

THE BEAUTY OF TAIWAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

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General Introduction

Taiwan Theological College and Seminary has been an institution of higher education in northern Taiwan, where modern education was first introduced and promoted. It dates back to 1872, when Dr. George Leslie Mackay, a Presbyterian missionary from Canada, started to gather students for regular theological training. It was not until 1882 the College's first building was erected in the town of Tamsui. In 1918 the campus was moved to a new site in Taipei City. Later, in 1965, the campus was moved again; this time to the present site on a hill-top in Yangmingshan.

Taiwan Theological College and Seminary has a graduate school of theology, which provides M. Div and M. A. degrees, and a four-year college containing two departments, i.e., Church and Society and Church Music. Since it is affiliated to the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, it adheres to the religious beliefs and theological orientation which

eminently reflect the “Reformed tradition” of Protestantism. It is a small-scale institution, in which religious and humanistic education predominate. Its educational philosophy and ideals are centered around the spirit of “love towards the people and passion towards the land.”

The faculty members at the College make great efforts in integrating the western Christian tradition into Asian cultures. We wish to implant ecumenical views in the minds of our students which will create a more pluralistic and open-minded educational attitude. In addition, we have very deep concern for our homeland. We help our students build up a healthy and autonomous Taiwanese consciousness and social awareness.

While the majority of students in the College are native speakers of Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese), there are students from other ethnic groups as well. In this sense, the College is indeed a microcosm of the Taiwanese society. It is particularly characterized by the presence and participation of Hakka and aboriginal students.

Dedication and Contributions of Foreign Missionaries

Dr. George Leslie Mackey (1844-1901)

Dr. George Leslie Mackay was the first

missionary appointed to a foreign country by the Presbyterian Church of Canada. To the Taiwanese people, he was the first foreign missionary who came to northern Taiwan and dedicated himself to the medical, educational, and evangelical service after the period of the Spanish and Dutch regime in the 17th century. He had steadfast faith, and was a resolute, daring, and earnest person. He was tough and determined, and “never took the secondary position.” As a result of his fearlessness in the face of hardships and difficulties, he laid a solid foundation for the church in northern Taiwan. He alone established 60 churches, a hospital, a college of science, and a women’s school. The Oxford College, which he founded in 1882, was the forerunner of Taiwan Theological College and Seminary. It was his deep love for the island of Taiwan and the people on it that led him to dedicate the prime of his life to working here and to marry a Taiwanese lady. Eventually he passed away in Taiwan and was buried in Tamsui. His statue was erected outside the chapel to show our tribute to his memory. His well-known motto— “rather burn up than rust out”— has served as the primary drive for students at the College to commit themselves to the evangelical work in Taiwan.

William Gauld (1861-1923)

Dr. William Gauld, the successor to Dr. Mackay,

was also a missionary assigned to Taiwan by the Presbyterian Church of Canada. Unlike Dr. Mackey, Dr. Gauld didn't "take the leading position." Rather, he showed respect for the native Taiwanese people. In the spirit of "joint consultation", he established a consultation mechanism for the church in northern Taiwan. Accordingly, "Taipei Presbytery" was formed and the model of democracy for society in northern Taiwan was set up.

Dr. Gauld was an eminent architect. He built a great number of church and school buildings, including the original building of the Mackay Memorial Hospital, which was then considered "the most beautiful building in Asia". In addition, during the Japanese occupation he formulated timetables for the Railway System and served as an architectural consultant for the construction of the Taiwan Governor-General's office (today's presidential office). The administration building of the College, known as the William Gauld Memorial Building, was dedicated to the memory of this Canadian missionary, who set a high value on democracy. The consultative mechanism he advocated remained the ideal of the College's administration.

James Dickson (1900-1967)

Dr. James Dickson was an American missionary appointed to Taiwan by the Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and played a

significant role in the church in Taiwan at the end of the Japanese colonization (1945) and during the postwar period. Compared with the previous Canadian missionaries, he was more easy-going and amiable. With vision and the ability to do administrative work, he placed greater emphasis on management and efficiency. His major contribution to the church in Taiwan was centered around evangelical work for the aboriginal people and the promotion of theological education. Being highly committed in providing aborigines with theological training, even during the Japanese occupation, and in the hope that they would be able to serve in their own communities, he didn't allow severe persecution to interrupt his work. Such dedication led to extremely successful evangelism in aboriginal communities during the post-war period, which has been claimed as "a 20th century miracle."

