CRAYFORD FLOUR MILLS, KENT.

Last week we had the pleasure of a trip to Crayford to inspect the complete new roller plant and accessories that Mr. H. W. Richards has just had installed in Crayford Mill by Messrs. Thos. Robinson and Son, Ld., of Rochdale.

Mr. Richards comes of an old milling family, his grandfather, Wm. Richards, being a Cornish miller who bought the Ladock Flour Mills, Cornwall, as far back as 1826. His son, the present Mr. Richards' father, was a Cornish miller, and then flour factor in London for a number of years.

Mr. H. W. Richards himself was born within sound of Bow bells, and has had a flour trade in London for some 16 years, and is well known to the bakers of the metropolis.

About two years ago he decided to start milling on his own account, and looking round for suitable premises, he decided that Crayford Mills would suit his requirements. These mills were built by a Mr. Henry Downing about the year 1820, on a tidal creek of the Thames. The mill was fitted with five pairs of stones and an undershot waterwheel, to which later a steam engine was added. The mills later passed into the hands of Mark Jacobs, from whose executor Mr. Richards bought them 19 months ago.

The situation of the mills is ideal, both for receiving wheat and distributing flour. Near enough to London, being in fact in the S.E. district, to have full advantage of the docks and markets and yet far enough out to escape London rates and high wages. Strong foreign wheats can be lightered down the Thames from any dock or riverside warehouse on one ebb tide and floated up the creek and alongside the mill on the next flood tide, so that foreign wheat can be carried to the mill at a minimum cost, at least as cheaply as to many of the London mills. In addition to these great advantages as regards foreign wheats there is a supply of local native wheats to be obtained in this part of Kent delivered by motor waggons, of which newer mode of haulage our friend will take full advantage. He knows from his long experience of the trade the requirements of bakers, and his new mill enables him to produce flour to compete with any on the market at the lowest possible cost of production.

Mr. H. W. Richards.

The mill is equipped with an intake elevator for receiving wheat from the barges lying alongside, as illustrated in the view we publish. These elevators carry the wheat to the top of the mill, whence it is taken by a band conveyor to the new silos which have just been built at the other side of the mill proper. Under each of the silos are automatic Moir feeders and wheat mixers for drawing off the wheat as required, which then passes by means of conveyors and elevators to the cleaning rooms, which are separated from the mill and silos by fire-proof doors. The wheat cleaning consists of Robinson's milling separator, which also grades the grain into two sizes for the cockle and barley cylinders. From the cylinders it passes to the scourer and on to the washing machines or to clean wheat bins as the sort being cleaned may require. The scourer is one of Robinson's well-known pattern with revolving scouring case, and its work leaves nothing to be desired. The stoner, washer, whizzer and conditioner are also of Robinson's standard patterns.

We should mention here that the wheat-cleaning machinery has a capacity more than double that of the mill, so that enough grain can be cleaned and conditioned in the day time to last 24 hours. This department, therefore, will not require to be worked at night, thus saving a considerable amount in insurance charges, and also doing away with a large amount of night work.

From the clean wheat bins the wheat goes to the mill, where it passes through a brush for a final polish, and is then automatically weighed on its way to the first break rolls.

Crayford Flour Mills.

mill by railway siding. The mill is only 14 miles by road from idge, so is within easy distance for delivery of flour, especially

The ground floor of the mill is occupied by the elevator bottoms and the line shafting. The floor above is the grinding floor, and contains a