

FRANCIS BERTIE BOYCE (1844-1931) CLERGYMAN AND REFORMER

It is an honour to be invited to deliver this Moore College Library lecture... But why choose Francis Bertie Boyce?

It was not because he was typical of his period - I don't think he was. (Indeed most clergy on examination are not. They are not born the same; even though they may be moulded to a type or conform themselves to it). If Boyce had a hero or mentor among clergymen of his day, I have not yet discovered him. (I say "yet" because my researches on Boyce are still "work in Progress").

But, again, one asks 'why Boyce?' "The Grand Old Man of the Church" his obituary in the A.C. Record called him (June 4, 1931, p.1). Others echoed it and among other things referred to his outstanding record "in advancing the social welfare of the community". My interest was drawn by his social concerns: the Temperance movement and licencing laws - yes, these above all were his active concern: but so was his concern for the aged, and then for widows and invalids; the purity of women; for slum abolition, and denominational schools. In fact, within the diocese, and in the community and beyond he embodied this concern for social welfare. In an age that worshipped social improvement (especially for the poor) and whose calendar of saints includes Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Fry and Florence Nightingale, F.B. Boyce was a revered name. How far he acted as an individual, or as one of a group (albeit as their spokesman) has yet to be determined.

Studying Bertie Boyce has for me meant digging a slit trench in the Tell of Australian Religious History 1870-1920, especially the non-episcopal history and the non-party history of the Diocese of Sydney. It has helped me discover something of the alignment of their policies, their preoccupations and leading personalities, of whom F.B. Boyce was undoubtedly one.

F.B. Boyce is an attractive subject also on account of the relatively large quantity of surviving printed materials or "artefacts."

The last, published posthumously in 1934 by A&R, was  
"Fourscore years and Seven: the memoirs of Archdeacon Boyce, for  
over sixty years a clergyman of the Church of England in N.S.W."

Its 165 pages include or summarise material he published in  
pamphlet form before: e.g.

BOYCE F.B., A Campaign for the Abolition of the Slums

Sydney. William Andrews Printing Co 1913 36 pp  
(a collection of letters and other documents compiled,  
written after his early successes. - summarised  
partly in chapter 8.

BOYCE F.B., Empire Day, Syd W. Blanchard (1905 16pp, letters &  
documents (in 1902 FBB elected State President of  
British Empire League Sydney Branch)

There was a 4th enlarged edition in 1931 - chapter 10.

BOYCE F.B., How Old Age Pensions Came to NSW Syd W. Blanchard 16pp  
letters and documents.

Stressing that he, not a politician, had first raised  
the matter in public discussion in NSW - part of  
chapter 9.

BOYCE F.B., Letters in Defence of denominational schools. 8vo.,  
pl + 46 Sydney G. Loxton & Co 1884. (The published  
letters of his first Press campaign in defence of  
denominational schools and religious instruction in  
State schools ). part of chapter 6.

BOYCE F.B., Our Church on the River Darling: A Reminiscence  
Syd Madgwick & Sons 1910 24pp. The substance of  
chapters 3 & 4 in his autobiography memoir describing  
extensive pastoral 'treks' into Western N.S.W.

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Of the other surviving pamphlets (illustrating the breadth of  
his activities and interests), the largest group relate to Temperance  
and reform of the licensing laws. They are an early "How the Money

is Spent" published in 1888 by the NSW Alliance for the Suppression in Intemperance (the NSW Temperance Alliance: a body FFB had helped form in 1882); 'The Open Sore of NSW' followed in 1892. It was a sermon preached at St Andrews Cathedral at an annual service of the Church of England Temperance Society on 8 August 1892. FFB was a committee member of the Church of England Temperance Society from 1882 onwards.

It was a larger work, The Drink Problem in Australia, or The Plagues of Alcohol and the Remedies, 330pp published in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne and taken up and published by the British National Temperance League 1893 that made his temperance work internationally known.

