breath was heard at a remote distance, like the hoarse murmurs of rebellious winds, when Eolus recalls them to his cave, that the tempest may cease: his long tusks were crooked like a sickle, nor could the trees of the forest stand before them. He gored all the dogs that had courage to approach him; and the boldest hunters that pursued him, were afraid he should be overtaken.

Yet Antiope, who, in the course, was swifter than the wind, came up and attacked him; she threw a javelin at him, which wounded him in the shoulder: the blood gushed out in a torrent, and he turned upon his adversary with new fury. The horse of Antiope, however bold and spirited, shuddered and drew back:

la isla de Calipso. Mientras cantaba Antiope, el guardaba un profundo silencio; y al instante que ella habia acabado, el dirigia luego la conversacion hacia otro asunto.

No pudiendo el Rey por este medio acertar con lo que deseaba, resolvió al fin hacer una batida muy grande para dar gusto á su hija. Antiope lloró no queriendo asistir á ella: pero al fin tubo que obedecer á la orden terminante de su padre. Montó ella un caballo ardiente, fogoso, y semejante á los que domaba Castor para los combates; ella le guía sin trabajo: una tropa de doncellas la sigue con ardor; y parece Antiope en medio de ellas como Diana en las selvas. El Rey la vé, y no puede hartarse de verla; en viendola olvida todas sus pasadas desgracias. Tambien la vé Telémaco, y le mueve mas todavia la modestia de Antiope, que su destreza y todas sus prendas.

Los perros perseguian á un jabalí enormemente grande, y tan furioso como el de Calidon: sus largas cerdas eran ásperas y erizadas como dardos; sus ojos centelleantes brotaban sangre y fuego; se oya á lo lejos su resuello, como el ruido sordo de los sediciosos vientos quando Eolo los vuelve á llamar á su antro para apaciguar las tempestades; sus colmillos largos y corvos como la cortadora guadaña de los segadores, cortaban el tronco de los arboles. Todos los perros que se atrevian á embestirle salian despedazados: los mas atrevidos cazadores, al mismo tiempo que le seguian, temian alcanzarle.

Antiope que corria tan ligeramente como los vientos, no temió atacarle de cerca: le dispara un dardo que le atraviesa por encima de la espalda. Sale á borbotones la sangre del feroz animal, y le hace mas furioso: se vuelve hacia la persona que le hirió. Al instante, el caballo de Antiope, no obstante su fiereza,

the monster then rushed against him; and the shock was like that of the ponderous engines, that overturn the bulwarks of the strongest city: the horse could not sustain it, and fell. Antiope was now upon the ground in a situation that left her no power to avoid the tusks of the furious animal, whom she had provoked: but Telemachus, whose attention had been engrossed by her danger, was already dismounted: and with a rapidity scarce less than that of lightning, threw himself between her and the boar that was foaming to revenge his wound: the prince instantly plunged a hunting spear in his body; and the horrid monster fell, agonized with fury, to the ground.

Telemachus cut off the head, which astonished the hunters, and was still terrible when nearly viewed: he presented it immediately to Antiope, who blushed and consulted the eyes of Idomeneus, to know what she should do. Idomeneus, who had been terrified at her danger, and was now transported with joy at her deliverance, made a sign that she should accept the present; she took it, therefore, with an elegant acknowledgment; «I receive from you, with gratitude,» said she, «a more valuable gift: I am indebted to you for my life.» The moment she had spoken, she feared she had said too much, and fixed her eyes upon the ground. Telemachus, who perceived her confusion, could only reply, «How happy is the son of Ulysses, to have preserved a life so precious! How much more happy, if he could unite it with his own?» Antiope made no answer, but mixed hastily with her young companions, and immediately remounted her horse.

Idomeneus would immediately have promised his daughter to Telemachus, but he hoped, that, in a state of uncertainty, his passion would still increase, and that the hope of ensuring his marriage, would prevent his departure from Salentum. Such were the principles upon which Idomeneus reasoned; but the gods deride and disappoint the wisdom of men; the

se estremece y retrocede: el monstruoso jabalí se lanza contra el, semejante á las pesadas máquinas que sacuden las murallas de las plazas mas fuertes. Vacila el caballo y cae. Se vé Antiope en el suelo sin poder evitar el golpe del colmillo del jabalí animado contra ella. Pero Telemaco atento al peligro de la princesa, ya se habia apeado. Mas pronto que el rayo el se arroja entre el caballo abatido y el jabalí que vuelve para vengar su sangre: tiene en sus manos un dardo largo, y le mete casi entero en el vientre del horrible animal, que cae lleno de rabia.

