

NEWS & ACTIVITIES AROUND THE WORLD...

BOLOGNA, ITALY, Nov. 27-29, 1982.

On the first day of the Italian National Congress, called "The Shroud and Science", Prof. Baima Bollone gave his talk on the presence of myrrh, aloes and blood on the Shroud. In essence, his talk can be reduced to this: there is no chemical reaction or visual proof of the presence of aloes and myrrh on the Shroud; on the contrary, the presence of these resins near the scorched areas would show signs of alteration in density since they are thermally unstable. The professor's method was that of comparison. Several pieces of modern linen were stained with blood, with aloes, with myrrh, with mixtures of all three in various combinations. These were then baked (scientists use this to achieve conditions of 'age'). Then by use of the scanning electron microscope, x-rays, and other haematology investigations, he makes the following comments:

1. The comparison linens stained with myrrh and aloes is similar in texture to the threads taken from the body-stained areas of the Shroud.
2. Similarly the comparison linens stained with blood, aloes and myrrh corresponds with the blood stains as far as he could see.
3. Not only in texture but also in mineral content, there is a correspondence between the comparison linens and the Shroud threads.
4. He had obtained a crystal from the Shroud which was in all respects analogous to a derivative of haemoglobin, namely haematine hydrochlorate (Teichmann's crystal) and the emission and absorption spectra of this substance had confirmed his belief.

That evening, there was a public and illustrated series of talks on the latest discoveries of Professors Baima Bollone and Max Frei-Sulzer.

Saturday 28 November, the first speaker* was from England with a plea that the Italian Report from the Congress should be devoted to positive statements, the established scientific proofs of the authenticity of the Holy Shroud; any personal opinions, any hypotheses, should be added as appendices. What the world wants and needs, and what science has now established, are the FACTS proved by photographs, by the electron microscope, and by innumerable tests. Hypotheses are voices in the dark.

Dr. Max Frei gave the arguments for and against his pollen discoveries. In talking to him afterwards, I put an objection. Dr. Frei has maintained that the fallout of pollen is very limited in area dispersal. This may well be so in normal circumstances, but in the Dead Sea area things are very different. The Dead Sea is 2000 feet below sea level, it

*[This was Father Foley himself, author of this report. Ed.]

has no outlet, its level being due to the abnormal evaporation in the cauldron heat of summer. Consequently, the upsurge of humidity (and pollen) is quite out of the ordinary. The fallout must also be extraordinary and over a very wide area. Dr. Frei has always claimed that the 'breakthrough' for the pollen argument, namely that the Holy Shroud has on it at least seven pollen from plants which grow uniquely in a very saline soil around the Dead Sea, proves that the linen must have been in the area at some time in its existence. So if the pollen might have spread far and wide, what value had his argument? He defends his argument quite simply in saying that such dispersal is limited not only in physical fact, but also by reason of ecology. By this he means that the plants which grow in conditions of such high salinity will not grow elsewhere because the ecological conditions are unique to the Dead Sea borders.

Prof. Brandone gave his analysis by neutron activation,. A subject whose results deserve fuller exploration than is possible in this short account, but will be printed in the Congress Report.

This was followed by a paper which was so extra-peculiar that I will not say anything more than "It put the 'coins on the eyes' hypothesis to shame!" So far as one could understand the author, there are quite a number of Hebrew letters to be deciphered on the Shroud if one heavily overprints the Shroud photographs, and then puts one's imagination into a very high gear indeed. Nor does one see any purpose for this sort of thing.

The morning ended with an old and tried friend of the Holy Shroud who has quietly worked away and succeeded with the unique property of the Shroud imprints, namely that they are three dimensional. It is always a pleasure to listen to master craftsman Prof. Tamburelli. Equally another good friend, Prof. Cacciani with his densitometer-proofs of the enhancement by computer, methods and use in the interpretation of the Shroud imprints. No hypotheses for these men but all of it hard, solid fact.

Prof. Fasola reported on the archaeological studies relative to the Shroud, which have been discovered during the past three years. Dr. Galignani from Milan on 'The Byzantine Icon Tradition', showed a series of most interesting slides of the various icons which radiate from that which we know in the west as 'Our Lady of Perpetual Succour'. In each of them she holds the baby in her arms, and in every one of them, the boy is shown with the right foot most awkwardly twisted. It is a tradition of the Orthodox Church, due to a misinterpretation of the reading of the dorsal imprints of the feet on the Shroud, that Our Lord was a cripple; strange to find so ancient if incorrect a tradition reflected so clearly in these beautiful paintings.

The afternoon ended with Prof. Coppini's lecture on the reproductions of the Holy Shroud in Bologna during the past centuries.

The next series of lectures concentrated on the medical aspects of the cause of Jesus' death on the Cross. One final lecture was concerned with fibrinolysis as a possible cause for the imprints on the Shroud.

To Professor Coppini, president of the Congress, we of the English delegation are most grateful, not only for his kindly care of all of us, but for making us feel that we were part of the family. And to Signora Maria Milani, who acted as our guardian angel and guide ... nothing was too much trouble to her in showing us the beauty of Bologna and its churches. As was said at the Congress, "Italy, it is not only a Pope from the north who loves you, but we barbarians do too."