'The Drink Bills of NSW' published in Sydney in 1898 32pp. is a filling out of an annual research exercise which he had published in the Press. 'The New Testament and Intoxicants' 12pp published in Sydney by Wm Andrews between 1900-1910 in several editions reflected differences of views on whether temperance reform required total abstinence. Bound up with the Mitchell Library collection of Boyce's pamphlets is a later rejoinder to Boyce by the Rev R W Montgomery 'Does the Bible prohibit the use of wine? An answer to Archdeacon Boyce and the prohibitionists' published as Pamphlet No 1 by the Citizens' Rights and Liquor Reform Association. The Temperance Alliance saw the results of decades of 'consciousness-raising' and dogged political lobbying when Premier Joe Carruthers in 1905 put through a Bill giving local option on the renewal or introduction of liquor licenses. The forces of the Temperance Alliance had been ably 'generalled' by their President, F B Boyce who proceeded to arm his followers for the local polls with "Shall I vote for NO license?" An address he delivered at the Parramatta Branch of the NSW Alliance in Sept 1906. Within 12 months,

25,000 copies of 16pp at 1 penny had been sold. "The Case for NO License" is another heavier missile of 96pp at 6d. published in 1913.

To foster the celebration of the anniversary of the Colony's first Christian service in late January 1788 (or early February - the date was disputed for a while) he published in 1905 a 16pp pamphlet on "What the Church of England has done for NSW". A larger edition appeared in 1926.

His historical interests are further exemplified in "Augustine and the Evangelization of England" a 16pp pamphlet based on a paper read to the Diocesan Clerical Meeting in June 1897; and again seen in "Thomas Moore: An Early Australian Worthy" (16pp) revised and reprinted from the Diocesan Directory of 1913. Contemporary events seem to have prompted 'the War and Future Problems' based on a paper read on August 24, 1915; and The Coronation of the King published in 1911. Prompted by the Lambeth Conference of 1908 he wrote The Lambeth Conference, or, a Synod for the Anglican Communion; published by A & R 1908, and his fertile mind returned to the theme in 1920 with Should There Be a Federal Synod for the Anglican Church? The Lambeth Conference.

These pamphlets, however, were completely outnumbered by a striking characteristic of his work, a flow of letters and articles to the Press and the politicians (and even bishops) in Australia and overseas. In some years I estimate there were more than a thousand. They appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Daily Telegraph, the Evening News and the London Times, but very rarely in Church papers.

Some are preserved in the scrapbooks he kept: Letters, Statistics on NSW, Mission tracts, clippings of parish and other events, Synod Papers - full of as yet unsifted treasures. Some scrapbooks remain with the Boyce family. (All his wife and family

papers were destroyed in a bushfire in 1940).

Some letters are preserved in remoter places. Recently I found a deposit in the Frederick Temple Papers in the Lambeth Palace Archives, which shed interesting light on his work and his character.

It is a 'hard luck story', really. In 1882 Boyce applied to Archbishop Tait for a Lambeth B.D. degree, and lodged some documents in support. Some seem to be missing from the bundle, but among the remaining letters is one by S E Marsden, Bishop of Bathurst, who assumed the B.D. was given to reward and aid clergy who have laboured in the colonies and missionary fields. Boyce, he said, had been ordained about 14 years.

To be precise, he was ordained deacon on 21st December 1868 when T B Tress also was priested. Boyce claimed they were the first in the new St Andrews Cathedral. Bishop Marsden added that Boyce "had been a zealous hard-working parish pastor - and done much service in the way of the erection of churches and parsonages, and in connection with the Church of England Temperance Association." In a separate memo he notes that Boyce declined the title of Hon. Canon as well as the office of Rural Dean. A copy of his Moore College certificate signed by the Principal, Robert L King, is attached. Boyce spent four terms in Moore College; his first year was the original Principal (the Rev William Hodgson's) last; his second year the first of the Rev Robert Lethbridge King, M.A. Boyce excelled in Church History.

