

Alabaster "Table" Relief at Hopton Hall.

By MRS. MEADE WALDO.



THE tablet of which we here give an illustration is the property of Captain Chandos-Pole-Gell, at Hopton Hall. These "table" reliefs are of much interest, being examples of an art, or industry, which, originating at Chellaston, in the alabaster country, was once widely known. In fact, we may safely say that all the carved alabaster work dating from the fifteenth century, which is found in churches and cathedrals all over this country, as well as in France, came from Chellaston. Several of these tablets are in the British Museum. The Hopton example is not one of the earliest class—and has the peculiarity, among others, of a battlemented canopy. The figure of the Saviour has the hand in blessing at arms-length, and the left hand holds a Resurrection banner. The position of the right hand raised in blessing, however, varies, and in some of the examples is held close to the body; and in the British Museum Resurrection tablet the banner is omitted. The Hopton tablet also shews the remains of a gilt background, diapered all over with round white spots. This is also seen in two examples in the British Museum. The subject of one of these is the Annunciation; that of the other, the Destruction of Sodom.

Mr. St. John Hope, in *Archæologia*, vol. lii., p. 698, states that these tablets were carved at Chellaston, *circa* 1494, and were much used for monuments in various parts of England; and were also exported to France. All the tablets referred to by him have the head of St. John Baptist as the primary subject. The figure of Christ, rising from the tomb, is introduced as a secondary group, smaller, and below the Baptist's head.



ALABASTER "TABLE"-RELIEF.