Work and Wages in Athens

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WORK AND WAGES IN ATHENS.

BÜCHSENSCHÜTZ in his *Besitz und Erwerb* comes to the conclusion (on pp. 343 and 349) that the rate of pay in Athens for an artizan was from 5 obols to a drachma and for a labourer 3 obols. The facts and figures on which he bases his conclusions are taken from Boeckh (*Staatshaushaltung*,³ Bk. I. c. 21), the conclusions are his own. Büchsenschütz is indeed somewhat puzzled by two facts, viz. that on 3 obols a man could scarcely support himself, much less a wife and family, and that in an inscription of the Periclean age (now published in *C.I.A.* I. 325) a mere labourer got a drachma a day. However, Büchsenschütz neither attempts to explain these two facts nor does he allow them to modify his conclusions.

But since the publication of *Besitz und Erwerb* some inscriptions have been discovered (now in *C.I.A.* II. ii. 834 *b* and *c*) which throw more light on these points. These inscriptions are fragments of the building accounts of the epistatae of Eleusis and the treasurers of the two goddesses, 834*b* in the archonship of Cephisophon (329/8), and 834*c* some ten or twenty years later. The following passages make it quite clear that at this time the daily wage of an unskilled labourer, finding his own food, was 9 obols: 834*b*, col. I. line 29, *μισθωτοῖς τοῖς . . . πλινθοφοροῦσιν καὶ πηλοδευστοῦσιν καὶ τὰ ξύλα ἀνακομίσασιν καὶ τὸν κέραμον, ἀνδράσιν* ἔξ, *τῷ ἀνδρὶ οἰκοσίτῳ* †|||, line 46, *μισθωτοῖς τοῖς τὰς πλίνθους καὶ τὸν χοῦν ἀποφορήσασιν εἰς τὸ θέατρον καὶ βωλοκοπήσασιν, ἀνδράσιν* ΔΔΔ, *τῆς ἡμέρας τεττάρων ἡμερῶν τῷ ἀνδρὶ οἰκοσίτῳ* †|||, *κεφάλαιον* Η^αΔΔΔ, and line 60, *μισθωτοῖς τοῖς τὴν γῆν βωλοκοπήσασιν . . . ἀνδράσιν* Δ, *τριῶν καὶ δέκα ἡμερῶν, τῷ ἀνδρὶ* †||| *οἰκοσίτῳ, κεφάλαιον* Η^αΔΔΔΓ. Hence line 33, which does not specify the nature of the work but mentions the same rate of pay, probably also refers to unskilled labour, *μισθωτοῖς τοῖς ἐργασαμένοις ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ . . . τῷ ἀνδρὶ οἰκοσίτῳ* †|||. A slightly higher rate is mentioned in line 75, but, owing to mutilation of the inscription, it is not certain whether the pay is merely for unskilled labour or for that and something else, *τῷ τὸν χοῦν ἐχφο[ρ]ήσαντι . . . [ωνι μισθὸς* Π (the *μισθὸς* is for the prytany of 36 days, and amounts to 10 obols a day). Sawyers, like the carriers of earth, etc., earned 1 drachma 3 obols per diem, as appears from col. II. line 24, *πριστῶν ζεύγει τοῖς τὰ ξύλα διαπρίσασιν, τῆς ἡμέρας οἰκοσίτοις* †††, *ἡμερῶν* ΔΔΔΓ, *κεφάλαιον* ΗΓ. A sawyer seems to have made less than a carpenter of one kind, at any rate a door-maker gets for the prytany of 36 days 65 drachmas, *i.e.* 10 $\frac{5}{6}$ obols

