

## BLANCHARD S. HAYDEN STURDY SON OF THE FRONTIER

Ninety-two Years of Life and Five Weddings Have Left Him Vigorous and Active in Pursuit of Affairs of Business and the Comforts and Consolations of Religion.

**T**HE FAMILY FROM WHICH BLANCHARD S. HAYDEN, pioneer of Nebraska, sprang, was one which would have delighted the president of a certain great republic. There were nineteen children and seventeen of them grew to manhood and womanhood. Indeed, it is refreshing to anyone who loves the human race and delights in seeing it increase and multiply to look at a family of this kind. It is the more delightful in this day and age, when the man without any child is satisfied with just a good wife, when the father with one child is complacent, the father with two is contented, the father with three is proud, the father with four is arrogant and boastful, when the father of five considers himself a veritable patriarch, and the father of six hurries to a photograph gallery with his wife and children and there, smiling the smile of a man who has done his full duty to the world, surrounded by his six children and with his wife seated proudly at his side he has his remarkably numerous family pictured for the admiration of future generations, and orders one of the pictures finished more elaborately than the rest, for that picture he is going to forward to President Roosevelt, who, doubtless, will write him a personal letter of commendation.

Back in Kentucky where Blanchard S. Hayden was born 92 years ago, married people were pitted if they didn't have at least a dozen children, twenty was considered "right smart of a family" and if a man had thirty children he was considered to have rather a large household.

Of course, the economists have a valid argument here. In Kentucky a century or so ago it didn't cost much to raise children. Strong young men and women were valuable assets, rather than expenses in the conquest of the backwoods. They learned early how to use the axe and the plow; and the land, rich with the fertility of ages, poured forth copiously from its bountiful lap into the hands of the men and women who asked. Today in cities the average man would be decidedly embarrassed in a financial way if he had a couple of dozen children to support. He might receive the commendation of the president and he might be lauded by his fellow citizens for contributing fair daughters and sturdy sons to the assets of the state. But the grocer and the butcher and the department stores would not enter so heartily into the spirit of the occasion as to cancel the bills which would necessarily arise.

### Early Life in Kentucky

But, returning to Kentucky, Blanchard S. Hayden was one of the nineteen children of his father, who was married three times. The father was a pioneer, one of those sturdy men who went along in the vanguard of the westward moving civilization from Pennsylvania across the trackless mountains into Kentucky at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Mr. Hayden was born April 22, 1816, in Mead county, near Louisville. His father's farm consisted of more than 200 acres. On it were a distillery, a mill and a blacksmith shop, beside the barns and the house. The life there in that enchanted country and in that history-making age is surrounded with all the charm lent to it by remoteness and by the unique character of the sturdy race that had occupied the land. Kentucky was already famous for good whisky, pretty women and fast horses. Mr. Hayden inherited the popular taste. He was as wild as any of the young bloods of the new country.

"One of our greatest sports then was horse racing," he says. "I was as much interested in it as anyone, and many a time I have stood by the track and shouted myself hoarse with the excitement that was born in my blood. Another of our sports was fighting. It was a common thing to have a big mill between two giants, who seemed to be made of iron, judging by the punishment they could take. It wasn't scientific. They just hammered each other or choked each other or wrestled. The idea was to put one or the other out of business, and it didn't matter how it was done except that any other weapons than those with which the men were equipped by nature were barred."

In this life of hard work and rough sport, amid the dangers of the natural enemies of civilized men and the dangers from rough fellow men, young Hayden grew up in his father's patriarchal, pioneer household. When he was 16 years old he left that home and bound himself as apprentice to a blacksmith in Elizabethtown. At the end of four years he set up for himself in a small village. Though his father was amply able to aid the son, he pursued that grim pioneer policy of letting his son struggle for himself. He advanced him only enough money to buy a set of simple tools. The boy set up his business literally "under a spreading chestnut tree." He rented a cabin from a negro and there he "backed it" for six months. Then he married—the first time—he was married five times during his life.

### Married at Twenty Years

"I was 20 years old and my wife was just 15 on our wedding day," he says. "I met her on a farm close to where I was in business. Her parents were well-to-do for that time and country. She came with me into that little cabin with its one room and I bet we were as happy a young couple as ever got married. We ate on a goods box for the first three months of our married life because we didn't have money to invest in a table. Then I bought a table at a bargain from a colored man and we felt we were getting on in the world with this fine piece of furniture."

