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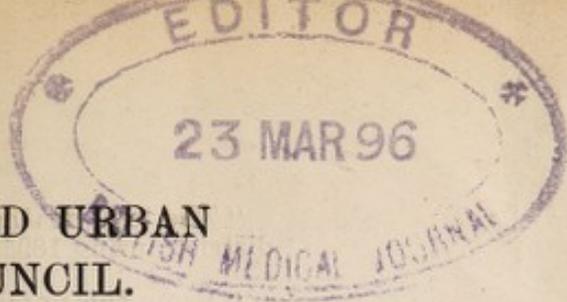
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TO THE WATFORD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

" Gentlemen, — I have the honour to submit to you my annual report for the year 1895. It is the twenty-third that I have sent you as the Board of Health, and the second as the Watford Urban Council.

" The year has been a severe one, your district having been visited by two epidemics, influenza and measles, to the former must be ascribed the large increase in deaths, due to bronchitis pneumonia, and pleurisy, 67 against 40 in 1894; as regards the latter, I have made a special report. To these causes must be attributed the increased death-rate.

" I would, however, especially draw your attention to the subjoined tables, a careful perusal of which will bring out the greater incidence on New Bushey, of—

1. Cases of zymotic disease notified.
2. Deaths due to zymotic disease.

" As regards the habits and distribution of population in this district, they are the same as in the rest of the town, but New Bushey differs from Watford—

1. In soil, which is gravel or clay (Watford, gravel or chalk).
2. In water supply, Bushey is supplied with the Colne Valley water, which is softened before distribution, whereas the Watford water, which is practically from the same source, is not softened.
3. Complaints have been especially frequent from New Bushey, of foul smells from the public sewers.

" Vital Statistics.

" The population of your district, estimated to the middle of 1895, 23,200.

" The area of the district is 784½ acres, which gives an average density of population of 29·57 per acre.

" Marriages.

1st Quarter.. ..	21
2nd " 	40
3rd " 	61
4th " 	53

Total .. 175 Marriage rate 7·5.

" Births.

" The births registered during the year were 724, 82 of these occurred in that portion of your district which lies in the parish of Bushey.

" The birth-rate for the year was 31·2 per 1,000 persons, being against 28·37 in 1894.

" Illegitimate births 25.

Deaths.

“ The total deaths registered as occurring in the district during 1895 were 400.

“ From this number must be deducted 22 deaths which took place in the Workhouse Infirmary ; four in the Cottage Hospital ; and seven in the Isolation Hospital, of patients who, previous to admission, resided without the district.

“ The total deaths thus corrected represented a mortality of 15·38 per 1,000 of estimated population.

“ In 1894 the death-rate was 10·46.

“ The mortality from all causes at different age periods was as follows :—

At all ages	400
Under 1 year.. .. .	103
1—5	60
5—15	24
15—25	12
25—65	107
65—80	73
80—90	19
90 and upwards	2

“ The two who died above the age of 90 were 91 and 98 respectively.

“ Comparing the deaths under 1 year with births, it will be seen from the above Table that the infant mortality is 142·26 per 1,000 births.

“ Of the 339 deaths recorded as occurring in Watford and New Bushey—

31	were ascribed to Phthisis.
67	“ “ “ Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy.
29	“ “ “ Heart Disease.
11	“ “ “ Malignant disease, <i>i.e.</i> , Cancer, etc.

Zymotic Diseases.

“ Under the Notification Act, 110 reports were made to me. Subjoined are Tables giving :—

- 1st. No. of cases reported compared with 1894.
- 2nd. Distribution of cases.

TABLE I.

Disease.	1894	1895
Small Pox	1	1
Scarlatina	60	66
Diphtheria	7	23
Membraneous Croup	1	2
Fevers—		
Enteric or Typhoid	7	3
Continued		1
Puerperal		1
Erysipelas	6	13
Total	82	110

TABLE II.