per diem, line 67, τῷ ποιήσαντι τὰς θύρας Διουνσίῳ Ἐλευσίνι οἰκοῦντι μισθὸς ϜΔΓ. On the other hand the highest rate of pay mentioned is for brick-setting and carpentering, and is 2 drachmas 3 obols per diem, I. 26, τέκτοσιν τοῖς πλινθοβολήσασιν τὰ περὶ τὸν πυλῶνα καὶ τὸν πύργον καὶ τὰ ξύλινα ἐργασαμένοις, ἀνδράσιν τρισίν, τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκάστω οἰκοσίτῳ ΙΒΙΙΙ. And the next highest wage is 2 drachmas for finishing the *antae*, II. 42, τοῖς ἀποξέσασιν τὰς παραστάδας . . . ἀνδράσιν τέτταρσιν τῷ ἀνδρὶ οἰκοσίτῳ τῆς ἡμέρας ΙΒ, δυοῖν ἡμέραιν ΔΓΒ.

Thus far, day-wages seem to vary with the skill (and perhaps the strength) of the workman but not to fall below 9 obols. I. 31, however, presents something like an exception, ἐπιξέσται καὶ ὑπαγωγεί τοῖς ἐργασαμένοις ἐπὶ τῷ πυλῶνι . . . τῆς ἡμέρας δυοῖν οἰκοσίτοις ΙΒΙΙΙ, ἡμερῶν ΔΓΒ, κεφάλαιον ΔΔΔΔΒΒΙΙΙ, from which it is clear that either the scraper or the adjuster of the bricks, or both, received less than 9 obols a day. Perhaps the scraper was an apprentice and only got a drachm, whilst the adjuster was a master and got 9 obols.

Finally, the ἀρχιτέκτων was paid at the rate of two drachmas a day, as is shown unmistakably by 834*b* I. 12, and 834*c* 60, while the pay of the man elected to check the bills which was 1 obol a day in the earlier accounts (834*b* I. 12) was raised by a vote of the people to 2 obols in the later accounts (834*c* 61). Obviously, however, checking the bills could not have taken up all his time and he must have earned other money from other sources, for the sum allowed in these very accounts (*b* I. 5) for the daily rations of one slave is 3 obols.

These inscriptions then, as far as they go, would show conclusively that the unskilled labourer got 9 obols, and a clever artizan as much as 15, and that Büchsenschütz has fixed the rate too low. But the information given by these accounts has to be reconciled with Büchsenschütz's other evidence. That evidence is partly inscriptional, partly literary; and principally the analogy of the rate of pay given to the sailors and soldiers of Athens.

The inscriptional evidence is contained in *C.I.A.* I. 324. These again are building accounts (for the erection of the Erechtheum) belonging to Ol. 93 and probably to the year 408. In these accounts we have to distinguish between day-labourers who were taken on for an occasional job and men on piece-work. In the former class we have first sawyers, perhaps stone-sawyers, who received 1 drachma a day (πρίσταις καθ' ἡμέραν ἐργαζομένοις . . . καλύμματα εἰς τὴν ὀροφὴν, ἐπτὰ ἡμερῶν δραχμὴν τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκάστης); next, men who put up scaffolding and take it down, bring benches and fix them, and carry things (unknown, as the inscription is mutilated); these men receive sometimes 3 obols, sometimes 6, sometimes 9, but as the accounts explicitly say their pay was a drachma a day (ὑπουργοῖς καθ' ἡμέραν ἐργαζομένοις . . . ἐπτὰ ἀνδράσιν δραχμὴν τῆς ἡμέρας), it is plain that the payment of 3 obols represents half-a-day's work, of 9 a day and a half's. Another day-labourer, a τέκτων of some kind, is mentioned, but the inscription is so mutilated that it is only by conjecture that he has been represented as receiving 5 obols (τέκτ[ονι καθ' ἡμέραν ἐργα]ζομένῳ μ[. τ]ρίτη[ς]

