

## SHROUD TESTING - LATEST

On 18th. January of this year, during an all too short stop-over at Heathrow en route from New York to Turin, Father Rinaldi imparted to Ian Wilson, for the benefit of members of the B.S.T.S., the latest situation concerning a forthcoming Shroud testing. While Father Rinaldi stressed that nothing is resolved yet, he expressed optimism that a breakthrough is imminent, and that he expected to have some news not long after his arrival in Italy. Particularly encouraging is the fact that on November 9th of last year Dr. Luigi Gonella, foremost scientific adviser to the Cardinal of Turin, travelled to Charlotte, North Carolina, U.S.A. for a meeting with leading scientists from the American STURP group. The STURP group, as ever reticent about making anything public of their plans, have these at a very high level of readiness, and are even rumoured to be anticipating working on the Shroud this coming autumn. This is almost certainly over-optimistic, and if true would be an embarrassment to the ASSIST group who are still finalising their proposals. But with the sheer accumulation of serious proposals for renewed scientific testing of the Shroud already lodged in the in-trays of desks in Turin and Rome, and ASSIST's about to follow, a breakthrough cannot be too far away. The likelihood is that a small panel of scientists from the Pontifical Academy of Sciences will assess the value of each individual proposal, and an appropriate selection will be made. The ecclesiastical authorities are in no doubt that in the public mind radiocarbon dating is expected as an integral part of any new testing programme, the question-marks revolving around "when" rather than "if". But for the present at least, patience remains the order of the day.