As for the College, his greatest contribution was that, after the war, he had the campus moved to its current site in Yangminshan so as to meet the need for expansion and a quietude. From then on, he dedicated himself to administering the College. Indeed, his dedication is mirrored through every single building (e.g., the administration building, classrooms, dormitories, and residences for the faculty), and every single flower and tree on campus. The fruit of his careful management – "the beauty of

Taiwan Theological College and Seminary”– is now appreciated by everyone who strolls around the campus.

Six Items of Particular Significance

- ***The chapel*** was designed by Lin Qinfeng, a famous architect, and Chen Jinghui, an art teacher at Tamkang High School. It was completed in 1958 under the supervision of another architect, Hu Mingde. Its structural design is a combination of western and oriental styles. The building is solid and practical, elegant and grand. It is warm and cozy in winter and cool and comfortable in summer. The chapel is the tallest building on campus. Special features can be seen in the design of its interior and the pagoda-like bell tower.

- ***The school emblem*** dates back to the time when Dr. Mackay built the Oxford College. The *cross* represents the sacrificial love of the incarnated God. The *lilies* at the four extremities of the cross serve as symbols of the religious reformation in France. They represent witness to the resurrection after death.

- ***The dragons*** placed on the pillars next to the main gate to the College was designed by Chen Jinghui. Dragons represent “great power” and “propitiousness” in Taiwanese culture. Now it

serves as a symbol of the indigenization of the Christian religion. It also indicates that behind the gate is a “divine” place.

- *Stained glass* is believed to have been installed in all the windows of all the buildings of the College in the early days, but nowadays it is only found in Room 101 in the William Gauld Memorial Building and in the chapel. When the sun shines through, it seems to give an account of a history that has gradually been laid to rest.

- *The big bell*, with the inscription *1840 Quintin Leitch* engraved on it, originally belonged to Mr. John Dodd, who was an English businessman in Taiwan. It was given to Dr. Mackay in February 1890 when Mr. Dodd took leave of Taiwan. It then hung at the Oxford College. Now it hangs on the right hand side of the William Gauld Memorial Building.

- *The pipe organ* was built by Kilgen & Son Company in Missouri in 1895. It was originally installed in the First Presbyterian Church in Memphis. In 1977, it was brought to Taiwan through an arrangement made by Rev. Smathers, who was then a missionary to Taiwan from the Presbyterian Church in the USA. In the following year, it was officially inaugurated on the College’s anniversary.

The Geographical Aspects of Taiwan Theological College

Taiwan Theological College is located on the slopes of Yangmingshan, which lies in the northern end of Taiwan. To the west is Mt. Guanyin in the distance, and to the north are Mt. Datun and Yangmingshan National Park. Being at a relatively high altitude, the College has an average temperature which is 2-3 degrees lower than that of downtown Taipei. Therefore, it is slightly more temperate in the summer time. Moreover, being located on a hill-top, the College escape much of the air pollution. Looking over the Taipei Basin from the College at dusk, one can enjoy a peaceful atmosphere that seems to be far away from the hustle and bustle of one of the world's most densely populated cities.

Features of the Ecological Environment

The College's vegetation is characterized by the preservation of the plant distribution pattern typical of regions at middle and lower elevations, where camphora and indigenous plants are dominant. Giant zuihoensis, thunbergia, camphora, and sebiferums, etc. are easily found on campus. In addition to these plants species, Dr. Dickson introduced a great number of serrulatum and

pulchrum when he was mapping out the campus. He also planted a lot of native campanulata. His successors have made great efforts in conserving the ecological environment he had created. As a result, seasonal changes in the character of the vegetation are particularly noticeable at the College. The diversity of plant species and the gigantic cedars characterize the ecological environment, which, in turn, provides an excellent habitat for a variety of animals and insects.

Seasonal Changes

There are vivid climatic changes and a wide temperature range with the turn of each season at the College. Seasonal changes also bring about a change in hue for the flora on campus. For example, serrulatum's leaves have different colors along with the alternation of the four seasons. Campanulata and pulchrum blossom alternatively. Consequently, the campus is like a kaleidoscope, displaying a world of changing colors and appearances.

