

# BOOK I

## ARGUMENT

In a council of the Gods, Minerva calls their attention to Ulysses, still a wanderer. They resolve to grant him a safe return to Ithaca. Minerva descends to encourage Telemachus, and in the form of Mentis directs him in what manner to proceed. Throughout this book the extravagance and profligacy of the suitors are occasionally suggested.

Muse make the man thy theme, for shrewdness famed  
And genius versatile, who far and wide  
A Wand'rer, after Ilium overthrown,  
Discover'd various cities, and the mind  
And manners learn'd of men, in lands remote.  
He num'rous woes on Ocean toss'd, endured,  
Anxious to save himself, and to conduct  
His followers to their home; yet all his care  
Preserved them not; they perish'd self-destroy'd  
By their own fault; infatuate! who devoured 10  
The oxen of the all-o'erseeing Sun,  
And, punish'd for that crime, return'd no more.  
Daughter divine of Jove, these things record,  
As it may please thee, even in our ears.  
The rest, all those who had perdition 'scaped  
By war or on the Deep, dwelt now at home;  
Him only, of his country and his wife  
Alike desirous, in her hollow grot  
Calypso, Goddess beautiful, detained 20  
Wooing him to her arms. But when, at length,  
(Many a long year elapsed) the year arrived  
Of his return (by the decree of heav'n)  
To Ithaca, not even then had he,  
Although surrounded by his people, reach'd  
The period of his suff'rings and his toils.  
Yet all the Gods, with pity moved, beheld  
His woes, save Neptune; He alone with wrath  
Unceasing and implacable pursued  
Godlike Ulysses to his native shores.  
But Neptune, now, the Æthiopians fought, 30