District.	Population.	Small Pox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Enteric Fever.	Continued Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.
Watford	20980	1	38	11	2	1	1		7
*New Bushey ...	2220		28	12		2			2
Workhouse ...								1	4

By New Bushey is meant that part of your district which lies within the Parish of Bushey.

TABLE III.—Shewing deaths from Zymotic disease.

Disease.	1894	1895
Scarlatina	1	3
Diphtheria	3	4
Membranous Croup	2	2
Fever—		
Enteric	1	
Puerperal		1
Erysipelas		2
Measles	2	36
Whooping Cough	2	6
Total	11	54
Zymotic Death Rate51	2.34

TABLE IV.—Schedule of Births and Deaths for Watford and New Bushey, shewing large death-rate of New Bushey as compared with Watford.

District.	Population.	Births.	Birth Rate.	Total Deaths.	Genl. Death Rate.	ZYMOTIC DEATHS.					Zymotic Death Rate.	
						Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Erysipelas.	Measles.		Whooping Cough.
Watford	20,980	642	30·6	306	14·56		4	2		28	6	1·9
*Bushey	2,230	82	36·93	44	19·81		2		1	6		4·95

* By Bushey is meant that portion of the Parish of Bushey lying in the Watford Urban District. The deaths occurring in Workhouse are not considered in this Table.

TABLE V.

Schedule of Births and Deaths for previous Years.

Year.	Population.	Births.	Deaths.	General Death Rate.	Zymotic Death Rate.
1880	10,400	323	191	18·3	2·4
1881	10,073	344	182	18·06	2·48
*1882	12,653	339	181	15·68	2·08
1883	12,684	433	231	16·23	1·13
1884	12,950	442	261	17·8	1·6
1885	13,220	425	262	17·3	2·7
1886	13,490	463	276	18·08	2·37
1887	13,840	462	216	13·51	1·
1888	16,000	466	294	17·2	2·12
1889	16,300	457	237	13·6	1·6
1890	17,000	328	248	13·23	·76
1891	17,000	396	242	12·94	·35
*1892	19,400	547	306	13·93	1·9
1893	20,500	580	284	12·82	·87
1894	21,500	610	248	10·46	·51
1895	23,200	724	400	15·38	2·34

* District enlarged in this year.

“ Small-pox.

“ One case of small-pox occurred during the year. The patient, a postman, aged 35, on February 25th, walked into the surgery of a medical man practising in the town—he was then in a high fever and delirious. Prompt measures were at once taken, the patient being removed to hospital, the surgery closed until disinfected, and a corden of vaccination established. No other case occurred.

“ Scarlatina.

“ Sixty-six cases occurred during the year, all of which, with the exception of two, were removed to your isolation hospital for treatment. The attacks were, with few exceptions, of a mild character. In many cases the complaint not being diagnosed until the desquamating stage had been reached. To this cause 13 cases which occurred between March 28th and April 28th may be attributed, and several cases which occurred in June, July, and September.

“ A careful perusal of Table II. will shew the large proportion of cases received from New Bushey, this I attribute to the fact that no less than five cases were admitted from there in the desquamating stage. In connection with this matter I would again impress upon you the necessity of providing some more efficient means of disinfection of clothing than you at present possess.

“ Fumigation with sulphur, as practised, is not a reliable method of disinfecting clothing, and is useless as regards bedding.

TABLE shewing incidence of age in cases of Scarlatina and Diphtheria notified.

Age.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.
Under 1	2	
1-5	19	4
5-10	23	10
10-15	12	3
15-20	5	2
20-25	1	2
25-30	2	1
30-40		1
40-45	2	
All ages	66	23

" Diphtheria.

"No less than 23 cases of this disease were notified during the year, as against seven in 1894.

"Of the 23 cases, 20 were removed to your Isolation Hospital for treatment, of which three died.

