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NOTE ON PINDAR, *OL.* VI. 15, 16 (23, 24).

ἐπτά δ' ἔπειτα πυρᾶν νεκρῶν τελεσθέντων Ταλαί-
 ονιδας
 εἶπεν ἐν Θήβαισι τοιοῦτόν τι ἔπος.

This passage has been viewed with so much suspicion by many, even among the most recent commentators, that it may be pardonable to offer a few words with regard to it.

Among the editors whom I have consulted, Christ prints the MS. reading without comment, but the rest with one exception either (1) understand *τελεσθέντων* to mean 'having been consumed' or (2) express doubt about the correctness of the text, in some cases boldly printing conjectures. Many of the second class appear to assume that *τελεσθέντων* can have no other meaning than that mentioned above.

Of those who believe in the possibility of interpreting *τελεῖν* in this way the champion is Dissen, who puts forward two arguments—(1) the same meaning is found in Aesch. *Cho.* 874 οἱμοὶ πάνοιμοι δεσπότην τελουμένου and (2) ἀνίσαι has a similar use. Now in the passage of Aeschylus *τελουμένου*, though retained by Wecklein, is almost certainly corrupt. To object to the unusual meaning of *τελεῖν* might seem like begging the present question, but apart from that the tense is wrong—for the slave states most emphatically that Aigisthos is already dead—and moreover the word *τελουμένου*, used correctly, ends line 871, while the last word of 873 is *τέλος*. The case of ἀνίσαι proves nothing. It is not permissible in any language to establish anything more than bare possibility by arguing from special uses of one word to those of another of kindred meaning. Of course completion often necessarily involves the cessation of existence in the thing completed, as in *τελεῖν βίον*, ἀναδοχὰν *τελεῖν πόνον* (*Soph. Tr.* 825). But it will not be maintained that a corpse is completed in any sense by burning: and for our present purpose it is enough to deny that *τελεῖν* can mean 'to destroy' except where destruction is a necessary concomitant of completion. The duty of proof rests with those who affirm.

It may be added that this interpretation is loudly denied by the sense of the context. Adrastus, surveying the pyres, exclaimed 'I miss the eye of my host': he knew already that Amphiaraios was not in his place among the living, and now, behold, he was not to be found among the dead. Now this would not strike the chief as he gazed upon an in-

discrete mass of charred animal and vegetable remains *after* the burning. Surely it was when the dead were fairly laid out for the burning, when all had been collected that could be found and assigned each to his proper place, that Adrastus made a round of the pyres and marked the mysterious absence of the seer. This important consideration has been ignored, not only by Dissen and those who agree with him, but by many of those who wish to change the text, e.g. Bergk τ' ἔδεσθέντων, Herwerden τε δαισθέντων.

Tycho Mommsen has shown that none of the ancient commentators understood *τελεσθέντων* to mean 'consumed,' but all who mentioned it took it to refer to the completion of preparations for the burning. His own interpretation is 'bereiten, beschicken (Lat. *componere*)': but this view assumes that it could be used of laying out a single corpse, which is improbable except in special contexts; and it is not the view of the scholia to which he appeals, nor has it seemed convincing to his successors (see the notes of Fennell and Gildersleeve). My own belief is that a Greek reader would have no hesitation in taking the words to mean 'when the full tale of the corpses of the seven pyres had been made up.' And this, I think, is exactly what the ancient commentators meant: the note of Thomas Magister is obscure, but Paraphr. B gives ἐπισωρευθέντων, καταριθμηθέντων (when perhaps Mommsen was influenced by the v. l. καταριθμηθέντων), Schol. B ὅτε συνηθροίσθησαν, Moschop. συναχθέντων καὶ ἀποκαταστάντων ἐπὶ τῷ δοθήσεσθαι τῇ πυρᾷ. Seeing that *καταριθμηθέντων* (or *καταρρυθμ.*) and *ἀποκαταστάντων* are only subsidiary explanations, I may claim the support of all these three. For the sense of *τελεῖν* (to make up a total) which I require, I can cite no exact parallel, because the cases in which it seems to be present are of such a nature that the items are completed as well as the total (*Pind. P.* iv. 104 (185) εἴκοσι ἐκτελέσας ἐνιαυτοῦς, *Soph. Ant.* 1065 κάτισθι μὴ πολλοὺς ἐτι τρόχους ἀμυλλητῆρας ἡλίου τελῶν &c.). But I believe that it was from this very meaning that the meaning of *payment* was derived: take four instances from Ast's Platonic Lexicon—*τελεῖν μισθοῦς, χρήματα, ἐκατὸν μνᾶς, μετοίκιον*. Be that as it may, I claim that the sense is near enough to the strict literal sense of the word to be accepted without the support of other instances.

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