

Book XI.
Title XXIV. (XXIII)

Concerning the grain for the City of Constantinople.
(De frumento urbis Constantinopolitanae.)

11.24.1. Emperors Honorius and Theodosius to Ursus, City Prefect.

To no one, not even to our imperial house¹ shall be furnished grain from public storehouses, instead of bread (annona), but the grain shall be consigned intact to the bakers and furnished to the various houses as baked bread. In this manner shall the grain tribute, granted by Constantine, of famous memory, and increased by the divine grandfather of My Piety, Theodosius, be distributed, since want increases, if the grain, contributed for bread (annona) is used for other purposes, and the people will be compelled to buy from the public graneries what they otherwise would be in position to sell.

Given at Constantinople July 23 (416).

C. Th. 14.16.2.

11.24.2. Emperors Theodosius and Valentinian to Leontius, City Prefect.

The amount of gold set aside for the purchase of grain, shall remain perpetually dedicated to that purpose, and no one who hereafter has the administration of the City prefecture shall diminish the amount or convert it to any other purposes. It shall definitely appear, from a certificate of the transaction what has been delivered to the bakers (mancipibus) as a loan and what they, without any extortion, (excepta concussionem)² should pay. 1. Whoever attempts to violate this rule must restore twofold the amount, in connection with which he have acted fraudulently, and the increase arising from the aforesaid sources, shall be added as an addition to the money for the grain supply. The tenor of this law shall be engraven on brass tablets.

Given at Constantinople November 27 (434).

C. Th. 14.16.3.

Note.

The instant law did not deal with the grain that was supplied to the bakers of Constantinople from the grain tribute which came mainly from Egypt, but evidently with grain that was bought up - through forced sales - for the purpose of supplying the people of the city. That was at times necessary when the regular grain supply failed. See, for instance, C. 11.2.4, where it appears that the public seamen who had regularly carried the Egyptian grain failed to do so.

¹ [Blume] According to Gothofredus, the palace officials were meant. The law shows that bread was distributed free in the city of Constantinople, as was also true at Rome. The subject is more fully considered at headnote of the next title.

² [Blume] According to Gothofredus: "with moderate increase."