PART III
TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS

CHAPTER XLVII

THE TRADES AT POMPEII.—THE BAKERS

In antiquity there was no such distinction between trades and professions as exists to-day. In the Early Empire all activity outside the field of public service, civil and military, or the management of estates, was considered beneath the dignity of a Roman; the practice of law, which had received its impulse largely from the obligation of patrons to protect their clients, was included among public duties. The ordinary work of life was left mainly to slaves and freedmen. Not only the trades, as we understand the term, but architecture and engineering,—in antiquity two branches of one occupation,—the practice of medicine, and teaching, were looked upon as menial. A Roman of literary or practical bent might manifest an interest in such vocations, but it was considered hardly respectable actively to engage in them.

This attitude of mind, especially toward the higher occupations, is only explicable in the light of the social conditions then existing. Men who kept slaves of every degree of intelligence and training, and were at all times accustomed to command, were not disposed to hold themselves in readiness to do another’s bidding, excepting in the service of the State alone; and work committed to slaves and freedmen naturally came to be considered unworthy the employment of a gentleman. The freemen of the same craft were often united in guilds or corporations, for the administration of certain matters of mutual interest; but nothing is known in regard to the activities of such organizations at Pompeii.

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In a city as large as Pompeii, all the occupations corresponding to the needs of daily life must have been represented. The remains of the appliances and products of labor are of the most varied character, sometimes far from satisfactory, raising more difficulties than they solve; yet often revealing at a glance the ancient methods of work, and casting light upon the economic background of Greek and Roman culture. The excavations have brought before us three sources of information, inscriptions, paintings, and the remains of buildings or rooms used as workshops.

The inscriptions refer to more than a score of occupations; from farming to innkeeping, and from hairdressing to goldworking. Most of them are election notices, in which the members of a craft unite, or are exhorted to unite, in recommending a certain candidate for a municipal office. These are painted in red letters on the walls along the streets, and are much alike, though some are fuller than others. The simplest form contains only three words, as Trebius aed. tonsores, — 'The barbers recommend Trebius for the office of aedile.' The more elaborate recommendations may be illustrated by the following: Verum aed. o. v. f. (for aedilem, or vos, facite), singventari, facite, rog[a]. — 'Do make Verus aedile, perfumers, elect him, I beg of you.' The whole craft of goldsmiths favored the election of Pansa: C. Cuspius Pansaem aed. aurifices universi rog[aunt], — 'All the goldsmiths recommend Gaius Cuspius Pansa for the aedileship.'

The recommendations of the fruit sellers are particularly conspicuous. On one occasion they joined with a prominent individual in the support of a ticket: M. Holconius Priscus II vir. i. d. pomari universi cum Helvio Vestale rog., — 'All the fruit sellers, together with Helvius Vestalis, urge the election of M. Holconius Priscus as duumvir with judiciary authority.' There may have been some special reason why the fruiters wished to keep in favor with the city authorities, and so took an active part in the elections; the dealers in garlic (aliari) also had a candidate.

Among the representatives of other employments that joined in the support of candidates were the dyers (affectores), cloak-
cutters (sagarii), pack-carriers (saccarii), mule-drivers (muliones), and fishermen (piscicapi). The inscription in which reference is made to the gig-drivers is mentioned elsewhere (p. 243).

The paintings in which we see work going on are numerous. By far the most pleasing are those in which the workmen are Cupids, busying themselves with the affairs of men. Several pictures of this kind have already been described (pp. 97, 332-337); but we ought to add to those mentioned two scenes from Herculanum, often reproduced, in which Cupids are represented as carpenters and as shoemakers.

Among the more important paintings in which the figures of men appear are those which picture the life of an inn and those that present the processes of cleaning cloth; both groups are reserved for later discussion. In a house in the ninth Region (IX. v. 9) a stuccoer is pictured at work putting the finishing touches on a wall with a smoothing tool, and in the house of the Surgeon an artist is seen painting a herm (Fig. 133).

In only a few instances are the remains of workshops sufficiently characteristic to indicate their purpose. Among the most impressive, to the visitor at Pompeii, are the ruins of the bakeries, with their large millstones (Fig. 218). Equally important, also, are the remains of the fulleries, and of a large tannery, which, as well as those of the inns and wineries, will be discussed in separate chapters.

A few out of the hundreds of shops opening on the streets contain remains of the articles exposed for sale. The discovery of charred nuts, fruits, and loaves of bread in the market stalls north of the Macellum has already been noted (p. 96). We know the use of other shops from the remains of paints found in them. The arrangements of such places of business were discussed in connection with those of the Pompeian house.