Right at this point Mr. Hayden has certain things to say which are to the disparagement of the modern bride, compared with the girls who went out and fought the battles of the wilderness by the side of their husbands back in the pioneer days. But he admits it is only the influence of environment that has made many girls of today extravagant and frivolous. If cities, theaters, department stores, irremissible millinery displays were suddenly removed and pioneer men were suddenly launched back into the wilderness the women of today would, no doubt, adjust herself by her intrinsic worth to conditions and be just as happy in a sunbonnet as in a \$25.98 hat and in a calico Mother Hubbard as in the stunning creation of a Parisian tailor.

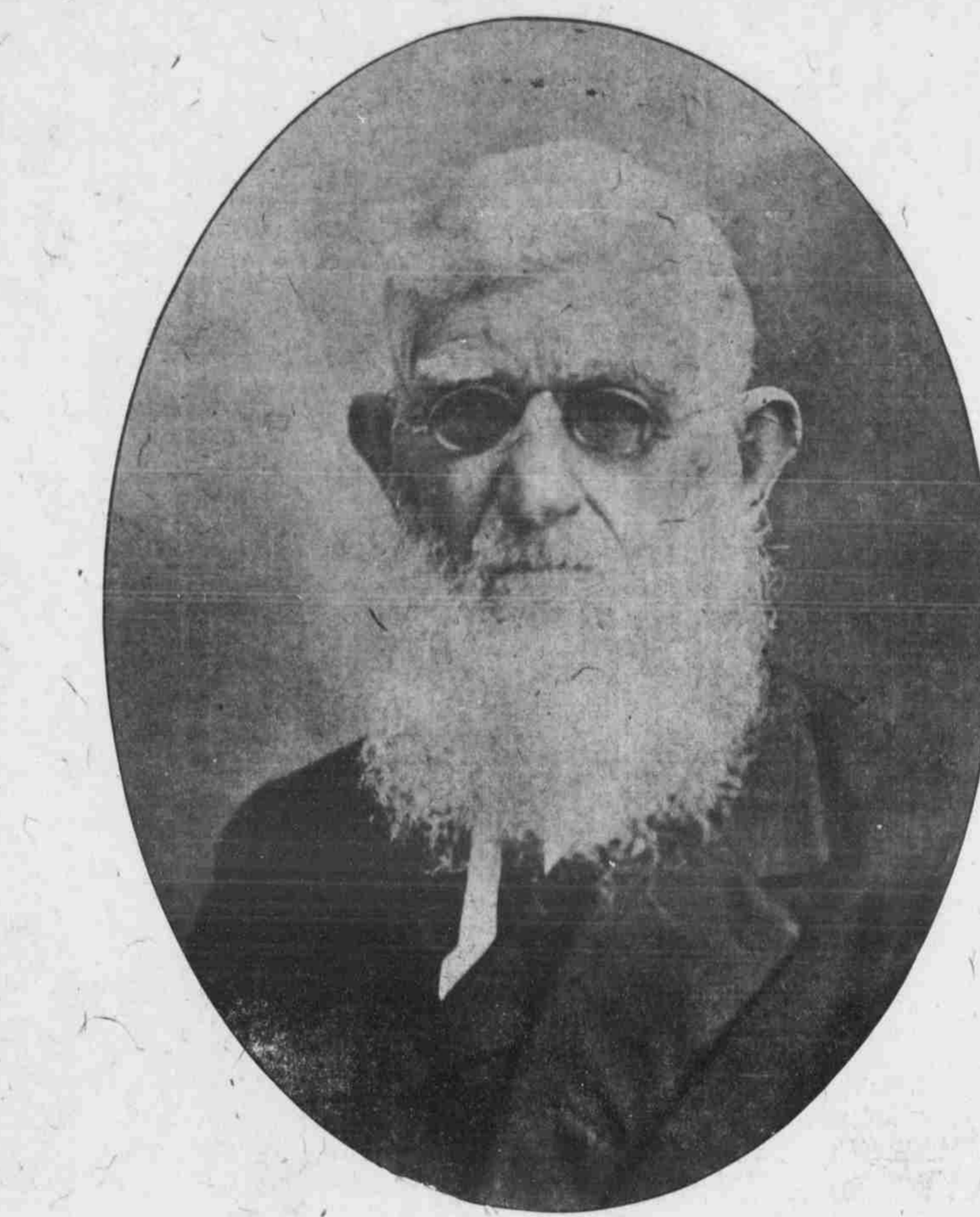
Just before his marriage, the event which Mr. Hayden considers the greatest in his life, occurred. This was his conversion to Christianity and his joining of the Baptist church. His conversion partook largely of the nature of the supernatural. From a roistering backwoods boy, full of animal spirits and very fond of all three of Kentucky's famous products, he was changed to a sedate, solemn-minded man whose first thought was for religion and whose chief concern was for the conversion of others. He was converted during a protracted meeting conducted by Thomas Fisher of Louisville, one of the most powerful of pioneer preachers.