"Subjoined is a Table, giving date of occurrence and place :—

Date.	Street.	Age	Remarks.
Jan. 18	Pinner-road	7	All members of same family. } Filthy house. } Sanitary defects. } Bushey Board School, Wat'rd Field.
"	"	13	
"	"	3	
"	"	6	
"	"	11	
Feb. 27	Stratford-rd., Wtfd	19	
Mar. 1	Lwr. Paddock-rd	12	Infection directly traced. } Bushey Board School.
" 7	Capel-road	8	
" 16	Capel-road	9	
Apr. 14	Oxhey-street	22	
May 27	Pinner-road	5	
July 18	Chalk-hill	18	
" 27	Villiers-road	4	
Aug. 29	Malden-rd., W'tford	3	Bad case. Fatal. Sotheron Road School.
Sep. 16	Watford Heath	37	} Grave sanitary defects.
" 18	" "	27	
" 29	Loates-lane, Watfd.	25	
Oct. 18	St. Mary's-road, "	6	Sotheron Road School.
" 23	High-street "	5	Grave Sanitary defects. Closets blocked. Fatal. Watford Fields School.
Nov. 5	Oxford-street "	22	
" 17	St. Mary's-rd "	7	Infant School, High-st.
" 25	Chalk Hill	5	Grave sanitary defects. Filthy house. Fatal.
De 29	Copsewood-st., Watford	2	Fatal. Measles previously Callow Land School.

" Typhoid Fever.

" Four cases notified against seven in 1894. Two in New Bushey, and two in Callow Land, the most sanitary quarter of the town. One of the latter was directly traceable to a case in London which the patient (by occupation a nurse) had been attending three weeks previously. All these cases recovered.

" Measles.

TABLE shewing dates and incidence of age of cases of Measles which ended fatally.

Date.	Under 1.	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5 upwds.	Total
Nov. 10 and 23		1	1				2
Dec. 1st week	1	1	1				3
Dec. 2nd week	2	7		2	1	1	13
Dec. 3rd week	3	1	3	2		1	11
Dec. 4th week		1	2	2			5
Dec. 5th week	2						2
							36

" At the latter end of the year your district was visited by a severe epidemic of measles, which caused 36 deaths, and for which I found it necessary to advise you to close the Schools.

" The first cases occurred early in November. Towards the end of the month the disease rapidly spread, reaching its height the second week in December.

" The cases, which were of a severe and some of a malignant type, were chiefly confined to the poorer districts of the town, and to children under the age of 10.

" I attribute the spread of the complaint to—

1st. A very susceptible population.

2nd. School attendance, *i.e.*, children attending school in early stage of the complaint.

3rd. To the careless and indifferent manner in which it was treated by the heads of the households affected, and in but few cases were any precautions taken. Often no medical man was called in.

" The deaths in all cases (except eight) were attributed to lung complications, though at the time mild weather prevailed.

"Influenza.

"This complaint again made its appearance towards the middle of February, and soon becoming widely prevalent and assuming an epidemic form, which lasted throughout March and April, six deaths being attributed to it.

"Fever Hospitals.

"These hospitals have done useful work during the year, and in spite of their temporary nature and straitened accommodation, have given universal satisfaction.

"Out of 66 cases of scarlatina reported 64 allowed themselves to be removed there for treatment. Of diphtheria 20 out of 23 cases reported.

"For further details I would refer you to the Medical Officer's report.

"Ambulance.

"The ambulance, which you purchased last June from Atkinson & Phillip, Newcastle-on-Tyne, is a great boon. It is of the Red Cross pattern, being built of pine with walnut panels, and fitted with light springs and rubber brakes; running very smoothly and easily drawn by one horse.

"The accommodation for patients consists of one stretcher suspended on slings, one bed mounted on springs and india-rubber tyred wheels, and one seat with spring back. In addition to this there is room for two attendants inside and one out, beside the driver.

"Streets and Courts.

