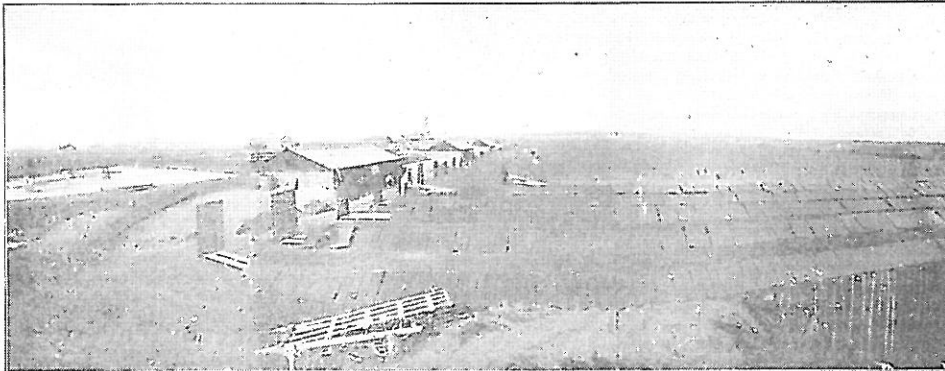


A MODEL BRICKFIELD.

Though by no means the largest in Sittingbourne, Messrs. C. Burley's brick and cement works fully deserve the title we have given them, on account of their convenience and excellent organisation. The business was established over

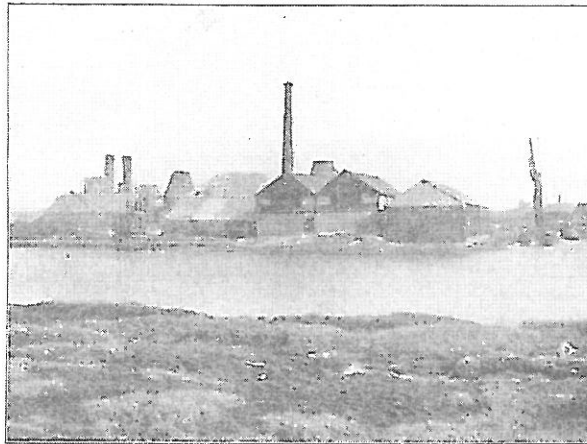
is small but usefully equipped with four stools, the turn-out being 4,000,000 bricks per year, and the firm's office is also here. On the other, which covers 75 acres of land, the bulk of the bricks are made, the turn-out being 13,000,000 bricks per year. Most of the land is, of course, simply being dug



GENERAL VIEW OF MESSRS. C. BURLEY'S BRICK-FIELDS.

thirty years ago by the father of the present proprietors, who are also, we may mention, large shareholders in the firm of Messrs. Wakely Bros., Ltd., contractors-Bankside, London.

The cement and brick-making are two quite distinct branches, and the former works being close to the station we made our first call there. No cement in the world has a higher reputation than that made on the banks of the Medway—and for that made at the Dolphin Works Messrs. Burley bring Medway chalk and clay in their own barges so that the product is identically the same as that actually made near the noted river. One hundred and fifty tons a week is made, and as the barges arrive alongside the Quay their cargoes are taken out, mixed into slurry and pumped into drying backs where it remains until it has reached a certain consistency, when it is spread on a heated floor and dried hard. In this state it is broken up and placed with alternate layers of coke in kilns, of which there are six holding from 18 to 30 tons each. Here it is burnt to a hard clinker and afterwards ground to a fine powder in a Duttrell Edge Rimmer, the most improved type of machine for this work, that at the Dolphin Works being in fact the first erected in England. It will grind to any fineness, Messrs. Burley's standard being a 10 per cent residue on a 50 mesh, though finer is made if required.



CEMENT WORKS.

The cement is finally weighed and sacked, and samples from each burning are tested in a special room, some we saw after having been immersed for seven days in still water resisting a breaking strain equal to 330 lbs. to the square inch. The cement produced here is in great demand locally and also further afield. To drive the grinding machines, washers and slurry pumps, a 20 h.p. engine fed by two Cornish boilers is employed.

