

EDITORIAL

The New Look to this Newsletter

Members will note, with the New Year of 1996, a 'new look' to this Newsletter. The type-size has been reduced one point, and the number of pages increased, (but enabling substantially greater content than before. Both changes are experimental, and members' opinions will be valued on (a) whether they are happy with the reduced type-size; (b) whether a Newsletter of this or greater length would be acceptable twice a year [e.g. January and July], rather than the three times a year that is the current norm. The advantage, as in this issue, would be to carry substantially longer articles. The disadvantage would be a slight loss of topicality. Whatever your views, do let us know, as the aim is always to improve, if at all possible!

HOME NEWS:

The BSTS Autumn Lecture:

The Kuwaiti Government, and a timely replacement for Prof. Paul Nicholls as guest speaker

The now globally stretched communications between the BSTS's officers were put to their severest test just a few days before the Autumn Meeting, scheduled for 25 October, 1995. With little more than a week to go, our guest speaker **Professor Paul Nicholls** faxed that he had been asked by the Kuwaiti government to go to Kuwait at unavoidably short notice to advise on pharmaceutical education, and could therefore no longer give the lecture.

These sorts of eventualities underline the usefulness of the 'reply-slip' system for members wishing to attend our lectures, but even so, rather than upset those who sometimes travel long distances to turn up 'on spec' on the night, we asked Professor Nicholls if he might provide a text of his lecture that could be read for him. In the event he went one better, supplying an Iranian colleague, **Dr. Bijan Riazi-Farzad**, also of Cardiff University's Welsh School of Pharmacy, to speak on the same theme on his own account.

Professor Nicholls recommended his replacement as 'a fine philosopher with wide interests' and Dr. Riazi-Farzad's presentation turned out to be most professional and excellently balanced in the very best traditions of the BSTS. The full text of it has been included with this Newsletter, and can be found on pages 14 to 27.

The next BSTS Lecture Wednesday 24 April 1996

Dr-Allan Mills to speak on: 'The Image on the Shroud: Product of the 'Yellowing Reaction'?'

In the latest issue* of *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, a scientific journal with a glittering Editorial Board that includes the Baron George Porter, Baron Alexander Todd of Trumpington and a certain **Professor E.T. Hall** of Oxford, there appears a suitably authoritative article 'Image Formation on the Shroud of Turin: the reactive oxygen intermediates hypothesis'. The author is longstanding BSTS member Dr. Allan Mills of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Leicester, and Dr. Mills has kindly agreed to present his arguments in more

popularised form for the Society's Spring Lecture. His basic hypothesis is that the Shroud's image was produced by singlet oxygen lost from the body promoting a long-term 'yellowing reaction' on the cloth

Dr. Mills, who was one of the BSTS's earliest speakers following its foundation in 1977, is in the best tradition of interdisciplinary scientists. He began his career with a degree in chemistry, then followed this up with a postdoctoral fellowship within the Department of Geology and Mineralogy at Oxford University, and is currently Leicester University's Senior Lecturer in Planetary Science, an appointment shared between the University's Geology and Physics-with-Astronomy departments. His present line of research is Martian regoliths (mantle rock), and the possible emergence of microbial life on Mars. Dr. Mills became focused on how the Shroud's image was formed as a result of noting its affinity to the imprints produced by some pressed plants on their mounting paper. Then he happened to browse through a textbook on the biochemistry of free radicals, and there evolved the hypothesis that he will present at the BSTS's next meeting:

Time: 7pm, Wednesday 24 April 1996. Venue: The Board Room of the Society of Authors, 84 Drayton Gardens, London SW10. As usual, members intending to attend are requested to return the slip included with all U.K. copies of this Newsletter.

* 'Image formation on the Shroud of Turin. The reactive oxygen intermediates hypothesis' *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* vol 20, no. 4, Dec. 1995, pp.319-327