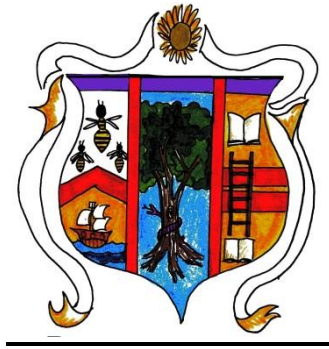


The Institute Crest



Notitia ens Rationis

The heraldic symbolism of the TIFAS coat of arms is relatively obscure, but in essence comprises the following features:

*In the left panel a trio of bees that includes the queen, symbolising industriousness and mutual cooperation, are on a background of argent indicative of wisdom¹. The gules chevron is a symbol of protection below which the ship under full sail denotes exploration, an odyssey in pursuit of knowledge in the Darwinian tradition² and the or background indicates ambition rewarded. The central panel shows the tree of knowledge in the form of the Irish oak with the serpent³ on an azure background indicating steadfastness. The right hand panel is ambiguous but derives from Boethius' discourse on the problem of theodicy in **The Consolation of Philosophy**, with the ladder acting as the conduit between two open books representing the sum of what is known about the universe. The implied direction is upwards, perhaps suggesting the re-interpretation of the known in the greater*

*light of new insight. As it is on a background of or this is plausible although a ladder is bi-directional and may infer an interplay between higher and lower categories of knowledge, with the ultimate superiority of the things of the mind. The ladder may also be a biblical reference to Jacob's ladder, the conduit to Paradise, and as there are six rungs on the ladder it could be a subtle allusion to the **I Ching** where the corresponding ying hexagram is that of Heaven. The gules verticals stand for endeavour and the purpure top margin indicates majesty.*

The motto of the Institute is: "Notitia Ens Rationis" i.e. 'Knowledge is the Product of Rationality' which, of course, indicates ordering of information in the light of conceptual models of the world.

Notes.

- 1. An oblique reference to George Stephenson's beehives which had to be re-sited from the top of a hill to enable the bees to reach home when laden.*
- 2. A ship was also present on the University College Hospital Medical School shield together with a maple leaf to represent the businesses that contributed financially to the establishment of the medical school.*
- 3. The Irish oak with a serpent is also the symbol on the crest of the O'Rahilly family.*