δωδε[κήμερου . . . ὀβο] | λους τ[ῆς] ἡμ[έρας ἐκάστης, ἐ]πτα ἡ[μ]ερῶ[ν]. The piece-work consists in fluting columns. Each column is assigned to a gang of 5 or 6 or 7 men. Each gang can do at least two sections of a column, perhaps two and a bit, in a prytany. The pay for a prytany amounts to 38 drachmas for each man in a gang of 5, 32 drachmas for each in a gang of 6, and 27 drachmas for each in a gang of 7. Now as the pay for piece-work is and always must be calculated on the basis of the current rate of day-wages, and as the amounts just mentioned fluctuate about an average rate of a drachma a day, it is probable that day-wages were a drachma. The members of the gangs of 6 and 7 men appear to get less than the members of the five gang, and less than a drachma a day, but it is hardly likely that 5 men could do more in the same time than 8. It may be conjectured therefore that although the larger gangs only completely finished two sections in a prytany, they were well on with a third, for which they would get paid when it was completed.

We may note that the architect gets a drachma a day, and a ὑπογραμματοῦς an obol less.

The rate of pay for unskilled labour does not appear from the Erechtheum inscription, I. 324, but as in II. ii. 834 it was, as we saw, the same as for sawyers, perhaps we may infer that here too it is the same, viz. a drachma. This inference is corroborated by the inscription referred to by Büchschütz, which was assigned by Boeckh to the Periclean age, but is of uncertain date and is placed in the *C.I.A.* (I. 325) next after the inscription of Ol. 93. In this inscription the daily wage of an unskilled labourer is mentioned not once but repeatedly as a drachma.

If therefore we were confined to the inscriptional evidence known before the publication of *Besitz und Erwerb* we should be forced to conclude that Büchschütz's figures are too low: he puts the labourer's day-wages at 3 obols, whereas the inscriptions show that they were sometimes twice as much. The inscriptions discovered since the publication of his book show that sometimes the labourer's pay was three times what Büchschütz puts it at, and the artizan's twice and twice and a half as much. And Kirchhoff (*Abhandl. d. Berl. Akad.* 1876, p. 56) and Fränkel (*Anm.* 202 to Boeckh) agree that the higher inscriptional rates were the normal rates, the lower merely exceptional.

What then is the evidence which is so strong as to outweigh in Büchschütz's opinion the plain testimony of the inscriptions? First, the literary evidence, next the analogy of soldiers' and sailors' pay. His literary evidence consists of four references (taken from Boeckh). The first reference is to Lucian (*Timon* 6, 12), which is not evidence for the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. The second is to Ar. *Eccles.* 310, where the chorus, by way of illustrating the difference between wages now and in the good old times, say

νυνὶ δὲ τριώβολον
ζητοῦσι λαβεῖν ὅταν
πράττωσί τι κοινὸν ὥσ-
περ πηλοφοροῦντες.

But this does not necessarily prove that 3 obols was really the rate of pay in Aristophanes' time. If we may suppose Aristophanes capable of a joke, it is conceivable that the point of the jest is the substitution of *τριώβολον* for a larger sum *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*. It is as though—the average yearly wage of parlourmaids (*Economic Journal*, V. p. 147) being in London £20—an old lady were to say servant-girls ask such exorbitant wages now-a-days that she could never get one under £10. The third reference is to the *Frogs* 172, the passage in which the dead man stipulates for 12 obols for carrying Dionysus' luggage, and when asked to take 9, wishes he may be revived if he does. On this all that needs be remarked is that Büchsenschütz admits that it proves that 'under favourable circumstances' a labourer could earn more than 3 obols. The fourth and last reference is to a fragment of Aristophanes (in *Poll.* VII. 133), *ὀβολῶν δεουσῶν* (*sc.* *δραχμῶν*, Meineke¹) *τεττάρων καὶ τῆς φορᾶς*, which proves two things: (1) that the charge for carriage was some (unknown) number of drachmas minus 4 obols, (2) that if the reference is to the day-wage of a porter, then the wage was at least 2 drachmas minus 4 obols, *i.e.* 1 drachma 2 obols. Thus of Büchsenschütz's four references, one is irrelevant and the other three prove, if they prove anything, that his figures are much too low. Again, then, what is there to make us fly in the face of the combined and harmonious evidence of inscriptions and literature, and fix day-wages at three obols? There is only the analogy of the pay of mercenaries and Athenian soldiers and sailors.

