

BRITISH TEMPERANCE REFORMERS AND THE ISLAND OF MALTA 1815-1914.

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The Maltese temperance movement was an aspect of British colonial rule, a period stretching from 1800-1964. In the late nineteenth century in particular British temperance reformers attempted to erect a framework of respectable leisure activities for British servicemen, other expatriates, and interested Maltese, not simply as 'social control', a 'counter-attraction' to the evils of hard drinking, but also as a counterpoise to existing cultural structures associated with the Roman Catholic Church. Temperance work on Malta was connected very closely with two men - the Revd. John Laverack (1847-1926), of the abstaining Methodist Church, and a Free Presbyterian, the Revd. George Wisely (1826-1917). During the course of exceptionally long ministries on the island both came to exert an astonishingly great influence on this devoutly Catholic Island.⁽¹⁾

The background to Laverack's ministry on Malta was a tale of devoted and determined missionary activity in the face of great Catholic hostility. This battle, like that of Waterloo, began in 1815 when the Methodist Missionary Committee in London received appeals from soldiers stationed on Malta for a Wesleyan vicar. This demand reflected a surge of interest in Methodism in Britain from 1811-16 born of complex religious, social and economic factors.⁽²⁾ Until 1824, however, Methodist meetings were organized by army personnel noted for evangelicalism and generous patronage of missionary societies. Thereafter the Missionary Committee sent out five vicars before 1851. A house and church were purchased in the capital, Valletta, from the Maltese government in 1824. This was the only Protestant church on the island until St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral was opened in 1839. It could not be built in the shape of a church,

1. There are few secondary sources for modern Maltese history for most of this period. The source for this article are therefore principally sources, to be found in the Methodist and Free Presbyterian Church archives of Valletta, Malta, the Local History Archives of the Biblioteca Nazionale, Malta, Methodist Overseas Division Archives London, University of Aberdeen Special Collections, and the Alloa Collection of Scottish Temperance League material of the University of Glasgow, Scotland.
2. E. Fawthrop *The Floriana Story*, Methodist Church Press, Malta, 1963, now out of print. The following Table is derived from figures produced by C. Cook and J. Stevenson in *British Historical Facts; 1760-1830*, London, 1980, Chapter XII, pp. 163-4, and A. Gilbert *Religion and Society in Industrial England*, London, 1976. *Methodist Strength in England as a % of the Adult Population*

Year		5 - Year Increase
1801	1.6%	
1806	1.9	0.3
1811	2.3	0.4
1816	2.8	0.5
1821	2.9	0.1
1826	3.3	0.4
1831	3.4	0.1
1836	4.0	0.6

a privilege restricted to Roman Catholic churches. Legal impediments also blocked acquisition of property by Protestant groups. Consequently the church was purchased by its vicar and remained in his name until 1843.⁽³⁾

Opposition to early Methodist activism in Britain was nothing to native Maltese mistrust. Much in the way that proselytizing Presbyterian city missionaries, and later the Salvation Army, were often the victims of violence and abuse in the Catholic enclaves of West Central Scotland, vicars and their families were repeatedly stoned by mobs.⁽⁴⁾ Methodist methods were however fairly provocative. Finding contact with Maltese interested in Protestantism nil, one vicar had, like Presbyterian counterparts in Ireland, taken the opportunity to dispense tract literature in Maltese to beggars together with food alms. His assistant was more careful to approach only the Italian-speaking upper classes, but was also hated for failing to show what the islanders felt to be due to respect to Catholic priests.⁽⁵⁾ Mob catcalls of 'Framason' at the Methodists indicated far more than tactless references to their church as a 'society'. Already there was a tie-up in personell between Protestants and this secret society, a link which intensified on Malta after 1885 with the formation of Templar and Orange lodges amongst expatriates.⁽⁶⁾ Attempts to bring local bullies to justice met a wall of silence. The lieutenant Governor was forced to threaten certain islanders with eviction if persecution persisted. Nevertheless the funeral of the first Maltese convert in the