Archbishop Tait turned him down - why? According to his Chaplain (J H Ellison) "The Lambeth B.D. degree equally with the D.D. degree is given only as the recognition of very exceptional services of a literary character. His Grace feels that what has been said on your behalf by the Bishop of Bathurst hardly shows your work to have been of such an exceptional character as to justify him in granting to you the exceptional honor (sic) of this degree."

Boyce tenaciously did not give up. Seizing on the phrase "hardly shows" he gathered further evidence of his work "especially if of a literary character". Then came news of Tait's death. Waiting till he heard of the installation of Archbishop Benson, he forwarded additional documentary evidence. One was a letter by W M Cowper, as Administrator, Diocese of Sydney, which noted his fruitful work in the Diocese of Bathurst and his part in the controversy over denominational schools. The other was a letter to Boyce by Sir Alexander Stuart, Prime Minister of NSW, also extolling his contribution in the Education controversy. Boyce received no acknowledgement of these from England.

In 1894 he wrote again, sending particulars. This time he received "a courteous answer" but to the effect that "the degree was only granted for special literary work of a theological character." But Boyce persisted. In June 1899 while in England (a journey he undertook to restore vigour of mind and body) he wrote again to his third Archbishop of Canterbury, Frederick Temple. On the top of this letter, in his large handwriting, Temple had written a note to his chaplain, "Boyce (colonial) - application for B.D. Give answer when Bishop of Winchester comes ..." (Such was the power of Randall Davidson, chaplain to Tait, counsellor and confidant to Benson, close adviser to Temple. The Archbishop himself then follows his handwritten comments: "Nil. Quite impossible to give Divinity Degree on this evidence".

Earlier I said that this correspondence tells us a great deal about Boyce's work and character. Those of you who have had to describe your career and experience for a scholarship or some position will know the difficulty that self advertisement and self advocacy can pose. Little of this is seen in Boyce's 1899 application. It is confident, capable, forthright and pugnacious: I read the last half of his letter:

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What then were these labours that were esteemed so worthy of note? Foremost in his early testimonials is his work in defence of denominational schools. His timely letters published in the Press in 1879 were, according to Dean Cowper, most highly thought of by Bishop Barker. Bishop Barker was struggling to keep State aid coming to the church schools - they were almost all primary schools - while among his opponents were many of his clergy and leading laity.

Briefly the background is this: Sir Henry Parkes had secured in 1866 a Public Schools Act which allowed the continuation in NSW of two systems: public schools and denominational schools, each with a measure of government support. Meanwhile a secularist movement which in Victoria, Queensland and New Zealand had managed to exclude the religious training of the young from state or 'public' schools, now formed a League in Sydney to render all schools 'national, secular, compulsory and free'. The debate was embittered by an unwise Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Vaughan and the other Roman Catholic Bishops which tried to promote their church schools by denouncing the state schools as "seed plots of immorality". Thereupon, as Boyce later described it to Archbishop Temple, "A strong cry of 'No Popery' arose in the Colony, and was adroitly used by the secularists to aid the abolition of State Aid of every kind. Sir Henry Parkes,, under the influence of this cry, introduced and passed through both houses of [the NSW] Parliament a 'Public Schools Act' (of 1880) which withdrew all assistance from Church Schools and so generally destroyed them."

Through his letters in the Sydney Morning Herald Boyce found himself fighting the secularists at great disadvantage: along with Bishop Barker and some fellow clergy he had to defend their schools against a Protestant reaction within (e.g. Dr Zachary Barry,

S M Paddington) and outside it (The Protestant Standard). Along with the Roman Catholics he wrote to underline the value of the spiritual guidance and moral training available with church schools. One result of this emphasis was to secure in the Act (clause 7) provision for religious training on non-sectarian lines and the right of the clergy to enter the schools (clause 17) during school hours to give weekly instruction to their own children.