### Prosperity in Youth

The blacksmith shop under the tree prospered and the home in the negro cabin grew in elegance, adding to itself gradually two chairs and five children. In the course of time the young couple acquired enough money to buy a horse, then two horses and a wagon. Then the pioneer blood which flowed in the veins of both of them stirred a feeling of unrest in their hearts and they determined to push several hundred miles further into the west. They placed their belongings and their children in their wagon and in the fall of 1848 started through the wilderness for the west. After a trip of twenty-eight days they reached the southeastern corner of Iowa and there they stopped in Carroll county, looked around and considered themselves fortunate to find a little house.

"It was a fine house," says Mr. Hayden. "It was built of small poles. It had one room, a puncher floor and a clapboard loft under the thatched roof. My wife thought it was elegant. Nowadays they wouldn't use the place for a barn, but it was a lot better than our negro cabin."

The brave young couple set to work with native industry and thrift and the virgin soil yielded good crops. They prospered, their flocks and herds multiplied and their lands increased in value. Soon after they reached Iowa, however, Mrs. Hayden died, leaving the



BLANCHARD S. HAYDEN.

father with five young children. Two years later he married again. In 1861 he left Iowa and settled in Missouri. There he lived during the civil war. He was a sympathizer with the south during this conflict. He was plundered to some extent by wandering bands from both armies, but his loss was comparatively small, considering the times.

### Frontier Calls Him

Population in Missouri in 1865 was becoming too thick to suit the backwoodsman and he determined to push west again. Disposing of his property, loading his goods and chattels and his wife and children in a canvas-covered emigrant wagon, he set his face to the west again. The caravan consisted of a big wagon loaded with provisions and drawn by three yoke of oxen, four pack mules and a buggy driven by a mule. Beside his wife and children he was accompanied by his two sons-in-law, Jacob Harmon and Samuel Schuster. When they started they expected to go to the Rocky

mountains. But the charms of Nebraska drew them from this purpose and they stopped in Otoe county, near the present site of Nebraska City, where Mr. Hayden has lived ever since. They crossed the Missouri river February 14, 1865. That spring Mr. Hayden bought three quarter sections of land, paying \$1,600 for all of it. He farmed for five years and then retired to Nebraska City, where he has lived in retirement since that time speculating, buying and selling property until he is a well-to-do man.

Five times Blanchard S. Hayden has been married. His first bride, the 15-year-old Kentucky girl who shared the hardships of his young manhood, lived thirteen years and bore him five children. She died soon after they reached Iowa, which was thirteen years after their marriage. Her maiden name was Martha Ann Matthews. He married Mary Ann Woodring in Iowa in 1850 and she lived twenty years, dying in Nebraska City. Then he married Lucinda Dakan, who died in 1890. Then at the age of 74 years he married Rebecca Ann Childs in Kentucky, bringing her to his new

home in Nebraska City. She lived eight years. His fifth wife, who is still living, was an Omaha woman, Mrs. Amanda Shupp, mother of Mrs. C. A. Sherwood, 2582 Manderson street. Mr. Hayden was 85 years old when he married her.

The three sons and two daughters, borne by his first wife, were his only children. Three of these are living. They are: John Hayden of Syracuse, Jacob Hayden of Sterling and Mrs. Sarah Schuster of Nebraska City.

### Still in Vigorous Health

Almost a century old, Blanchard S. Hayden is still in vigorous health. His appetite is good, he sleeps soundly. He walks with a crutch because an accident caused the dislocation of his right hip a few years ago. In Nebraska City he attends to all his own business interests, which include the renting, repairing and managing of eighteen dwellings, besides some farm land. He keeps his own books and visits his tenants personally.

"What have I done to keep my health?" he says. "I have just lived a clean, moral, Christian life. I never drank or used tobacco to amount to much. I did use tobacco when I was a boy, but one day I heard the men talking about how expensive it was. One man said it cost him more for chewing tobacco than it cost for coffee for his whole family, and he had a big family. I had a plug of tobacco in my pocket then and I went right out to the creek and threw the plug as far into the water as I could throw it. I have never used any tobacco since then."

When Blanchard S. Hayden was born James Madison was president of the United States. George Washington had died only seventeen years before. Cornerstone statesmen were still grumbling because Thomas Jefferson had thrown away \$7,000,000 of the country's good money to buy from Napoleon Bonaparte 3,500,000 square miles of desert land lying west of the Missouri river. He was already a middle-aged man of 60 years at the time of the civil war. He passed the three-score years and ten mark when Grover Cleveland was elected to the presidency the first time.