"Great improvements have been effected during the year, many streets having been made up and paved. I would take this opportunity of pointing out the ill-paved and dirty condition of several of the courts, especially would I mention Ballard's Buildings. This court, which is situated in the centre of the town, consists of 55 cottages, a stable and several sheds, covering an area of 2,500 square yards, and contains a population, according to a census taken by your Sanitary Inspector, of 148 persons (35 men, 45 women, 68 children). The cottages are all, with one or two exceptions, in a bad state of repair, many of them, by reason of adjacent buildings, are badly ventilated, damp, and dark; some have no through ventilation, being built back to back. The only sanitary conveniences are two rows of extremely foul and filthy trough closets, situated at the bottom of the yard, being upwards of 50 yards distant from some of the cottages. It is the custom of the inhabitants to empty the bedroom and other slop utensils over the yard gullies placed down the centre of the court, and seeing that the paving consists of cobbles loosely set in cement the crevices of these stones become permeated with filth. During the year nine deaths occurred in the court, eight of which were children under five years of age; four of the five being under one year. This gives a death-rate of 60 per 1000 (the rate for the rest of your district being 15.38), and it would be higher still but for the fact that, by reason of their poverty, the adult inhabitants when ill are usually removed to the Workhouse Infirmary.

“ *Market Place.*

“ I would draw your attention to the condition of the Market-place, which badly requires re-paving.

“ *Slaughter-houses.*

“ The condition of these require your attention. During the year it was found necessary to close the one at Little Otterspool on account of its insanitary condition. I trust in the near future you may see your way to establish a Public Abbatoir.

“ *Seizures of Unsound Food &c.*

“ Eleven seizures of unsound food, &c., were made by your Inspector during the year, but in no case did you consider a prosecution necessary.

“ *Water.*

“ In my report last year I especially drew your attention to the water supply, and to certain dangers which existed of its becoming contaminated *en route* from the reservoir to the consumer.

“ It is with pleasure I now record the appointment of a Water Inspector during the year.

“ It is, however, with regret I notice you are now adopting lead service pipes instead of iron.

“ Watford in the past has been practically free from cases of lead poisoning, and though the water by reason of the Calcic Carbonate it contains in solution has, as far as we know, little or no action on lead; yet, seeing that there is a wide divergence of opinion among chemists and sanitarians as to the action of water on lead, it is a pity at the present time to make any change.

“ The total water pumped in 1895 was 290 million gallons. This gives a daily supply of over 40 gallons per head of those to whom you supply it.

“ *Sewers.*

“ Numerous complaints have been made during the year of smells arising from the sewer ventilators. Especially has this been the case in New Bushey: one ventilator in particular, that under the Bushey railway bridge, has been most offensive.

“ I attribute these smells—

“ 1st. To the steep gradient.

“ 2nd. To the following reasons:—The Bushey sewerage is received at the bottom of the High-street into a low level sewer which discharges itself into a deep tank at the Sewage Works.

“ The pump which empties this tank does not always do its work satisfactorily, and the sewage rises in the tank above the level of the sewer discharging into it. As a consequence the sewer becomes more or less full and forms an elongated cesspool.

“ I would suggest (1) the advisability of adopting some more satisfactory method of emptying this tank (2) erecting ventilating shafts to the sewers.

"Recreation Grounds.

"I notice, with pleasure, the improvements effected in the new Recreation Ground, viz., the building of an embankment along the river-side, and making up of the roadway.

"I trust that during the coming year you may see your way to plant the ground with trees and ornamental shrubs.

"Public Baths and Wash-houses Act.

"I would again urge upon you the advisability of taking advantage of this Act. A good swimming bath and other baths are much required.

"The present bathing place in the river is much patronised during the summer months. During the year there were no less than 26,769 bathers, made up as follows—

April	254
May	3204
June	9514
July	6803
August	5249
September	1695
October	50
Total	<u>26769</u>

"Union Workhouse.

"Four cases of erysipelas were notified from the Union Workhouse during the year, and one case of puerperal fever. Two of these cases ended fatally. On investigating the matter the drains of the house were found to be in a very bad state, necessitating an entirely new drainage scheme, which is now being carried out.