Boyce had also argued that with one in four children in church schools, it was a case of church aid to the state. He also produced figures to show that church schools helped by costing the State less. His strong support of church schools as an invaluable auxiliary to the State was undercut when a colleague and neighbour Canon Smith at Bathurst (previously founder of St Barnabas, Broadway) actually closed All Saints, Bathurst, as a pledge of his Protestant opposition to church schools!

Boyce lost the battle but earned enormous respect for his integrity and his abilities in controversy. Boyce had been using the Press to promote causes since he was 16. By 1880, aged 36, he had shown himself a battle hardened fighter, and distinctly 'leadership material'.

Boyce wrote these letters as Rector of Holy Trinity, Orange. He came to the Diocese of Bathurst, then still part of the Diocese of Sydney, straight after ordination, in late December 1868, to the parish of Georges Plains. This was an area which Bishop Barker had described to members of the Church Society four years earlier as an area notorious for cattle stealing and bush ranging and one whose moral standards highlighted the need for more income to the Church Society Extension Fund. In the 12 years Boyce spent in the Diocese of Bathurst, his "services" of a non-literary and non-liturgical kind were considerable. They could be tabled as follows:

In the Parish of Georges Plains (area about 40 miles x 20 miles) churches erected.:

1. St Stephens, Fitzgeralds Valley;
2. St Philips, Tourkey (temporary slab church - a permanent church commenced);
3. St James, Moorildra;
4. St Marks, The Lagoon;
5. Christchurch, Blayney (the first part);
6. St Judes, Diamond Valley;
7. St Bartholomews, at Whittakers, Bathurst Road.

In 1873 he moved to the Parish of Molong, with Wellington (about 300 miles x 100 miles). Churches erected:

1. St Thomas, Ironbark
2. St Lukes, Bell River
3. St Johns Cathedral

and the parsonage at Wellington.

It was in 1874 that the Bishop of Bathurst, noting his abilities, sent Boyce off on a two month journey as Organising Secretary for the Church along the Darling to the west of the Diocese: Boyce set off by horse from Molong down the Bogan, on an over two thousand mile journey on herseback through flood, desert and loneliness, visiting Bourke (400 miles off) then Wilcannia and Brewarrina, and even to Cobar. Welcomed everywhere he challenged the residents of each district to build churches and raised funds for a stipend for a clergyman in Bourke.

For more stability and family life (he was away 5-6 nights a week) he moved in 1875 to Orange (small in area: 20 miles x 10 miles) where he built (1) Holy Trinity, Orange; (2) St Lukes, Borenore; (3) St Philips, March; (4) St Johns, Cave Creek; and (5) St Davids, Beneree.

In total, therefore, 15 churches erected, and 1 parsonage. Most were small and of timber. Holy Trinity, Orange was of stone

and probably that is why it was the only one he left with a debt (£7,000). Many are still "in use".

Such activity took its toll and turning down Bishop Marsden's offer of a canonry at Bathurst, he departed in February 1881 for England alone on holiday. While away he missed election to the Deanery of Bathurst by a very small margin. On his return in April 1882 he was appointed to the Parish of Pymont, and when Canon A.H. Stephen died in 1884, Boyce was chosen to succeed him at St Paul's, Redfern. His ministry there lasted 46 years till the weakness of old age forced his retirement aged 87 in December 1930.

It is not possible in a lecture of this kind to do full justice to the range of activities in which Boyce was engaged while at St. Pauls. But the extraordinary diversity of the causes he espoused, the thoroughness with which he supported them, and the success that he achieved in so many of these, merit more than a passing mention of them.

Boyce first joined the Temperance movement (Sons of Temperance) in 1871 hoping to help an addicted farmer, one of his parishioners, to do likewise. He succeeded. "When I took this initial step I hardly realised that I had undertaken a mission that was to be one of the dominating motives of my work for the rest of my life." In Orange he identified himself closely with the cause, being convinced that drink was indeed the curse of the colony:

"Its evil effects (he recalls later) were very evident in the country towns of the State, as well as in the cities. Immorality, pauperism, lunacy and crime were the offspring of this vile traffic, and it was impressed on me, by what I witnessed, that it was my duty to do what I could, however ineffective or slight, to fight its evil influence."