Rev. Charles Foley

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From the complete review of the Bologna Congress, given in SINDON #30, we note briefly some of the speakers who addressed the assembly, and who are not mentioned in Father Foley's lively and detailed account.

Prof. Giovanni Imbalzano called attention to the 3-D effect of chemical-thermographic imprints, which could offer information about the Shroud image. Edoardo Garelli presented his personal ideas concerning the coin on the eyes, seen by Fr. Francis Filas. The cause of Jesus' death was discussed by Drs. Malantruccio and Delle Site. Brother Bruno Bonnet-Eymard carried a step further the studies of Lavergne, Feuillet and Robinson on the interpretation of John 20:6-7. Mons. Zardoni brilliantly treated the theological aspect of the Relic. Prof. Cazzola and Maria Delfina Fusina demonstrated the sindonic traces in Byzantine-Russian icons, showing slides in which even the Baby Jesus is shown with the left leg shorter than the right. Prof. Aurelio Ghio showed slides he made in 1978 of the patches and bloodstains, pointing out some details which no one had ever imagined.

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EPHRATA—Two Special Reports of the STURP team are now available from the Holy Shroud Guild, Box 336, Ephrata, PA 17522. They are:

J.H. HELLER and A.D. ADLER: *A Chemical Investigation of the Shroud of Turin*. \$1.50.

L.A. SCHWALBE and R.N. ROGERS: *Physics and Chemistry of the Shroud of Turin; A Summary of the 1978 Investigation*. \$4.00.

Both prices include first-class postage.

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NEW YORK— From the Holy Shroud Guild, we have received a brief summary of the preliminary results of the research undertaken by the Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP). The information given has been amply publicized in newspapers and scientific journals, but some observations are noteworthy: for instance, concerning the formation of the image, "The basic problem from a scientific point of view is that some explanations which might be tenable from a chemical point of view, are precluded by physics. Contrariwise, certain physical explanations which may be attractive are completely

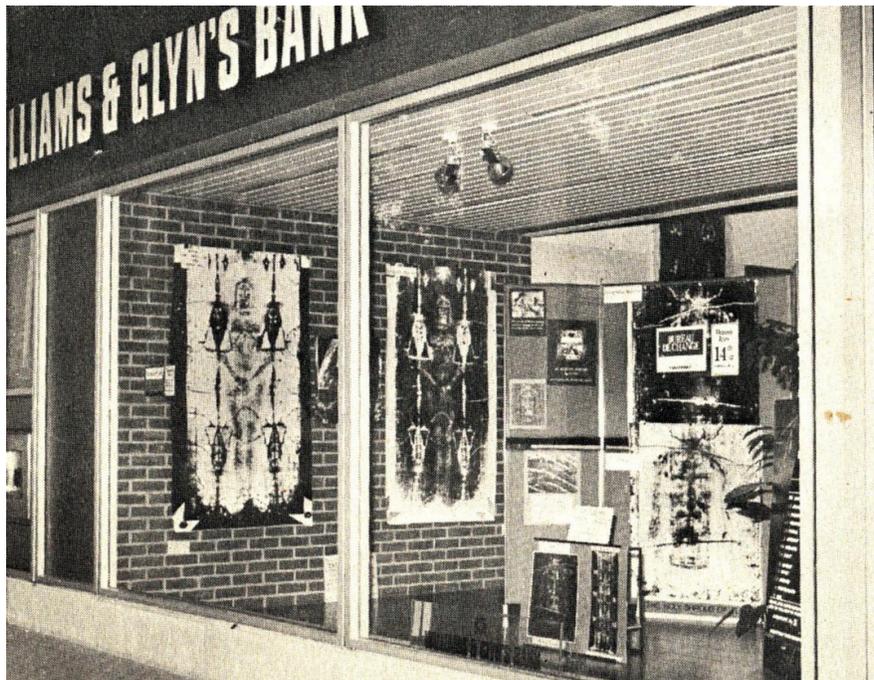
precluded by the chemistry. For an adequate explanation for the image of the Shroud, one must have an explanation which is scientifically sound from a physical, chemical, biological and medical viewpoint." The summary concludes that "for now the Shroud image is that of a real human form of a scourged, crucified man. It is not the product of an artist. The blood stains are composed of hemoglobin and also give a positive test for serum albumin."

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BRUSSELS—Prof. Marcel Lobet, author and historian, has kindly sent the resume of a lecture entitled "The Enigma of the Turin Shroud", given in Belgium's capital city by the Rev. Pierre Murlon-Bernaert, S.J. While it is not possible here to report at length on this excellent conference, we would like to quote one line: "For our faith, [the Shroud] cannot be considered as a proof, but rather as a sign (and what a sign!) for our time".

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NOTTINGHAM, Eng.—The Holy Shroud Information Centre has not confined the Shroud message to those interested persons who attend lectures or visit exhibitions, but reaches also the "man in the street" who might otherwise be totally unaware that Christ had left this True Image of Himself on which everyone can see the validity of his gospel. An exhibit in the care of the Nottingham Building Society was recently mounted in the front window and foyer of the Williams and Glyn's Bank, a branch of the Society. The impressive display is now circulating to others of the Society's 60 branches in the County.



Shroud exhibit in front window of Williams & Glyn's Bank, Nottingham, England.