

CORRESPONDENCE

In the Italian language, a key word for describing the Shroud is *infalsificabile*, (in-falsee-fee-caa-bee-lay). It defines something which cannot be falsified, as the Shroud. In a recent letter to SHROUD SPECTRUM, the Rev. Charles Foley, of England, raises the word like a battle cry: *INFALSIFICABILE!*

It takes some time to find one's way through the ramifications of Father Fossati's article (June SPECTRUM) in which he questions the identity of the Holy Shroud and the Edessa ikon.

Parts of the article under the heading "Veronica of St Peter's Basilica" suffer from confusion. Any suggestion that the Veronica of St Peter's is "indistinct" or "features of the Face can barely be distinguished" are misleading since there is no figuration on the Veronica Veil in St Peter's, no remnant of a figure or face. There never was. Again, "It has not been possible to study the original directly" and "it has never yet been closely examined" is not in accord with fact. Msgr. Wilpert (Prof. of the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology; member of the Holy Shroud Commission) with the permission of Pope St Pius X, took the linen of the Veronica out of its protective frame and glass covers, carefully examined it, and reported that there were two small dim areas at the centre, but nothing else. No face. No figure. No suggestion of either. Moreover the engraved portrait (known to us today from innumerable copies as the Holy Face of Tours) which had acted as a cover-guard for the original cloth had been lost forever in the 1527 invasion and looting of Rome.

The hypothesis of identity of the Holy Shroud and any ikon of any sort has always been unacceptable to those who have spent years in the study of the Shroud and its mysteries. Acknowledged world authorities concerned with iconography and specifically those concerned with the Edessa ikon (Sir Stephen Runciman of Cambridge University, Prof. Weitzmann of Princeton), the historians (Prof. Cameron of England, Prof. Grabar of France) have publicly repudiated such an idea. Photographs prove this foundation fact, that the images of the Shroud are in reversed light values. There is not a single example known anywhere in this world, from any period, of such a demonstration. I include in that statement the Gayet collection of Antinoe, the Assisi and the Lincoln's Inn frescoes, and any other whatsoever. As in other proven facts, the Holy Shroud is absolutely unique; it is absolutely *infalsificabile*. As the scientists who have spent some three years now in a variety of experiments admit, the Shroud is beyond the understanding, the expertise, and even the 'duplication by any hand or mind. This must be declared clearly, loudly and constantly.

CHARLES FOLEY