He linked all societies, organisations and individuals together into one Temperance Alliance for strength and effectiveness. (He was to do the same in Sydney). It seems that it was in Orange

in 1880 that he first met and talked with Sir Henry Parkes on temperance and concluded that "He was undoubtedly favourable to the Temperance cause, but he never seemed willing to go further than public opinion rendered safe." Boyce did not want state-wide prohibition but local option - a vote within each electorate on the granting or continuance of liquor licenses. Support would be slow at first. A motion calling for local option in the Bathurst Synod in 1880 received one vote - that of Boyce himself!

Returning to Sydney, he found the evils of drink "rampant" and the forces of Temperance disorganised, in disrepute and neglect through gross mismanagement. Boyce welded them into the Temperance Alliance, and by letters and pamphlets, sermons and speeches, built up pressure for reform. Letters in the Parkes' Correspondence in Mitchell Library, 1885-1895, show Boyce's constant attempts to gather the political numbers to pass a Local Option Bill. Fashioning an opinion changing weapon to his purpose, Boyce became the father and founder of The Local Option League. His shrewd grasp of political forces in faction or party politics won him the respect of politicians, not least of Sir Henry Parkes. Such was their mutual respect that Boyce married Sir Henry to his second wife, counselled them in her last illness, and tried to dissuade a Sir Henry in his 80's from getting married a third time to someone more than 50 years younger.

The breakthrough came later when, just before the 1904 election, the Premier, Joe (later Sir Joseph) Carruthers, promised that if returned he would introduce a measure providing local option. The whole Temperance Alliance took a prominent part in this post-Federation election, and had favourable candidates in 79/80 seats. Boyce campaigned throughout the State and in the Press. They won a favourable majority. In 1905 a comprehensive bill gave the Temperance Alliance what it had wanted. Local polls vindicated the Alliance, The League its political arm.

But Boyce did not let the matter rest. In 1915 the Alliance campaigned for early closing: six o'clock against the then eleven o'clock. Attempts at legislation failed till Mr McEwen, a member of Holman's labour cabinet (and who had taught in St Paul's, Redfern, Sunday School for the previous 30 years) suggested a referendum. Parliament handed its responsibility over to the electorate. Again there were state-wide meetings, speeches and Boyce led the Press campaign. The result? For 6 o'clock - 347,000; 7 o'clock - 5,000; 8 o'clock - 21,000; 9 o'clock - 179,000; 10 o'clock - 1,000; 11 o'clock - 3,000. A resounding victory for the Alliance.

Boyce retired after 24 years as chairman of the Alliance, in 1915 - he was old and tired (he had a serious illness in 1912) and new leaders were emerging of whom 'one of the ablest and most eloquent temperance advocates this country has had' was the Rev. R.B.S. Hammond, soon to conduct a sterling inner-city ministry at St Barnabas. Whatever eloquence and enthusiasm later leaders had, they lacked Boyce's political sagacity, and were persuaded by the politicians, against Boyce's advice, to forego local option for a policy of State-wide prohibition, which Boyce approved, thus allowing themselves to be shunted into a legislative siding, awaiting some sympathetic politician's judgement on the best time to be conveyed up to the notice paper.

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I have dealt with Temperance at some length because I believe that is how Boyce himself would vote its importance.