3. E. Fawthrop, 5-19

4. 'The Shadow' (pseud. of Alexander Brown, a Glasgow Liberal letter-press printer) *Scenes and Social photographs*, Glasgow, 1858, reprinted as J. McCaffrey (ed.) *Glasgow 1858: the Shadow's Midnight Scenes and Social Photographs*, Glasgow, 1976, Salvation Army Archive references to Lanarkshire, gleaned from the *War Cry* and *Salvationist*, are full of violence and ensuing adverse reactions against Salvationist work by local magistrates. Dr Victor Bailey gives the impression that similar clashes occurred on the South coast of England but not to the same extent. The Army used women to open and man mission-stations in such areas for precisely this reason, a point touched upon briefly in F. McLean *Marching as to War: A Salvation Centenary*, London, 1979. For specific references to Salvationist temperance in this milieu see *Salvationist*, May, 1879, 125-6, the reformer A. Gammie's *In Glasgow's Underworld: The Social Work of the Salvation Army*, London, n.d., *War Cry*, 28.5.1884, and *First Annual Report*, Scottish District, 1882, 6, which details funding from famous Scottish temperance reformers.

5. Fawthrop pp.8-11. Criticism of these tactics in Ireland during the 'hungry thirties' (when converts were referred to as 'souters') was a theme of the Irish nationalist Archbishop John McHale of Tuam - R. Dudley Edwards, *Daniel O'Connell and His World*, London, 1975, 62.

6. On masonry see *Malta Almanac*, 1893, 110. At that point one man, Hamilton Sharpe, (presumably of Scottish-Irish extraction) was the head of a lodge of 'English Knights Templar' and was also the 'Worshipful Master' of the "Irish Constitution" lodge at Isola. Maltese freemasonry is discussed in a work by A. Broadley (high-ranking official of Maltese masonry, and a barrister,) *The History of Freemasonry in the District of Malta*, London, "Free mason office", 1880. Masonry was attacked by the Catholic Church hierarchy in the 1820s and 1840s but the Maltese government was reluctant to intervene given its support from important figures in the American, British and Italian consular services - see pp.15-16 on Walter Wright of Suffolk British Consul to the Ionian Islands and inspiration of Maltese masonry, and pp.24,31,33, and 40 on hostility. For a discussion of the links between freemasonry and temperance in Scotland see N. Logan 'Drink and Society: Scotland 1870-1914', University of Glasgow Ph.D. thesis, 1983, Chapter II, pp.31-66 on the International Order of Good Templars, and Chapter IV pp.178-270 on the Independent Order of Rechabites.

late 1820s caused a riot, necessitating military protection of the Methodist incumbent and the London Missionary Society's agent plus a special night patrol of Valletta. Protestant 'social control' was at that point pre-empted by grave problems of civil disorder.⁽⁷⁾

Methodist success in conversion in the 1830s paralleled revived strength in Britain, especially over 1831-6. The Revd. John Keeling (1785-1857) together with Dr. Naudi, a Maltese convert, began to translate Wesleyan annotated New Testament, sermons, and tracts, into Maltese and Italian. The London Missionary Society also supplied them with the Catechism in Italian, suggesting a distinct focus on the middle class which so dominated all existing Maltese clubs and societies, from the Società Economica Agraria (1844), to the Società Promotrice Cattolica Maltese, active in the trade union sphere, and the mutual aid societies typified by the Società Reciproca Assistenza.⁽⁸⁾ Yet although Methodism spread to Gozo hostility was still widespread, causing Naudi to lose a valuable medical practice, and encouraging a building trade boycott of the Methodist church roof until the Catholic Archbishop intervened.

One can understand the Governor's concern to prevent scriptural teaching in a Charity School (1831) established by the Methodists. Undaunted they replaced it with a mission day school for the Maltese, "on strict scriptural principles", funded by a Quaker.⁽⁹⁾ Expansion of Methodist classes from 1838-41, together with circulation of a Maltese translation of the Gospels and Acts, was the signal for the Catholic hierarchy to warn against Methodist proselytism. Tracts in Italian against Methodism per se, interestingly with English authorship, followed. Religious tracts warfare evidently