Plants and Insects of Particular Interests

- **Prunus campanulata Maxim** 山櫻花

Family: Rosaceae

Common name: Red cherry / Taiwan cherry

Nativity: Taiwan

Flowers: Scarlet bell-shaped flowers. Once they fall, they form a gorgeous sea of flowers as the season turns from winter to spring.

Fruit: Dark red. Edible.

Notes: They attract a great number of insects and birds when blossoming and bearing fruits.

***Acer serrulatum* Hay 青楓**

Family: Aceraceae

Common name: Green maple

Leaves: Opposite. Color turns to yellow and to red in late fall and early winter. Falling in the winter, opposed to autumn.

Notes: They are easily mistaken for maples.

• *Lilium Formosanum* Wallace 百合

Family: Liliaceae

Common name: Taiwan lily / Tamsui lily

Habit: Perennial herbage with succulent bulbs.

Flowers: Blossoming in early summer with a sweet fragrance.

Notes: They are seldom noticed on campus because they grow in less trampled areas, such as the slopes left of the chapel and beside the basketball court.

• *Oxalis corymbosa* DC. 酢醬草

Family:

Common name: Lucky plant

Habit and leaf form: Perennial herbage with well-developed bulbs. Compound leaves, usually with three leaflets each.

Flowers: With 5 calyxes and petals.

Notes: They are often seen on lawns and look like a purple sea of flowers when found in sufficient numbers.

- **Rhododendron pulchrum Sweet 臺灣紫杜鵑**

Family: Saurauiceae

Common name: Chinese azalea

Flowers: Blossoming in spring and blooming for a long time. Its color compliments that of Taiwan cherry.

Notes: Like the Taiwan Cherry, the Chinese azalea often attracts a great number of birds and butterflies.

- **Osmanthus fragrans Lour 桂花**

Family: Oleaceae

Common name: Fragrant tea olive

Nativity: China

Habit and leaf form: Shrubs or trees. Leaves leathery and serrated.

Flowers: White, orange or light yellow flowers with a wonderful aroma.

- **Aglaia odorata** 樹蘭

Family: Meliaceae

Common name: Orchid tree

Nativity: China

Leaves: Odd feather-like compound leaves with 5 leaflets each.

Flowers: Yellow with slight aroma. Can be used as a spice.

- **Plumeria rubra linn** 雞蛋花

Family: Apocynaceae

Leaf: Ovate.

Flowers: Egg-colored.

Notes: Unlike other flowers which wither before falling to the ground, these flowers are at their best when released.

- **Erythrina corallodendron** 刺桐

Family: Fabaceae / Leguminosae

Common name: Sword plant / Coral tree

Habit: Deciduous trees

Flowers: Inflorescences raceme, terminal. In full blossom in summer. 2-3 bright scarlet sword-like flowers budding from each stem.

Fruit: Legume. Seeds are coral and round.

- **Solanum capsicastrum** 瑪瑙珠

Family: Solanaceae

Common name: False Jerusalem-cherry / Winter cherry

Habit: Herbaceous Perennial. Growing by the roadsides. Bearing small white flowers.

Fruits: When ripen, they are like glossy jewels.

- **Round millipede** 馬陸

Family: Diplopoda

Common name: Thousand-legged worms

Body: 2-4cm in length. Cylindrical and segmented.

Having two pairs of legs per body segment. Brownish and glossy in color. Can be found under stones or in fallen leaves.

Notes: Some are found in groups. They should not be picked up because they have poisonous glands.

They are also known as the train insect in the college because of its resemblance to a train.

- **Eumeces elegans Boulenger** 石龍子

Family: Scincidae

Common name: Newt

Notes: Having bright blue tails. Active during the day and quite fast. Very sensitive to movements around them. Often found in the grass by the roadside or under shrubs.

- **Japalura swinhonis** 攀木蜥蜴

Family: Agamidae

Notes: Due to a strong sense to territory, they patrol regularly. These lizards are often seen fighting with invaders until victory is won. Summer is their breeding season. Female lizards produce 4 striped eggs at a time and then hide them under the ground.

- **Cicada** 蟬

Family: Cicada

Notes: They live off sap. Adult cicadas appear in summer and fall. Male cicadas produce loud, high-pitched sounds.

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Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ ...Phm. 1:3