And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me if I tell of all that Boyce and others with him did, who through faith, ability and determination, campaigned and secured old age pensions for N.S.W. in 1899, went on and secured Invalid Pensions for the needy at age 50, in 1907, and hounded the City Fathers to remove the greater part of Sydney's worst slums by 1914. It was a casual

purchase of Charles Booth's Old Age and the Poor at Blackheath Railway bookstall which "awakened" Boyce to the rightful claims and the tragedy of the aged poor whom hitherto he had seen as a pastoral "nuisance". His campaign for pensions is best illustrated by this summary on Invalid Pensions. (With the Synod's Social Reform Committee behind him) he "then set out to create a favourable public opinion through propaganda from the pulpit and platform, and through the Press. I called a meeting in Redfern Town Hall [at other times it was the Sydney Town Hall] from which a deputation [armed usually with resolutions] was appointed to wait on the government to state the claims of the sick and destitute...". Other meetings, rallies, deputations would follow under a supporting barrage of letters to the Press. In 1896 he had formed an Old-Age Pension League.

His exploits in campaigning for the abolition of slums was something he said he remembered with pride. There were two sides to it: first as a clergyman he spoke out in Synod for a more adequate ministry to people living in congested inner city areas. Archbishop Saumarez Smith did nothing (Boyce claims) till he had Synod force him to do so (perhaps the Archbishop feared a lessening of support for the Church Society's work for the far-out parishes). With the help of others such as the Rev. William Carr Smith, a "Christian Socialist" Rector of St James, King Street, a special synod committee formed "mission districts" e.g. "Lilyfield", and with keen lay help set up Mission Churches in neglected areas.

Not only was the state of the slums a barrier to mission and evangelistic work but on the other hand as a citizen he saw the need for an alteration of the living conditions of the city's slum dwellers, whose conditions "were" (he claimed) "a disgrace to our democracy and our civilization". "The Rocks" had earlier been resumed by civic leaders to stop the spread of, or on account of their fear of bubonic plague; the notorious slums of Oxford Street

were largely obliterated when a road now was driven through from Oxford Street to the new Central Railway Station. But slums remained in Surry Hills and in Chippendale especially.

When a 1908 Royal Commission on the Improvement of Sydney appeared to be ignoring slums altogether, Boyce got permission to testify and urged a programme of slum clearance. He piloted a party of journalists around the worst areas (one of them was C.E.W. Bean, then of the Herald, later our World War I historian). They all fulfilled his expectations by publishing "graphic" accounts. As no action on slums followed the Royal Commission's Report, Boyce sought the backing of his Social Reform Committee of Synod and led the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Sir Allen Taylor, through select streets of Surry Hills and Chippendale. "Not fit for dogs to live in!" was His Worship's reaction. The City Council then resumed much of Chippendale. 500 houses were pulled down (their occupants went to other suburbs where (Boyce assures us) "under healthier conditions they were able to lead normal healthy lives." When factories began to fill the vacuum, Boyce urged the construction of "model" dwellings. The result was the Strickland Buildings from Miagher Street to Cleveland Street - self contained flats, some of which still stand.

By 1914 Boyce reckoned that three quarters of the slum areas in Sydney had disappeared. He always regretted that the War prevented the task being completed. When William Street was widened, as he put it: "large sums of money spent to benefit fashionable areas of Potts Point and Double Bay" while the slums of Woolloomooloo were ignored, it appeared to him a shocking case of cleansing the outside of the cup only.

Reflecting on 50 years of inner city parish experience he was convinced that "bad living conditions foster drunkenness and degradation of all descriptions." The reverse also he believed was true:

"Strong drink is a builder of slums. It is in the squalour of a crowded street that strong drink recruits its material."

Consequently he affirms (with apt contemporary reference)

"It is the Master's work to preach His gospel in the slums; but it is equally His work to tear down the slums to give His children clean, healthy, and decent conditions under which to live." And again, "Christ cared for the bodies of men as well as for their souls" (on provision of jobs and housing for returning soldiers).