7. The London Missionary Society (estd. 1795) was an undenominational society, and is the subject of two official histories, R. Lovett *The History of the London Missionary Society*, 2 vols., London, 1899, and N. Goodall *A History of the L.M.S. 1895-1945*, 1954. On the flowering of missionary societies as an aspect of the increasingly organised charity of the 19th century see Olive Checkland *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland: Social Welfare and the Voluntary Principle*, Edinburgh, 1980, B. Harrison's 'Philanthropy and the Victorians', *Victorian Studies*, June, 1966, C. Mowat *The Charity Organisation Society 1869-1913*, London, 1961, and especially D. Owen's *English Philanthropy 1660-1960*, London, 1963. 'Social control' has become a key notion contemporary studies of temperance and the world of leisure in general discussed at length in G. Stedman Jones *The Language of Class*, London, 1984, Chapter II, 'Class Expression Versus Social Control', 76-89.
8. This evident in the Table at f.2. Keeling was active on Malta from 1824-32. After this arduous posting he returned to the English circuits. Correspondence from him is held in the archives of The London School of African and Oriental Studies, and his obituary appears in Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1858, 13. The Maltese societies mentioned here were all active from the 1870s onwards. Increasingly Maltese mutual aid societies made plain sectarian and racial divisions. I am indebted to the Chief Librarian of the Biblioteca Nazionale for suggesting ways of using the 19th century Italian index to the local History section.
9. Three Maltese schools "for scriptural instruction" survived Keeling according to the Minutes (supra)p.13. On the Charity School Movement whose methods Keeling introduced see D. Owen, 2, 27-8, 31, and 35, and the temperance movement's connection with similar work amongst the young, N. Logan, Chapter III, "Temperance Lessons", 72-86, and specifically the Revd. Dr Thomas Guthrie's *A Plea for Ragged Schools*, 1847. Temperance reformers supported free education, charity schools, subsidised company schools, and emigration schemes, working closely with men like Quarrie and Barnardo in addition to emphasising the need of juvenile temperance work per se.

'followed the flag'.⁽¹⁰⁾ Another equally profound problem was continuity of numbers and funds, the perennial problem for religion and reform in the nineteenth century.⁽¹¹⁾ A typical congregation of eighty was composed primarily of service families. Transfer of regiments in the 1840s, for example, ruined support, encouraging the Wesleyan Missionary Society to regard Malta as stony ground, especially as local printing of tracts was complicated and sometimes frustrated by the R.C. Bishop's hostility. In 1843 work was discontinued, and the Valletta church sold to the young Free Church of Scotland.

Methodism was kept alive by expatriates with the help of the British and Foreign Bible Society.⁽¹²⁾ The Crimean War was a period of revival led by the Royal Engineers, and a Methodist vicar, W.S. Caldecott, was sent out to Malta in 1868. Again this corresponds to an upsurge of Methodist membership in Britain after a relative decline in the decade 1851-61. The centre of Methodist activity on Malta moved from Valletta to Floriana shortly afterwards, and developed a pronounced teetotal aspect.

The Methodist Church had been associated with the British temperance movement since the birth of the English movement hastened by the "seven men of Preston", of whom three, King, Swidleyhurst, and Turner, were Methodists. A feature of Maltese Methodism was a Soldiers' and Sailors' Home, established in the Piazza Maggiore, Floriana, in 1871 as "a counteractive to the wine shops and low houses of entertainment in which the neighbourhood abounds", (*Malta Almanac*, 1893). Reminiscent of later social settlement enterprises such as that of Jane Addams in Chicago, it had a reading room, library, dining rooms and baths as well as bedrooms. This community centre was designed to house the expanding Methodist activities, but soon Methodists also penetrated the established servicemen's leisure scene. The latter revolved around the Garrison Library in Piazza San Giorgio (later Piazza Regina) under the direction of the Anglican Dr. J. Cleugh, the navy library at Vittoriosa, the Malta Union Club (1826) for officers, "civil employees of the government, and gentlemen residing in Malta", and a leisure complex, the Gymnasium, for the lower ranks. By the 1870s servicemen had the choice of Anglican, Catholic or Methodist