Leaving the cement works, we next turned our attention to the brick fields, which are situated both in Sittingbourne and Milton. One near the railway

for the clay, the actual brick-making field being square and on a lower level than the rest; along one side and at the top of the bank are 24 drying backs into which the slurry is pumped, and below these are 12 pug mills and stools, one to each pair of backs. The dried slurry descends to the mills and from thence to the workmen; all Sittingbourne bricks, by the way, being made by hand. The bricks are then conveyed to the drying fields and afterwards burnt in clamps, eventually finding their way principally to London where the bulk of them are used.

Here, also, powerful engines and pumps are necessary for the drying backs and pug-mills, and whatever is wanted in this line is at hand.

With such an amount of raw and converted material coming and going, the matter of transit is one of importance. It is largely done by the firm's fleet of 20 barges which they have built in their own special sheds, and which are constantly passing between the Medway, London and Sittingbourne, laden either with cargoes from or for Messrs. Burley or for different owners, as the barges are let on hire to other firms.

Extensive as the cement and brick-making operations are, they do not solely occupy Messrs. Burley's attention, for they are farmers, fruit and hop growers and graziers on a large scale as well, a combination more than once met with at Sittingbourne. They have 150 acres of various sorts of fruit under cultivation and 40 acres of hops. Their fruit is well known

at Covent Garden, London, and all the principal markets, such as Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Brighton, &c., and during the fruit season daily supplies are sent to these centres.

Without the brickfields, the commercial importance of the district would be practically nil, and amongst the firms that keep it up to its standard, C. Burley is fully entitled to a high place.

The firm's telephone No. is 9.

THE SWALE IRON WORKS.

Naturally enough in a district where certain industries are specialised, we find others acting more or less as auxiliaries in providing gear and machinery by which they can be carried on.

Largely of such a nature is the Swale Iron works owned by Mr. F. Littlewood who devotes much of his attention to the building of slurry pumps, pug mills, brick moulds and all mechanical appliances connected with barges, such as windlasses, pumps, cribs, steering gear, &c., though the specialties named are not the only ones he produces.

He is, in fact if anything, more widely known in connection with the erection of windmills for pumping purposes and for working agricultural machinery, and also for the boring of artesian wells—work he has made a special study.

Littlewood's four-sweep windmills are specially adapted for raising water for cattle, and forcing water from lowlands to supply farmyards, stock, and dwelling houses; while they are equally useful for drainage and irrigation. Indeed, on any land where there is a lack of water it would speedily pay to have a boring made and one of these handy pumping mills erected. Mr. Littlewood has put up a large number throughout the district, and the numerous testimonials he has received speak of them in terms of unqualified approval.

For well sinking he has a complete steau plant which can be sent under the direction of a competent staff any distance, and as in this part of the country water is pretty easily found, an artesian well is not only a very great convenience but a considerable economy as well.

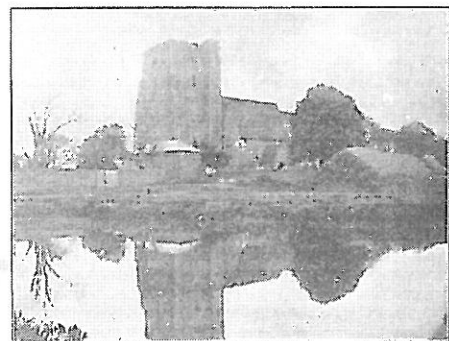
For all kinds of brickfield plant the works are well known. Mr. Littlewood being now engaged in putting up five pug mills, with the necessary slurry and water pumps, at Mr. Wood's new brickfield, near Milton Church.

The Swale Iron Works, which are situated in High Street, Milton, are

compact and well fitted, but like many other enterprises, they have had their "day of small things." At the time of their establishment, about thirty years ago, no steam power was employed, but there is now a complete plant in use driven by a 10 h.p. engine by Messrs. Hall, of Dartford. The iron foundry is fitted with two cupolas and a gun metal furnace: castings up to two tons weight can be made. The fitting and erecting shops have all necessary tools in the shape of lathes, drills, slotting and shaping machines, and the practical eye can at once see that its resources are equal to all that is professed to be done.

Besides the various products we have mentioned a good trade in general castings is done, and also in repairing engines and machinery of all kinds.

Mr. F. Littlewood has taken an active part in public life for many years, and was the first chairman of the Milton Urban District Council, of which he is still a member.



MILTON PARISH CHURCH.

Photo by]

[F. M. Hamer, Sittingbourne.