Several establishments which contain large lead kettles set in masonry, with a place for a fire underneath, have been identified as dyehouses. In the case of one on Stabian Street (VII. ii. 11), the identification seems complete. Nine such kettles stood in the peristyle, which has a direct connection with the street; in a closet were numerous bottles, part of which contained coloring materials. There was formerly a painting on the
wall of the entrance, representing a man carrying on a pole an object which had the appearance of a garment fresh from the dye.

On the opposite side of the street is the election notice: *Postumium Procolum aed. affectores rog*[ant], — 'The dyers request the election of Postumius Proculus as aedile.' The house on which this inscription is painted (IX. iii. 2) contained three kettles similar to those already mentioned; the dyers of both establishments may have united in supporting the candidacy of Proculus.

A potter's workshop, with two ovens, is located outside the Herculaneum Gate, where the streets divide opposite the villa of Diomedes (Plan V, 29–30). The ovens, which are not large, have an upper division, in which were placed the vessels to be baked, and a firebox underneath, the floor above being pierced with holes to let the heat through. The vault of one of the ovens was constructed of parallel rows of jars fitted into one another.

There was a shoemaker's shop on the northwest corner of Insula VII. i opening upon two streets. It is connected with the entrance hall of the adjoining house (No. 40), and near the middle is a small stone table. The identification rests upon the discovery here of certain tools, particularly leather-cutters' knives with a crescent-shaped blade; there was also an inscription on the wall, making record of some repairing done 'July 14, with a sharp-cornered knife (scalpro angulato) and an awl.' Apparently the porter of the house (ostiarius) was at the same time a cobbler, as frequently in Italy to-day.

On the same wall is another scribbling: *M. Nonius Campanus mil. coh. VIII pr. > Caesi,* — 'Marcus Nonius Campanus, a soldier of the ninth praetorian cohort, of the century led by Caesius.' The name of the centurion, M. Caesius Blandus, is scratched twice on the columns of the peristyle in the same house. Captain and private may have come from Rome in the escort of an emperor. Perhaps the centurion was quartered in this house; the soldier, waiting to have his shoes mended, scratched his name upon the wall.

The better houses were so freely adorned with statuettes and other ornaments of marble that there must have been marble-workers in the city. The workshop of one was found, in 1798, on Stabian Street, near the Large Theatre. It contained various pieces of carving, as herms, table feet, and table tops; there was also an unfinished mortar, together with a slab of marble partly sawed, the saw being left in the cut.

Signs of shops are not often seen in Pompeii, but two or three may be mentioned. In the wall of a shop-front in the block containing the Baths north of the Forum, there is a terra cotta plaque with a goat in relief, to indicate the place of a milk dealer; and not far away we find a sign of a wineshop, a tufa relief of two men carrying between them an amphora hung from a pole supported on their shoulders.

Not all such reliefs, however, are signs of shops. Near the Porta Marina (at the northwest corner of Insula VII. xv), a tufa block may be seen near the top of the wall, showing a mason's tools in relief; above it is the inscription, *Diogenes structor, 'Diogenes the mason.' This is not a sign—the inscription can hardly be read from below; it is, moreover, on the
outside of a garden wall, with no house or shop entrance near it. It is rather a workman's signature; Diogenes had built the wall, and wished to leave a record of his skill.

In antiquity the miller and the baker were one person. We rarely find in Pompeii—and then only in private houses—an oven without mills under the same roof. There were many bakeries in the city. The portion already excavated contains more than twenty, each of them with three or four mills; bread was furnished, therefore, by a number of small bakeries rather than by a few large establishments.

The appearance of a bakery to-day, with its mills and its large oven, may be seen in Fig. 218. The arrangements can more easily be explained, however, from the plan of another establishment, one of the largest, in the third Insula of Region VI. (Fig. 219). Entering from the street through the fauces, we find ourselves in an atrium of simple form (8) with rooms on either side; the tablinum (14) is here merely an entrance to the mill room (15). In the corner of the atrium is a stairway leading to a second story, which was particularly needed here, because the living rooms at the rear were required for the bakery; the floor of the second story was supported by brick pillars at the corners of the impluvium, joined by flat arches.

