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On the Meaning of σφενδωνή in Aesch AG. 997

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ON THE MEANING OF σφενδόνη IN AESCH. AG. 997.

καὶ τὸ μὲν πρὸ χρημάτων
κτισίων ὄκνος βαλὼν
σφενδόνας ἀπ' ἐνμέτρου
οὐκ' ἔδν πρόπας δόμος
πημονᾶς γέμων ἄγαν,
οὐδ' ἐπόντισε σκάφος.

Aesch. Ag. 995-1000.

Hermann followed by most modern editors and translators interprets σφενδόνας ἀπ' ἐνμέτρου by 'bene attemperato iactu,' 'a well measured throw.' This explanation, if explanation it can be called, has been sufficiently refuted by Prof. Housman (*Journal of Philology*, 16, 1888. p. 272) and by Dr. Verrall in his commentary *ad. loc.* and in *Appendix T* p. 213 *sqq.* Prof. Housman renders 'from a capacious sling,' in English metaphor *with unstinting hand.* Dr. Verrall's translation is 'discharging the measured scale,' with a note of interrogation appended. He suggests that some kind of instrument for suspending and weighing heavy goods was called a *sling*, but finally decides that, until the meaning of σφενδόνη in connexion with cargo can be positively ascertained, the whole passage must remain uncertain, and will scarcely repay further discussion. One of the inscriptions discovered by the French at Delphi proves that a σφενδόνη was part of an 'elevator' (*tolleno*) used in unloading vessels. The document, which is of great, historical interest, was first published by Bourguet (*Bull. de Corr. Hell.* 20 1896. p. 197 *sqq.*), and is now to be found in Michel, *Recueil d'Inscriptions Grecques*. n. 591, Dittenberger, *S.I.G.² n.* 140, Baunack, *Sammlung d. Griech. Dialekt.-Inscriften*. Bd. II Hft. 6. n. 2502 p. 652. It contains a record of sums of

money paid by the Council of Delphi between the years 351 B.C. and 328 B.C. (or 326 B.C.) to the commissioners for building the temple (οἱ ναοποιοὶ) and disbursed by these latter to contractors, workmen, and servants of various kinds. In the autumn of 348 B.C. the commissioners received 27 minae 25 staters: τοῦτον ἐδόθη Νικοδάμῳ ποτὶ τὸ ἐγ Κίρραι μαχάνωμα καὶ τοῦ χώματος μναὶ τρεῖς, στατήρες τριάκοντα δύο, ὀβολοὶ ἑπτὰ, ἡμυβέλιον. Νικοδάμῳ σφενδόνας τιμὰν ποτὶ τὸ ἐγ Κίρραι μαχάνωμα στατήρες πενήκοντα εἰς, ὀβολοὶ τέτορες. Οἰασίμῳ λιθαγωγῷ κατὰ θάλασσαν μναὶ ἑκατὶ μία, στατήρες ἑκατὶ πέντε (ll. 45-47). The accounts show that stone, some of it carved and ready for its place in the temple, was being brought by sea from Corinth to Cirrha, the port of Delphi. 'The engine at Cirrha' was something corresponding to a crane; it was made of wood (l. 12), coated with pitch (ll. 55-6) and sometimes broke down (l. 62). The pier (χώμα) may have been an addition to the harbour made necessary by the deep draught of heavily loaded vessels. The 'sling' is thus explained by Bourguet, *op. cit.* p. 218: *c'est sans doute la pièce de la machine où l'on place les fardeaux à soulever: comme elle était suspendue à des cordes (τορτίον), la forme générale en pouvait être comparée à celle d'une fronde. Mais le mot ne se rencontre avec ce sens dans aucun texte.* It is not clear that the cordage (τορτίον l. 29, apparently a collective) for which 3 minae 22 staters were paid to Xenon was bought for an 'elevator,' but there can be no doubt that the stones were somehow attached to ropes and then swung up out of the hold, and on to the quay.

W. WYSE.

NOTES ON THE GREEK LYRIC POETS.

POETAE LYRICI, ed. 4 Bergk (with Hiller-Crusius, 1897).

P. 39, Aleman 23, 11:

ἐκπρεπῆς τὼς ᾤπερ αἶ τις
ἐν βοτοῖς στάσειεν ἵππον
παγὼν ἀεθλοφόρον καναχάποδα
15 τῶν ὑποπετριδίων ὀνείρων.

Blass read τῶν at the beginning of v. 15, so that the reading of our MS. is the same tradition that Herodian followed. If only I could translate the words, I should feel less right to doubt; but I am at a loss to see what is the construction of the genitive; and knowing how common is the confusion of πετρ- and πετρ-, I cannot feel confident