10. eg. R. Challoner *Il Caveat Control I Methodists*, Malta, 1842. The escalating volume of tract literature in the 19th century is described in R. Altick *The English Common Reader*, London, 1967, Chapter IV, and V. Neuburg *Popular Literature: A History and Guide*, London, 1977, 290-93.
11. A similar comment is made on temperance society support in B. Harrison, 353-374.
12. The British and Foreign Bible Society (estd. 1804) was active on Malta from 1809-10 according to the B.F.B.S. *Annual Reports* in the University of Cambridge archives. Its work was directed locally by a Malta Bible Society after 1817. Minutes of the latter survive only for the 1820s. Like the Methodists they considered Malta unprofitable by the 1830s. From 1845-60 they again employed an agent on the island but unfortunately record evidence between 1857-1900 is also absent. The B.F.B.S. role in the translation of the Bible into Maltese for Protestant evangelisation of the island is the subject of articles by C. Sant, eg. 'Protestant Maltese Bible Translation 1870-72', *Journal of Maltese Studies*, 11, 1977, 118-44, and 'Protestants Maltese Bible Translation: The Gospel of St Mark, 1914-15', *Journal of Maltese Studies*, 1979, 80-118. Society histories have been produced at regular intervals, eg. a multi-volume work published over 1816-20, the authoritative history by G. Browne in 1859, plus those of 1904, and 1965, all sadly now out of print.

Sunday services. By the 1880s Wesleyan meetings became a permanent fixture at the Regimental Recreation Rooms, Floriana, and also H.M. Dockyard. Soon Methodism meant a rich social diet of services, fellowships, prayer meetings, Bible study groups, class meetings, Sunday Schools, Mothers' Meetings, and temperance meetings. In 1891, the same year that the non-respectable leisure scene spawned a Malta Jockey and Sporting Club, the Methodists could boast that "a religious or temperance meeting is held every evening".⁽¹³⁾

The Revd. Laverack was responsible for bringing the Blue Ribbon wing of the temperance movement to Malta. This form of 'gospel-temperance' had been a roaring success in Britain and America. It had revived many temperance societies with strong working class support, and moreover had reawakened fading interest in church attendance. It placed strong emphasis not only on legislative solutions to the drink problem and pressure group politics, but also on the strategy favoured by the 'moral suasionists' of the movement - "rational recreation", often including the formation of teetotal choirs, brass or flute bands, drama groups, classes in elocution and public speaking, and the cycling, rambling, and football clubs associated with 'muscular Christianity'. All this was very attractive not only to an expatriate community, but also to islanders interested in self-help and respectable recreation, while at the same time enhancing their status with the governing élite. Laverack's energy and enthusiasm was behind the construction of a new church in Floriana, with schoolrooms and a lecture hall, financed by subscriptions and bazaars. Progressive in every way, it was one of the first Maltese buildings to have electricity. Temperance symbolized progress of a different kind - progress towards the ideal, thinking working man, totally in control of his faculties, destiny and salvation. Throughout a ministry of over twenty years Laverack, a veteran of Good Templary and Rechabatism in Yorkshire and the Home Counties, shared the social reformer Agnes Weston's concern at sailors' and dockyard employees' crude and brutalizing pastimes, not to mention lack of interest in religion.⁽¹⁴⁾ Temperance meetings were held in the Floriana hall, and a tent of the

13. R.F. Wearnmouth's work on this aspect is still valuable, eg. *Methodism and the Common People of the 18th Century*, London, 1934, *Methodism and the Working Class Movements of England 1800-80*, London, 1937, and *Methodism and the Struggle of the Working Classes 1850-1900*, Leicester, 1954, although these have in other ways been challenged by the works of D. Hay and E.P. Thompson. The settlement mentioned here is described in an autobiographical work by Jane Addams herself, and is commented upon in R. Hofstadter *The Progressive Movement 1900-15*, New Jersey, 1963. Quoted here is *Malta Almanac*, (editor L. Cretien) 1893, 113.
14. This movement is the subject of A. Kimball's *The Blue Ribbon*, New York, 1894, and more recently of equally difficult to obtain articles in the periodical press of American church organisations by L. Lewis Shiman. It is also mentioned briefly in N. Longmate *The Waterdrinkers*, London, 1968, and K. Heasman *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of Social Work in the Victorian Era*, London, 1962. Good Templary has produced many official histories in America and Britain. It is also analysed in several recent studies, eg. B. Harrison *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-72*, London, 1971 A-E. Dingle *The Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England: The United Kingdom Alliance 1872-95*, London, 1980, and three theses - D. Paton 'Drink and the Temperance Movement in 19th Century Scotland'. Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis 1977, W. Lambert 'Drink and Sobriety in Wales 1835-95', University of Swansea Ph.D., 1969, and Logan, University of Glasgow Ph.D., 1983. The Rechabites are studied only in the latter thesis at Chapter IV, 'Moral Suasion and Thrift', 139-270. Agnes Weston's work is discussed in Heasman (supra) and F. Prochaska *Women and Philanthropy in 19th Century England*, Oxford, 1980.