Now, first, no analogy can be valid against such explicit and indubitable testimony as that of the inscriptions. Next, as for mercenaries, their pay is no more a guide to their total profits, than a railway porter's weekly wage is to his total receipts—there is the plunder to take into account. As for the Athenian soldiers and sailors, service was a personal duty which the citizen-soldier was expected to render to his country for nothing: the 3 obols (granting that it was 3) which the sailor received, were given as *σῆτος*, because the only citizens called on to serve as sailors were those who had no property, lived by their labour, and therefore when called off from their work by the state would have starved in its service had not the state allowed to them for rations what it allowed for the same purpose to its own slaves, *viz.* 3 obols.

If then Büchsenschütz be wrong in considering the wages mentioned in I. 325 (*viz.* a drachma a day for unskilled labour) as unaccountably high, the question remains whether Kirchhoff and Fränkel are wrong in regarding them as exceptionally low. Both the latter scholars consider that the normal rate of wages is that given in the inscription of B.C. 329 (*C.I.A.* II. ii. 834) *viz.* 1 drachma 3 obols for labourers and 2 drachmas or 2 drachmas 3 obols for artisans, and that the wages mentioned in the Erechtheum inscription of B.C. 408 (*C.I.A.* I. 324) are below the standard. Both scholars have therefore to account for the low figures of the latter inscription. Kirchhoff argues that at a time when the state was so hard pressed by war as Athens was in B.C.

¹ For this ellipse of *δραχμῶν* cf. *C.I.A.* I. 321, lines 11 and 16.

408 the erection of the Erechtheum could only have been undertaken for the sake of affording relief to the unemployed, and therefore the wages paid were below standard rates. Fränkel agrees generally with this but throws out the suggestion that it is necessary to consider whether the labourers were *οἰκόσιτοι* in B.C. 408 as they were in B.C. 329, or whether the state itself provided them with food at the earlier date instead of giving them the money for their rations. To begin with this suggestion: it does not quite account for all the facts. It might explain the difference of 3 obols between the earlier and the later rates for unskilled labour, for 3 obols is the sum allowed in the later inscription for a slave's daily rations; but it does not explain the difference in the artizan's wages which amounts to 1 drachma or 1 drachma 3 obols. In the next place, when the state provided labourers with food instead of giving them a money-allowance, the cost of their rations is duly entered in the accounts along with the wages-bill and is defrayed by the treasurers of the temple. Thus in II. 834*b* col. I., the rations of the public slaves are charged in lines 5 and 42, and the rations of the engravers in line 6, τοῖς τὰ γράμματα ἐπικολάφασιν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνάθημα ἐν τῷ Ἐλευσινίῳ σιτία □□□. The wages of the man employed by the state to purchase the rations have also to be defrayed by the treasurers of the temple, *ib.* c 57, ἀγχοράζοντι τοῖς δημοσίοις Ἀριστοκρίτῳ Τροξηνίῳ μισθὸς □□□□□ τοῦ μηνός. If therefore the labourers in B.C. 408 were not *οἰκόσιτοι*, if the state purchased their food for them, we ought to find the cost of it charged to the treasurers of the temple, but we do not. Of course the argument *e silentio* has in the case of a fragmentary inscription such as I. 324 less weight even than it usually has, but on the one hand fresh portions of this inscription keep being discovered (see *C.I.A.* IV. i. 1, p. 38, *ib.* 2, p. 76, and 3, p. 148), which confirm the rate of wages but contain no items for food,² and on the other hand we fortunately have the accounts for one prytany practically complete, and they duly charge for wages but not for board. The total expenditure in the eighth prytany (the accounts of which are contained in c, col. I. lines 25—87, *b*, col. II. lines 2—10, and *c* col. II. lines 1—23) is twice stated to amount to 1,239 drachmas. Of this sum 1,041 drachmas are accounted for by the items charged on that