He is an old man and to one who looks into his face, into the dull eyes, it seems as though the spirit has already half passed from the prison of clay in which it has been detained beyond the time generally allotted to mortal men. And this half-illusion is borne out by the experiences of this aged man, this man who has devoted more than seventy years of his life to preparing himself for the life to come. Blanchard S. Hayden has seen visions. These visions were of the other world and they came to him in time of great illness, when his soul seemed to have gone out from the body and hurried ahead to have a glimpse at the other world. Once he suffered a congestive chill and the doctors pronounced him dead. His body was laid out upon the bed. And then those who sat by and wept suddenly noted a quiver of the eyelids. The soul crept back into the body. And it seemed to have brought with it the memory of what it had seen during that brief, swift adventure into the spirit world.

### Stood on Jordan's Banks

"I seemed to have stood on the banks of the River Jordan," he says. "I could see the water flowing six or seven feet below me. And on the other shore I saw the entrance to the City of Zion. And while I looked, I saw a ship coming up the stream on the side opposite to me. It moved slowly, steadily, without sails or oars. It went up the stream some distance and then it swung around and came down the side on which I stood. It seemed to stop for me—and then I came back to earth."

Hymn writing is one of the favorite occupations of the aged man. He has written and set to music more than 200 hymns upon various topics. The inspiration to write these comes to him unexplainable, he says, sometimes in the middle of the night and then it is an effort at all to write them. The words come to them. It is a remarkable fact that although he never had much education these hymns are perfect in rhyme and rhythm. A poet could not make their meter better. Much of his time is spent in singing these songs. He carries a tune perfectly and his voice is good. He has composed one hymn to be sung at his funeral. He has been a member of the Baptist church since his conversion. In Nebraska City he has been a member of the First Baptist church for more than thirty years during all that time he has been a deacon. He has no desire to live to a greater age.

The mossy marble rests  
 On the lips he loved to press  
 In their bloom.  
 And the names he loved to hear  
 Have been carved for many a year  
 On the tomb.

"I am ready to go any time," he says with a look that seems to be across the great river. "I have lived much longer than most men. My father died at 89 years. I don't care to live longer."

## Digging Out the Remains of a Once Splendid City

**R**OME, March 10.—Prof. Dante Vaglieri, whose recent discovery of a pre-Romulean necropolis on the Palatine has revolutionized ancient Roman history, has now undertaken extensive excavations at Ostia, and their great importance may be judged by the fact that at the very start a good find has been made.

Ancus Martius, the fourth king of Rome, built over 600 years before Christ at the mouth of the Tiber, about sixteen miles from Rome, a seaport called Ostia and secured the trade of the river, as well as that of the adjacent salt pits. At first a Roman colony, Ostia became in the course of time an important and flourishing town. It was destroyed in the civil wars by Marius, but was rebuilt with greater splendor than before.

Claudius constructed a new and better harbor on the right arm of the Tiber—the old one was situated on the left arm—which Trajan enlarged and improved, and the port of Rome became one of the greatest works of the Romans. Artificial moles, forming a narrow entrance, advanced far into the sea and firmly repelled the fury of the waves, while three deep and capacious basins received the northern branch of the Tiber and afforded a safe anchorage for the vessels laden with the corn of Africa, which was deposited in spacious granaries for the use of the capital.

The old town and port of Ostia, whose harbor had already been partly filled with sand, gradually sank into insignificance and continued to exist only through its salt works, but the new harbor, called Portus Augusti, rose to great importance. It was described as a place where the spirit enjoyed repose and the body recovered health.

In the tenth century the port of Trajan was allowed to fill up with the sand and mud which the Tiber, at the rate of over 8,000,000 tons a year, carries down to the sea. As Pope Gregory IV had built a fortress at Ostia in the preceding century and attempted to revive the ancient town and port, which after him was called Gregoriopolis, a passing importance was given to mediæval Ostia, which was nothing but a fortified hamlet; but its few inhabitants soon fell a prey to malaria, the sand of the Tiber gradually covered all that remained of the ancient city, the land was con-

verted into pestiferous marshes and swamps and the port was left at a distance of nearly two miles from the sea.

Paul V cleared out the port of Trajan and connected it with Fluminio in 1612, and it has remained ever since the only way by which vessels can ascend the Tiber. Ostia today is one of the many ancient buried cities of Italy.

It is like Pompeii. Sand and mud instead of volcanic lava covered its streets, palaces, theaters, fora, villas and shops. The debris of Nero's great fire was carted thither and thrown over the ruins of the old town, which had already begun to pale before the prosperity of Portus.