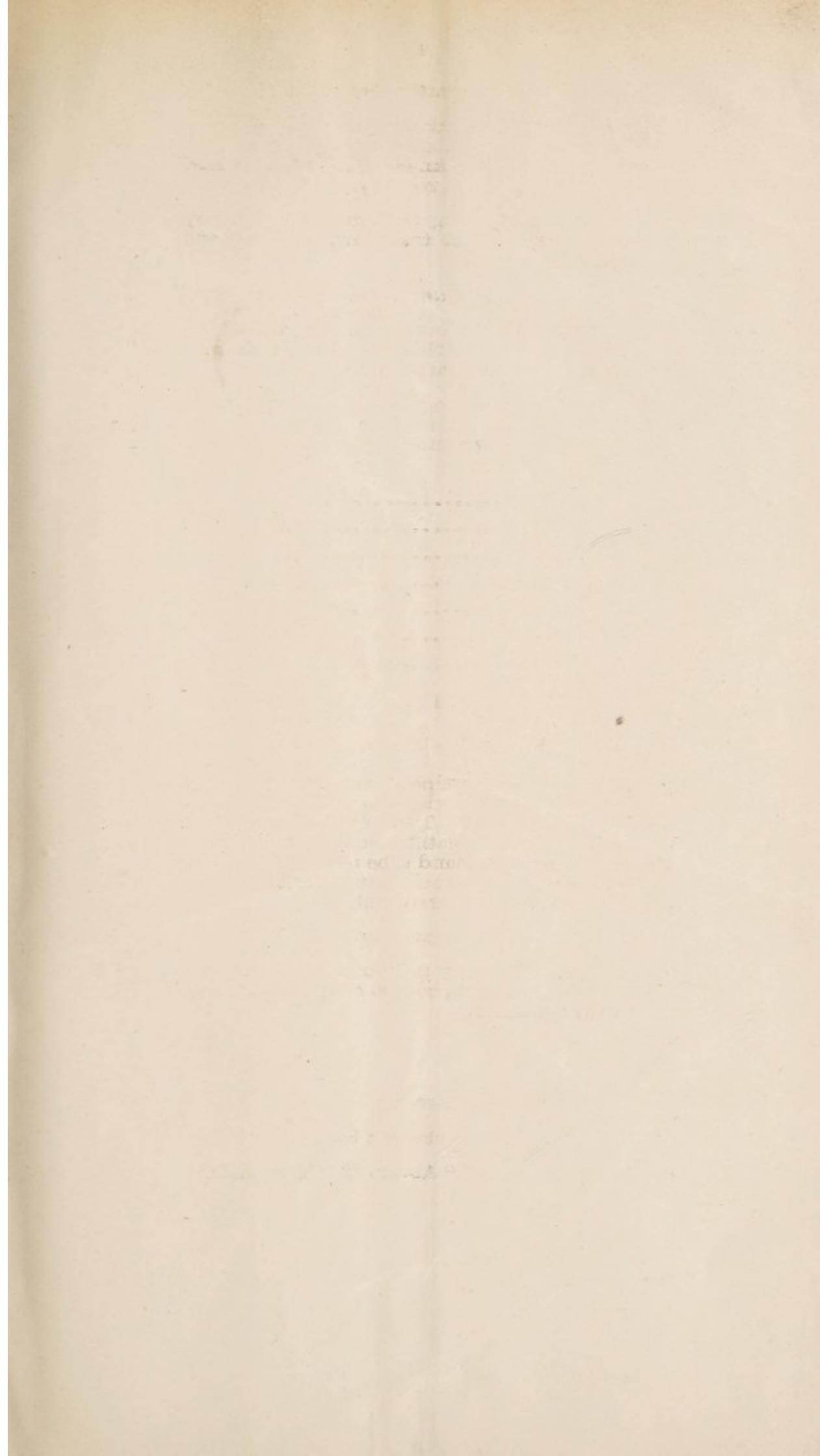
"Cottage Hospital.

"This is still very popular and does good and useful work last year, over 90 cases being admitted with 37 operations.

"I remain, gentlemen,

"Your obedient Servant,

"ALFRED T. BRETT, M.D."





FORD
APR 20
1896