² In *C.I.A.* IV. i. 2, lines 15 to 25 we have the pay-bill of the τέκτονες for the prytany complete, giving both the separate items and the total, and the names of the workmen and the amounts paid to them. It is headed, τέκτοσι μισθώματα καὶ καθημερινία. The last word (=καθημερινία) probably means 'day-wages' (sc. μισθώματα, cf. Suidas s.v. ἡμερήσια), and μισθώματα by itself probably means pay for piece-work, because some of the τέκτονες are expressly said to be paid by the day (τοὺς σφηκίσκους θεῖσι καὶ τοὺς ἰμάντας καθ' ἡμέραν, Γήρυι ἡμερῶν □□, □□) and others are paid for work by the piece (e.g. lines 32—34). But if any one were to suggest that the word agrees with τροφή understood, then he would have to

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regard this passage as conclusively proving that the τέκτονες were *οἰκόσιτοι* in B.C. 408 as they were in B.C. 329, for the meaning of the words, on this view, must be that the account following includes the cost of the food as well as of the wages of the τέκτονες. But there is no separate entry for food; therefore the cost of each man's food must be included in the amount paid to him and set opposite to his name. But that amount is, in the case of day-labourers, one drachma per diem, e.g.

Γήρυι ἡμερῶν	□□	□□
Μικίωνι ἡμερῶν		□□□
Κροίσφῃ ἡμερῶν	□	□

portion of the inscription which has survived; the remaining 198 drachmas were entered on the small fragment which is lost. Now, whatever those 198 drachmas were spent on (about 100 or 120 of them must, I think, have been paid to Theogenes' gang for fluting, for his gang is usually entered in the pay-bill next to that of Onesimus, and the inscription breaks in the middle of the payments to Onesimus and his men), they certainly could not have paid for the labourers' rations, for this simple reason: during this prytany 35 labourers were employed, and the cost of the regulation rations would have come to 630 drachmas, whereas the sum not accounted for is only 198 drachmas.

It seems therefore as though Fränkel's suggestion would not account for the difference in the rates paid in B.C. 408 and B.C. 329, for the labourers appear to have been *οἰκόσιτοι* at both dates. We must therefore fall back upon Kirchhoff's theory, according to which the rates were low because the work was relief-work. But there are objections to this view. The idea that relief-works were started for the benefit of the unemployed in ancient Athens is somewhat startling; and we should have expected a larger measure of relief—finding work for thirty-five men would not alleviate distress to any appreciable degree. At any rate we should have expected the relief to be confined to Athenian citizens (great jealousy was shown even of illegitimate Athenians when corn was being distributed gratis), but of the men employed in B.C. 408 on the Erechtheum the majority were metics. Again, the fresh fragments of the Erechtheum inscription seem to indicate that the works went on for several years, and were not undertaken to tide over some time of particularly sharp distress. Finally, if *C.I.A. I. 325* belongs, as Boeckh thought, to the time of Pericles, the matter is settled, for the uniform rate there is a drachma a day, and the relief-work theory does not apply to it.

As then there are objections, more or less serious, to the attempts made by Kirchhoff and Fränkel to show that the rates in the earlier inscriptions are misleading and abnormally low, I would suggest that perhaps the source of the difficulty is in the tacit assumption which both scholars make. They assume that in eighty years the rate of wages could not change. That 'real' wages did not change, *i.e.* that the labourer got no more of the necessities of life when his wages were 1 drachma 3 obols than he did when they were 1 drachma, is likely enough. But this only proves that his money wages must have varied, if the purchasing value of money varied. And the purchasing value of money does so notoriously change in the history of a nation, that the difference between the earlier and the later inscriptions in the matter of wages is itself a presumption that the inscriptions are correct. And this presumption is confirmed by what few facts we have that bear on the subject. Boeckh has shown (*St. d. Ath.*³ p. 118) that the standard price of wheat in the time of Socrates was 3 drachmas the medimnus, and in the time of Demosthenes 5 drachmas. Now if the price of other necessities of life went up on the same scale, money wages also must have risen at the same rate, if 'real' wages were to remain the same. That is to say, we should expect money wages to rise from 6 obols to 10 obols, since prices rose 3 : 5; and the inscrip-