In the Middle Ages Ostia became a marble quarry. The cathedral of Pisa is built mostly from marbles taken from Ostia, and some of them actually bear still the mark of their origin. This is also true of the cathedral of Orvieto. The cornice of the temple of Vulcan was broken and burned into lime as late as 1816.

Ostia marbles were used in the building of the Loggia of the Benediction at St. Peter's and in many other churches of Rome. And yet such was the vastness and richness of the ancient town that despite continued spoliation, wholesale destructions and the ravages of barbarian invasions many of its streets, houses and public buildings, although in ruins, still exist today.

The excavations undertaken at Ostia in the past have yielded a rich archaeological harvest. When the sacred field of Cybele, the mother of the gods, where in a triangular space about one acre in extent the temple of the goddess surrounded by a colonnade is still to be seen, was excavated in 1867 the bronze statue of Venus Clothe, a recumbent marble figure of Atys and a set of written records referring to the worship of the goddess were discovered. Other finds of great importance consisted of a Mithraic sanctuary, the house of the Aegirili, the imperial palace and many interesting inscriptions.

But the excavations were never carried on a scientific basis, and very often they were interrupted and the places unearthed were allowed to fall again into ruin. Seven years ago an eminent Italian archaeologist submitted a memorial to the government in which he affirmed that 3,000

bronze tablets constituting the records of Rome from its foundation to the time of Vespasian were buried in the marsh of Ostia, having been carried there after being rescued from the fire which devoured Rome in the year 69 of the Christian era. He proposed to drain the marsh in order to recover this invaluable historic treasure. Although a commission was appointed to investigate the matter, a few years after the project was entirely forgotten and it has been left in abeyance.

The main or entrance street of the ancient town of Ostia is entirely unearthed. It is long and narrow, paved with great blocks of lava closely dovetailed one into another and lined with the low ruins of small houses or shops chiefly built of brick set in opus reticulatum. Very few buildings have remained perfect.

In some of the smaller streets there are evident remains of pillared porticos. Here and there are the remains of temples and baths richly decorated with mosaics, while pieces of colored marble and ancient glass tinted in opalescent hues from long interment litter the ground.

The ruins made by chariot wheels obliged by the narrow space to run always in the same groove remain in the pavements of the streets. Fragments of broken pottery and here and there of human bones fill the basins. Everything is silent, melancholy and strange.

The level ground, mostly marshy and still unexcavated, that surround the town stretches away to the Tiber and the sea. On a low hill the remains of a once massive building mark the spot where the temple of Jupiter stood; when discovered it still contained its ancient altar.

The ruins of the theater discovered in 1881 belong chiefly to a careless restoration of the fifth century with materials plundered from the ancient monuments of the town. Here are a number of pedestals taken from the Forum which once supported statues of distinguished men. They are still inscribed with eulogiums of the merits and exploits of the men whose portraits they bore, but the statues have all disappeared. Here an altar of A. D. 124, bearing reliefs of the story of Romulus and Remus was discovered.

umnations of the east and west sides of its portico are divided off into rooms for the different trade guilds, and the corporation which occupied each is named in the white and black mosaics on the threshold.

The history of Ostia is the history of Rome, as it was the place where the great Roman expeditions embarked for the subjugation of the provinces. From Ostia Scipio Africanus started for Spain and Claudius for Britain. The town obtained its chief importance from Rome and it declined and fell with Rome.

Had any attempt been made to remove the sand which accumulated at the mouth of the Tiber, and which, cutting off Ostia from the sea, rendered it useless as a seaport, the town today would have remained the capital's harbor, as flourishing as when it was founded, but nothing has been done to save it. It was allowed to be buried under the sand of the Tiber, the ground around it was covered with stagnant water which bred malaria, its inhabitants died and nothing was left except ruin and desolation.

The excavations of Ostia are comparatively recent, as after the failure of the attempt to revive it by Gregory IV the popes considered it a lost town and left it to its fate. This being the case, Prof. Vaglieri's researches may be expected to disclose much valuable material.

His first find was made in the so-called Via della Fontana. There a large room probably belonging to a villa has been discovered. Its walls are decorated with paintings, while the floor is covered in black and white mosaics.

The frescoes, as seen in the two photographs kindly furnished by Prof. Vaglieri, are in the architectonic style, with figures painted in each square, and they are in a very good state of preservation owing to the fact that they were found covered by a layer of clay which had evidently protected them for centuries. Several fragments of the ceiling painted in a similar style were found and these can be reunited and replaced with very little difficulty. A corridor leading to the room has also been opened and very likely this was lighted by a window which was covered by a substance resembling mica and used instead of glass.