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to earn a scanty pittance - зарабатывать жалкие гроши
 2. небольшая часть; небольшое количество
  a miserable pittance of instruction - жалкое /убогое/ образование
  а pittance of hope - крупица надежды
 3. редк. скудная пища
 4. ист. пожертвование
                                                                                     Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 8th Ed.
pittance
                                              NAmE ['pɪtns]
pit-tance [pittance pittances] BrE ['pɪtns]
                                                                 noun usually
 a very small amount of money that sb receives, for example as a wage, and that is hardly enough to live on
  · to pay sb a pittance
  · to work for a pittance
  • She could barely survive on the pittance she received as a pension.
    Word Origin:
    Middle English: from Old French pitance, from medieval Latin pitantia, from Latin pietas 'pity'.
                                                                                                 Longman DOCE 5th Ed. (En-En)
pittance
pit tance /'pɪtəns/ BrE * AmE *
                                    noun [singular]
  [Date: 1200-1300, Language: Old French, Origin: pitance 'piety, pity', from Latin pietas; ⇒ †pity¹]
  a very small amount of money, especially wages, that is less than someone needs or deserves OPP fortune
    earn/be paid a pittance
         The musicians earn a pittance.
    work/be sold for a pittance
        The crop was sold for a pittance.
         She raised three children on a pittance.
pittance
                                                                                                                Freakuency Pack
  <sub>12500</sub>11083MCW
  15000 13632 COCA
  RANGE: 8k PITTANCE 261
    pittance 256
    pittances 5
  COCA 500k Unlemmatized
    24846329256 nn1
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1. скудное вспомоществование *или* жалованье; жалкие гроши (часто a mere pittance)

widow's pittance - нищенское пособие за мужа

Apresyan (En-Ru)

pittance

['pɪt(ə)ns] n