

BRONZE OR LATTEN FOOT OF A PORTABLE
CROSS, STOKE POGES.

The Rev. J. F. Hoyle, Vicar of Stoke Poges, has favoured me with some notes on a very interesting piece of church plate to which his attention was called more than a year ago, and which is believed to have formed part of the furniture of the Chapel of the Alms-house or Hospital founded here by Edward Hastings, K.G., second son of George, first Earl of Huntingdon, created Lord Hastings of Loughborough, A.D. 1558. Mr. Hoyle notes: This Hospital stood close to the Parish Church, and at the same time Lord Hastings built on to the church a chapel to serve as the oratory for the Hospital and a burial place for himself and his family. In 1765 Mr. Thomas Penn, of Stoke Park, obtained an Act of Parliament to pull down the ancient Hospital, standing in, or close to, his park, and to re-build it in another situation, about a quarter of a mile away. It is supposed that the old use of the Hastings Chapel was at this time discontinued, and the services held in the chapel-room of the new Hospital; the Chapel being later turned into a vestry-room, and is now brought into the compass of the church; the organ is placed there, galleries have been erected, and it has quite lost its original character.

Two old helmets which used to lie uncared for in the chapel-room of the new Hospital have lately been placed in the church, on the walls of the Hastings Chapel; and this bronze or latten stand has been taken into safe keeping from the kitchen or living-room of the Hospital. It stands on a reeded six-foil base from which rises a rounded engraved support, surmounted by a small open-work gallery, above which is the socket in, and on, which the cross itself stood. The engraving represents two natural and two conventional floral designs, under which and encircling the base is the inscription: JESUS NAZARENUS REX JUDEORUM FILI DEI MISERERE MEI.



STONE CROSS. BASE TO CROSS.

Mr. Hoyle received from Mr. C. H. Read, P.S.A., head of the Mediæval Antiquities Dept. of the Brit. Museum, the following report:—"I have examined the charming bronze object belonging to your church with considerable care, and I think it must be later than was my first impression, and I should be inclined to put it about the middle of the 16th century.* I have no doubt it was intended as the stand for a processional cross, or something of that bulk. . . . C. H. READ."

It was exhibited at the Society of Antiquaries on the 3rd February. Mr. St. John Hope described it as a "latten foot for a portable cross of early 16th century date," and, in conversation with me, said that it was intended to stand on or over the altar, there to receive a portable cross when the latter was not being used, supported on a staff, for processional purposes, one cross being thus made to serve two purposes. There are some indications of gilding, but whether it was entirely or parcel-gilt it is difficult now to say.

W. N.

* It is figured in Proceedings of the Soc. Ant. 1910 where (p. 51) its date is said to be about 1480, and to be of undoubted English work.