tions prove that wages actually rose from 6 obols to 9 obols for unskilled labour, and higher for artisans. That wheat was not the only article to rise in price, but that all commodities rose during this period, is probable because we know that throughout the history of Athens the quantity of the precious metals in circulation was continually increasing, and that consequently their purchasing value must have been proportionally decreasing. With the silver mines of Laureion at work, the silver drachma must have steadily depreciated, one would think. At any rate, for the whole period, from Solon to Demosthenes, Boeckh calculated that prices went up five-fold. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that the price of other necessities besides corn went up in the period B.C. 408—329 in the ratio of 3 : 5. Indeed it is easy to show that at the latter date 9 obols a day would only just purchase the necessities of life. The rate of the average workman's wages must be on the average such that an average family can be supported by it; and an average family consists of four persons, two parents and two children. Now in B.C. 329, as we have seen, the state allowed 3 obols a day for one slave's food; if therefore we consider that two children eat as much as one adult, the labourer's 9 obols would all go in food, and he would have nothing left for fuel, clothes, boots and rent. But as it is relatively cheaper to provide food for four persons living together than it is for one, and as a woman does not eat as much as a man, it is out of these economies that the labourer of B.C. 329 would have to pay for clothes, etc. That it was not impossible, though doubtless difficult, to do so is shown by Dem. 1045 § 22, where it is said that to live on the income from a capital of 45 minas *οὐ ῥᾷδίον ἐστίν*. Now at the usual Attic rate of interest this capital would yield an income of 540 drachmas, which is (for a year of 360 days) 1 drachma 3 obols a day—exactly a labourer's wage. Since then it was just possible for a labourer to live and bring up a family in B.C. 329 on a money wage of 9 obols, with wheat at 5 drachmas the medimnus, then in B.C. 408, with wheat at 3 drachmas and other necessities cheaper in the same ratio, a money wage of 6 obols would be a living wage. Thus the 'real' wages were the same at both dates; there is no difference to be explained away by theories of board wages or of relief-work for the unemployed; and Büchsenschütz's wage of 3 obols must be relegated to some early age for which we have no definite figures—it does not apply to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.

It is in accordance with these figures that 3 obols was the pay for dikasts, who, according to Aristophanes, were generally old men past work, and being old, probably had grown-up children earning money of their own. Possibly also they could try a case and put in half a day's work after it. This latter consideration may help us to understand how it was that a drachma or 5 obols was sufficient compensation to a bouleutes for losing a day's work. When he was not serving as a prytaneus, his duties as a bouleutes would leave a considerable amount of his time free. When he was in prytany, and therefore had to sit all day, he was fed in the prytaneum, and, if he got slave's rations, the pay came up to about what a labourer earned. The pay for attendance at an ordinary meeting of the ecclesia, established at the beginning

of the fourth century, was continually being raised, not by democratic depravity, but by way of correspondence to the continual rise in prices, until it reached the sum of 6 obols. But this, its maximum, could not compensate even an unskilled labourer for the loss of his day's work; and that it did not entice him, is made evident by the fact that to secure a respectable attendance at a *κυρία ἐκκλησία* a full day's wages, 9 obols, had eventually to be offered.