The four mills (6), were turned by animals; the floor around them is paved with basalt flags like those used for the streets. In the same room, at 9, were the remains of a low table; at e there is a cistern curb, with a large earthen vessel for holding water on either side, while the wall above was ornamented with a painting representing Vesta, the patron god-

The mills of Pompeii, with slight variations, are all of one type; if there were water-mills on the Sarno, no trace of them has been found. The millstones are of lava (p. 15). The lower stone, *metae, has the shape of a cone resting on the end of a cylinder, but the cylindrical part is in most cases partially concealed by a thick hoop of masonry, the top of which was formed into a trough to receive the flour, and was covered with sheet lead (Fig. 220). A square hole, five or six inches across, was cut in the top of the cone, in which was inserted a wooden standard; this supported a vertical iron pivot on which the frame of the upper millstone turned.

The shape of the upper millstone, *catillus, may best be seen in Fig. 221. It was like a double funnel, the lower cavity being fitted to the cone of the lower millstone, while that in the upper part answered the purpose of a hopper. The two cavities were connected at the centre by an opening similar to that of an hourglass, which left room for the standard and allowed the grain to run down slowly, when the *catillus was turned, to be ground between the two stones. The flour ran out at the base of the
cone and fell into the trough, ready to be sifted and made into bread.

The upper millstone was nicely balanced over the lower, the surface of which it touched but lightly; it could not have rested on the under stone with full weight, for in that case the strength of a draft animal would not have sufficed to move it. The stones could be set for finer or coarser grinding by changing the length of the standard.

The arrangement for turning the mill was simple. In shaping the upper millstone, strong shoulders were left in the narrowest part (Fig. 220), on opposite sides. In these square sockets were cut, in which the ends of shafts were inserted and firmly fastened by round bolts passing through the shoulders (Fig. 221). The shafts were tied to the ends of the crossbeam above by curved vertical pieces of wood, or by straps of iron, which were let into grooves in the stone and so made firm. The crosspiece above, which turned on the pivot in the end of the standard, was sometimes of iron, sometimes of wood with an iron socket fitting the pivot. The framework must necessarily have been exceedingly strong.

One of the mills at Pompeii (IX. iii. 10) has lately been set up with new woodwork, and grinds very well.

The smaller mills were turned by slaves, the larger by draft animals. Men pushed on the projecting shafts, but animals wore a collar which was attached by a chain or rope to the end of the crosspiece at the top. The links of the chain running to the crossbeam are distinctly shown in a relief in the Vatican Museum (Fig. 222), in which a horse is represented turning a mill. Blinders are over the eyes of the horse, which seems also to be checked up in order to prevent eating. A square hopper rests on the crossbeam, and the miller is bringing a measure of wheat to pour into it. On a shelf in the corner of the room is a lamp.

The ovens were not unlike those still in use in many parts of Europe. They were shaped like a low beehive, generally with some kind of a flue in front to make the fire burn inside while they were being heated. The oven in the bakery described above, however, has a special device for saving as much heat as possible (Fig. 223); it is entirely enclosed in a smoke chamber (b), with two openings above (d) for the draft. Fires were kindled in such ovens with wood or charcoal; the latter was probably used here. When the proper temperature for baking had been reached, the ashes were raked out (in Fig. 223, e is an ashpit), the loaves of bread shoved in, and the mouth closed to retain the heat. A receptacle for water stands in front of our oven (f), a convenience for moistening the surface of the loaves while baking. The front of the oven (at e) was connected with the rooms on either side, as may be more clearly seen by referring to Fig. 219. In the kneading room (18), where were found remains of a large table and shelves, the loaves were made ready, and could be passed through one opening to the front of the oven; the hot loaves could be conveniently passed through the other opening into the storeroom (19).
In many establishments a machine was used for kneading; the best example is in a bakery on the north side of Insula xiv in Region VI. Such kneading machines are seen also in ancient representations of the baker’s trade, as in the reliefs of the tomb of Eurysaces, near the Porta Maggiore at Rome.

The dough was placed in a round pan of lava a foot and a half or two feet in diameter. In this a vertical shaft revolved, to the lower part of which two or three wooden arms were attached (three in Fig. 224); the one at the bottom was strengthened by an iron crosspiece on the under side, the projecting centre of which turned in a socket below. The side of the pan was pierced in two or three places for the insertion of wooden teeth, so placed as not to interfere with the revolution of the arms. As the shaft was turned, the dough was pushed forward by the arms and held back by the teeth, being thus thoroughly kneaded. Modern kneading machines are constructed on the same principle, but have two sets of teeth on horizontal cylinders revolving toward each other.