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At first sight, his being appointed President in 1901 of the Sydney Branch of the British Empire League and his lifelong championing of Imperial unity was a long way from the cares of St Paul's, Redfern. It may indeed have proved a compensating outlet for his energies and his desire for recognition and fulfilment - yes, even by the early years of the century. He was welcomed when he allied with those seeking to magnify the benefits of Imperial unity against a rising movement which sought greater independence, which began to look for security to the "Land of the Great White Fleet"; and which was to lead the Labour Movement closer to the Irish (and therefore Catholic) connection. With good grounds Boyce must have the credit for urging the Empire - wide observance of Empire Day on May 24th, old Queen Victoria's Birthdays, and for securing its observance in Australia as a citizens' (not only a school childrens') festival - though not a public holiday.

He urged imperial unity because "it always seemed to me that through a united Empire the British Peoples could best make their contribution to the civilisation and advancement of the world."

It was an expression of "British Racialism" (shall I call it) which pathetically, tragically, he saw as having its realisation and culmination "in the magnificent demonstration of loyalty and unity of purpose made at the beginning of the Great War in 1914." It was that tragic war which was ironically to become the major dissolvent of the racial unity of the British Empire League.

Boyce lived to see his ideals of Britishness and Imperial unity devalued. But his patriotism held firm: for it had its roots in Australia and in his social reforms:

"I know that it is fashionable nowadays to deride Patriotism (he wrote in the late 20's - maybe in 1950) - But I have lived long and seen many fashions come and go whilst the verities remain. And patriotism is the call which all men feel, not merely to defend their country against foes in time of war, but to love and champion all those things that uplift her people. To fight against intemperance, gambling and all other social evils which degrade and defame our people, that is patriotism as I see it. Good citizenship is patriotism. Patriotism means to love one's neighbour as oneself."

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One cannot help noticing how well Boyce has integrated all his activities in his mind. His early call to the ministry (from a promising career in banking and commerce) has the same sense of duty to God and country. His bank job "imposed awkward limits on that ambition which urged me to take my place in the religious, political and philanthropic work of the community. I wanted to make more of my life, and I wanted to do something to help my fellows." This may owe something to hindsight, yet it rings true with his career, and his early scrapbook clippings also take a

proud and patriotic interest in the growing prosperity, size and moral improvement of the Colony. In later years he liked to identify with the following statements:

"I live for those who love me,  
For those who know me true;  
For the heaven that smiles above me  
And awaits my coming too;  
For the cause that lacks assistance,  
For the wrong that needs resistance,  
For the future in the distance  
And the good that I can do."

He was a good Victorian "Liberal". He saw growth and material improvements as good things, almost as divine favours on the British race; and he unhesitatingly supported well informed progressive social and moral reforms to enable the weak as well as the strong to share in Australia's bounty.

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In such a place as this, I must ask "What was his theology like?" It was recognisably Evangelical, yet he despised theological arguments, especially about unessentials, and kept his innovations to the practical outworkings of his faith.

In the Far West his most used text was "What shall it profit a man, etc." as good a text for Australians now as it was then. All humanitarian reforms, he argued, took their origin in the example and teaching of Christ in The Good Samaritan and "I was hungry and you gave me meat, naked and you clothed me" and so on. Included among the pamphlets he gave to Deaconess House were the early (i.e. 1869) Church Association tracts by M.H. Seymour - on causes of the reform, John Richardson on Ritualism, Eliot Garbett, publications of the Victoria Institute (Science, Archaeology), on "British Israelites" and very many on Social Questions. He shared an evangelical willingness to work closely with other denominations in spreading the gospel, in ministering to dwellers scattered throughout Western N.S.W., his parish of St Paul's was conducted on standard Evangelical lines with Evangelistic Missions and Bible classes. His successful campaign to elect Archdeacon R. Wright

of Manchester as the new Archbishop of Sydney reflected his moderation in party matters and his realization that in the Province of N.S.W. at least, Dr Griffith Thomas would not then have found ready acceptance. By securing a moderate Archbishop he probably secured the Evangelical inheritance of the Diocese against any outside interference in the election. His questions to confirmation candidates also reflect his Evangelical interests:

1. Why do you wish to be confirmed?
2. Explain the meaning of "justification by faith," and give texts from the Bible in support of the same.
3. For what reasons should persons come to the Lord's Supper?
4. What preparation do you consider necessary before partaking of the Lord's Supper?
5. Who was the first martyr of our church, and when did he die?
6. When was the Council of Nice?
7. When did Augustine land in England?
8. When did the English Church formally separate from the Roman Church?
9. Name the Bishops who were martyred in the reign of Queen Mary.
10. What two leading proofs does the Bible give that it contains a revelation from God? Give illustrations of each.
11. What are the chief parts of public worship?
12. Give some reasons for attendance at church.
13. Give some reasons for preferring, for public worship, a liturgical rather than an extempore service.

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To return to the application for the Lambeth B.D. again - why did he keep applying - were he and Bishop Marsden misinformed about the grounds on which it was given? Obviously Lambeth looked for "theological" literary competence, but Archbishop Davidson later gave degrees for "services". I think the answer lies in the fact that his two neighbours Puddicombe, Dean of Goulburn and W.T. Pownall,

Archdeacon of Wagga Wagga who did receive their B.D. appear both to have been Oxford M.A.'s and ordained in England before arrival in N.S.W. Boyce therefore was a "Colonial".

Obtaining a Lambeth B.D. obviously meant a great deal to Boyce: having neither means nor opportunity to graduate in Sydney he needed the degree (perhaps to qualify for higher positions?). Boyce was undoubtedly ambitious and therefore sought compensating public recognition. His annotations to pamphlets (adding and correcting degrees) and his pride in his son, Francis' academic achievements point to this. He even kept clippings of small men who became great.

By class and background he might well feel born to lead. His family had been prominent in Tiverton, Devon, when he was born in 1844. His father's wealth was sufficient to book a deck cabin on the way out and to survive loss of possessions when they were all shipwrecked at Barwon Heads on the way to Sydney, and to purchase 40 acres for a vineyard in Balmain in 1853. It flopped, and his father returned to practising as an accountant but died as a result of an accident in 1858. The effects of Gold Rush inflation meant Bertie Boyce had to go to work - but straight to a position of trust in the Union Bank of Australia, corner of Pitt and Hunter. His mother had finished her education learning French and Italian in Paris. By birth and background he had the poise to mix naturally with the leaders of colonial society.

Were his memoirs and his printed pamphlets published to inflate his own importance? Not quite; he received fame and reputation enough in his lifetime (quite apart from the tone of his obituary notices). They were, I believe, part of his attempt "to overcome the feeling that the Church cared little for the welfare of the masses." He was at heart a reformer.

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In Australia today there is a call to 'contextualise' theology, to indigenise it, to relate it more closely to the hopes, character and idiom of the Australian nation and to express this by social action. As a loyal churchman Boyce struggled to present the past history of the Church of England in the colony in such a way that newly Federated democratic independent-minded Australians would identify with it:

"While we can think with warm regard of the work of other churches, we must do justice to our own, and she for years was the only one represented, and had to work through quite alone in the darkest, most difficult, and cruelest days of our history. All through she has been a great moral force. She has not done all she might, but has been a great factor in the social progress made. Her pioneer ministers, such as Johnson and Marsden, bravely lifted up their voices against wrong, and did not hesitate to disagree with those in authority, seven Governors. The lowliest found in them friends and champions, and history has justified their doings."

In contextualising our gospel we will need 'models' from the past. I put it to you, then, for a robust, socially concerned Evangelical ministry, Australians would do well to make more of Francis Bertie Boyce, clergyman and reformer.

Post Script:

We are conditioned by our regular historians of the ~~Marsden~~ 'myths', even Manning Clarke tends to minimise the part played by our clergy in the first 100 or so years. We need to rewrite that - for our encouragement and imitation. Thus a graduate of this College, not generally the whose ministry has had continued social effect on towns and districts in N.S.W.

Let us follow Boyce who shows what the C of E has done for N.S.W., to be aggressive and to identify ourselves in the past of our country's history and to imprint ourselves on its future.