

## THE OLD BUSHEL MEASURE OF MILTON-NEXT-SITTINGBOURNE.

THE citizens of Milton (a town now usually distinguished by the suffix Regis) are to be congratulated on the settlement of what might have developed into a formidable dispute, the subject of controversy being the ownership of a bushel measure of Elizabeth's reign, which has been kept in the Old Court House. Great credit is due to Mr. Sydney T. Nicholls, who has held the office of Portreeve of this ancient town since 1918, for the care which he has taken to preserve this valuable object and for the pertinacity with which he has worked for its retention permanently in the town. The result of his and his fellow-townsmen's labours has been that the Lord of the Manor, Mr. H. W. Wykeham Musgrave, has agreed to present the measure to the Council to hold for the town in perpetuity. Mr. Nicholls is a member of the Kent Archæological Society and sought its help, but as the question involved was one of legal custody of the measure, the Society was unable to do much.

The measure is of bell metal and weighs 73 lbs. It is 10 inches high, including the three dwarf feet, and measures 1 ft.  $8\frac{3}{4}$  inches across the mouth, and  $7\frac{3}{4}$  inches deep inside. It is dated 1560 and bears the Royal Arms of Queen Elizabeth in red and gold. There is a similar measure preserved in Maidstone Museum, but the latter only dates from 1601.

Mr. Nicholls has lately acquired possession of the Old Court House of Milton, which was in a decayed condition, and considered by some to be past repair. He has, however, taken it in hand, and, with the help of a labourer, has restored the building, and has preserved all old features including three king-posts in the roof, which comprises five bays. The street front of the building, 40 feet in length,



MILTON BY SITTINGBOURNE.—Old Bushel Measure.

rises direct from the pavement, and on the ground floor may be seen the gratings of the old lock-ups or cages. In an upstairs room is the magistrates' seat; above, the bench where the jurors used to sit, with an old ledge much worn by their feet. The most ancient part of the Court House is believed to date from about 1450.

G.C.D.

*Note.* Thanks are due to Mr. S. T. Nicholls for the use of the photographs from which the accompanying illustrations have been made; also to the Rev. Hugh T. Lord, Vicar of Bapchild, for details of information respecting the bushel measure and the Court House.



View of Street Frontage.



Detail at the back of the Hall.

MILTON BY SITTINGBOURNE.—The Old Court Hall.