Al instante Telémaco le corta la cabeza, que aun infunde miedo quando se mira de cerca, y asusta á todos los cazadores: el la presenta á Antiope. Ella se pone colorada: consulta los ojos de su padre, que, despues de haber tenido susto tan grande, se halla arrebatado por la alegria viendo á su hija fuera de peligro, y le hace seña que debe aceptar el don que se le ofrece. Tomandole, dixo ella á Telémaco: recibo con agradecimiento otro don vuestro todavia mayor: pues os debo la vida. Apenas acabó de hablar, quando temió haber dicho demasiado; baxó los ojos: y Telémaco, que vió su turbacion, no se atrevió sino á decirle estas palabras: ¡ Dichoso el hijo de Ulises de haber conservado una vida tan preciosa! Pero mas dichoso aun si pudiera pasar la suya junto á vos! Antiope, sin responderle, entró precipitadamente en la tropa de sus jovenes compañeras, y volvió á montar á caballo.

Idomeneo hubieta desde ese instante prometido su hija á Telémaco: pero esperó encender mas su pasion dexandole en la incertidumbre, y creyó aun detenerle todavia en Salento por el deseo de asegurar su casamiento. Asi discurria Idomenéo en su interior: pero los dioses se burlan de la prudencia de los hombres. Lo que habia de detener á Telémaco fue precisamente

very project that was formed to detain Telemachus, hastened his departure. That tumult of love, and hope, and fear, which he now felt in his breast, made him justly distrust his resolution.

Mentor laboured, with double diligence, to revive his desire of returning to Ithaca; and the vessel being now ready, he also pressed Idomeneus to dismiss them. Thus, the life of Telemachus being every moment regulated by the wisdom of Mentor, with a view to the consummation of his glory, he was suffered to remain no longer at any place, than was necessary to exercise his virtues, and add experience to knowledge. Mentor, as soon as Telemachus arrived, had given orders that a vessel should be got ready.

Idomeneus had seen the preparations with inexpressible regret; and when he perceived that the guests, from whom he had derived advantages so numerous and important, could be detained no longer, he gave himself up to melancholy and despair: he shut himself up in the innermost recesses of his palace; and endeavoured to soothe his anguish, by venting it in sighs and tears; he forgot that nature was to be sustained with food, and no interval of tranquillity was bestowed by sleep: his health gradually declined, and a secret anxiety of his heart consumed him: he withered, like a stately tree which covers the earth with its shadow, but is gnawed by a worm at the root, the winds in their fury may have attacked it in vain; the earth may have nourished it with delight; and it may have been spared, in reverence, by the axe: but if the latent mischief is not discovered, it will fade; its leaves, which are its honours, will be scattered in the dust; and the trunk and branches only, rifted and sapless, will remain. Such, in appearance, was Idomeneus, the victim of inconsolable grief.

Telemachus was tenderly affected at his distress, but did not dare to speak to him: he dreaded the day of departure, and was always busied in finding pre-

lo que apresuró su marcha: lo que empezaba á sentir le inspiró una justa desconfianza de si mismo.

Redobló Mentor sus diligencias para inspirar á Telemaco un deseo impaciente de volverse á Itaca. Hizo instancia, pues, á Idomenéo, para que le dexara partir, y ya estaba pronto el baxel; porque habia cuidado de hacerlo prevenir, luego que estuvo Telemaco de vuelta en Salento. Así Mentor, que reglaba todos los momentos de la vida de Telemaco al fin de levantarlo al mas alto grado de gloria, no le obligaba á que se detuviéra en cada lugar, sino quanto era preciso para exercitar su virtud, y hacerle adquirir experiencia.

Idomenéo, que lo habia visto aprestar con sumo disgusto suyo, cayó en una afliccion mortal, y en un abatimiento de espíritu, digno de mover compasion en qualquiera ánimo, entendiendó que sus huéspedes, de los quales habia recibido tantas asistencias, ya se hallaban á punto de dexarlo. Cerrabase en los sitios mas oscuros de la casa, y allí daba algun alivio á su pecho; echando fuera muchos suspiros, y derramando amarguísimas lágrimas. Olvidabase de comer, y no podia mitigar el sueño sus crueles penas; enflaqueciase de día en día, consumiéndose con sus continuos desasosiegos. Como un grande árbol, que asombra con sus espesas ramas una parte de la campaña, que jamas han podido arrancar los vientos; que la fecunda tierra gusta de criar en su seno, y que nunca fué herido de la segur: si un gusano comienza interiormente á roerle aquellos pequeños conductos, por donde corre el xugo á alimentarlo, se empieza luego á poner marchito, sin poder descubrirse la causa de su mal, y perdiendo el primer vigor, despojado de sus hojas, que le eran no de ménos gloria que adorno, no muestra mas que un tronco seco, cubierto de una corteza hendida en muchas partes, y algunas ramas del todo sin verdor; así se mostraba en su pena melancólico Idomenéo.

Enternecido Telemaco, no se atrevia á hablarle, ántes temiendo que se llegaba el día de la partida, buscaba algun pretexto para dilatarla; y hubiera