Finally, perhaps I ought to mention some inscriptions which have been discovered at Delos (*Bull. de Corr. Hellén.* VI. p. 23), and which may at first sight seem to be irreconcilable with what I have said. The inscriptions themselves I have not seen; and for what the *Bulletin* says about them I am dependent on Fränkel's notes to Boeckh and on Prof. Gardner's chapter on Temple-property in a forthcoming *Manual of Greek Antiquities*. I would premise therefore that Delos is not Athens, and the Delian inscriptions belong to the beginning of the second century. They are the accounts of the Hieropoei of the Delian temple of Apollo, and they give, amongst other things, the salaries of various officials: neocori are paid at the rate of 1, 2 or 3 obols a day, a *κρηνοφύλαξ* $1\frac{1}{2}$ obol, a *παλαιστροφύλαξ* 2 obols, a secretary $1\frac{1}{8}$ obol, whilst the *ἀρχιτέκτων* receives a relatively large salary at the rate of 2 drachmas a day. Now I do not know what were the duties or the social position of a neocorus, but if he at all corresponded to the verger of a modern cathedral, then he would have plenty of time to ply a trade of his own when he was off duty and to supplement thus his official salary. I am in the same state of ignorance as to the position of a *κρηνοφύλαξ*, but there seems to be the possibility of 'tips' in it: the ancient tourist, or rather pilgrim, to Delos had probably to pay for being shown what he wanted to see. About the 'secretary' I am in less doubt: he corresponds to the *ὑπογραμματεὺς* of the Erechtheum inscription and to *τῷ χειροτονημένῳ ἀντιγράφειν τὰ ἀναλίσκόμενα* of *C.I.A.* II. ii. 824, who at first (*b* col. i. line 12) received one obol a day, then (*b* col. ii. line 7) $1\frac{1}{8}$ obol, and finally by vote of the people (*c* line 61) 2 obols. Now at Athens in B.C. 329 not even a secretary could live on 2 obols a day, and it is plain that he must have filled up his time and supplemented his earnings by doing other work. Obviously therefore he may have done the same in Delos; and if he, then why not the other officials whose salaries are at first sight so surprisingly small?

These considerations seem sufficient to show that the Delian salaries give us no clue to the rate of day wages in Delos. Another will perhaps be thought more conclusive: three temple officials are mentioned in these accounts who receive 120 drachmas a year (*i.e.* 2 obols a day) for food, *σιτηρέσιον*. This shows pretty clearly that in Delos at this time a single man's food was calculated to cost 2 obols a day; and if so, then the best paid neocorus, who got 3 obols, could not have maintained a wife and family on it; in other words, day wages must have been higher than 3 obols.

But there is another thing to consider: at Athens in B.C. 329, with wheat at 5 drachmas the medimnus, a slave's daily rations cost 3 obols. In Delos therefore, if I am right in arguing that money wages rose and fell with the

average price of wheat, we should expect that, with daily rations estimated at 2 obols, the price of wheat would be correspondingly lower, viz. 3 drachmas. And as a matter of fact, on the evidence of these same inscriptions (*Bull. de Corr. Hell.* VI. p. 14, line 103), the price of wheat at this time was 3 drachmas.

We may now make with some probability a guess at the average day wage in Delos at the beginning of the second century. The price of wheat was the same then and there as it was in Athens in B.C. 408. Probably therefore the rate of wages was the same, viz. a drachma a day. This is rather confirmed by the fact that the ἀρχιτέκτων at Athens received the wages of an artizan, *i.e.* higher wages than the unskilled labourer; he received 2 drachmas a day, and in Delos also his salary is at the rate of 2 drachmas a day.

To sum up and conclude: in Athens and in Delos, at the end of the fifth, at the end of the fourth, and at the beginning of the second centuries B.C., the day wages of the unskilled labourer were equal in value to $\frac{1}{3}$ of a medimnus of wheat; or, to put it another way, if he worked six days out of seven, his week's work would purchase 2 medimni of wheat. Of course he did not consume or require so much wheat: one man's daily consumption of wheat only amounted to a choenix ($\frac{1}{48}$ of a medimnus).

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