Independent Order of Rechabites was organized as a teetotal improvement upon the mutual aid and insurances already available on Malta but rather expensive for the working class saver, (e.g. via the Sovereign, Crown, Economic Life, North British and Mercantile, and Standard Life companies) and as a framework of self and mutual help for the Anglo-Maltese working and lower middle classes who were equally unlikely to be found in the four 'Casinos' of the Italian-speaking bourgeoisie and the recipient lists of Catholic aid societies.⁽¹⁵⁾

Yet not surprisingly Laverack, whose first ministry was at Aldershot, found that the greatest opportunities for gospel-temperance work were still amongst servicemen, building upon earlier work at Floriana by the Revd.s Caldecott, Benjamin Broadley, and Joseph Webster. In 1882 he opened a second 'Soldiers' and Sailors' Rest' in a rented house close to the Cottonera Naval Dockyard. So many evangelical activities took place at the two Rests that extension of premises became necessary. In 1884 the second Rest moved to premises in the Piazza Santa Margherita with enormous refreshment and lecture rooms. The use of refreshment rooms as a distribution point for temperance tracts was not new. This had been pioneered in the early nineteenth century by Thomas Corbet of Glasgow and copied throughout Britain. It was appropriate here given the increasing concentration of troops on the Cottonera side of the Grand Harbour. By 1893 there was also a 'Soldiers' and Sailors' Welcome' in Valletta itself, doubtless a tribute to Laverack's ability to be a "fervent and successful evangelist and a real friend to every soldier and sailor" on account of his experiences during the 1873 Kumasi expedition and Maltese hospital work throughout the 1882 Egyptian campaign. It was via this sterling work in 'gospel-temperance' that Methodism finally became 'respectable' on Malta - at least to the colonial governing élite, a shift of opinion reflected in the ultimate 1907 teetotal 'Home' at Floriana, the Connaught Home, named after and opened by the Duke, then Commander in Chief of the British forces in the Mediterranean.⁽¹⁶⁾

The temperance connection was if anything more profound in the case of the Free Church of Scotland's work on Malta. Although the establishment of St Andrew's Scots Church, Valletta, was inspired by the distinguished lawyer Andrew Jamieson concern for the spiritual welfare of the Black Watch regiment, and encouraged by the Ladies' Colonial Association of Edinburgh, finance for the church completed in 1857 came from many Scots associated with the temperance movement, and with the Scottish Temperance League (1844) in particular. These included the famous teetotal shipping

15. John Laverack's obituary appears in *Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of 1926*, London, 1926, 170, where he is noted as the first methodist military chaplain to receive a war medal. References to the Maltese Rechabite tent appear in the *Rechabite and Temperance Magazine* in the 1890s. An archive of Rechabite periodicals is held by the I.O.R., Glasgow. There were four 'Casinos' on Malta in 1870. They were dominated by Italian-speaking Maltese, and could charge quarterly membership fees of between 9/- and 16/-, i.e. the most expensive was on a par with the English-speaking expatriate élite's Malta Union Club.
16. On Corbett and similarly minded reformers see Logan, Chapter III, 'Moral Suasionist Ideologies and Strategies', 87-96. Development of the Rests is charted in *Stevens' Almanac*, 1880, 88, and 1888, 34-35 and *Malta Almanac*, 1882, 60, 1890, 66, and 1893, 113.

families of the Clyde, the Hendersons, Smiths, Allans *et al* plus Currie and MacIvor of Liverpool, the Macfies, active in shipping and sugar refining, the Edinburgh Rose family, and the football-loving philanthropist Kinnaird. Not all were Free Presbyterians.⁽¹⁷⁾

St Andrew's was very much the work of one man, the Revd. George Wisely, friend of the great director of Free Church missionary endeavour, the Revd. Dr Patrick Clason, and an admirer of Principal Marshall Lang. Wisely a 'private' student and 1846 graduate of Mariscall College, was of a wealthy Aberdeen merchant family. He was also personally connected with the Union Castle Steamship Co., and related by marriage to the Tod and Henderson families so active in Scottish temperance. Much has been made of the help of the then Governor, Major General Sir William Reid, son of a Scottish minister in easing the legal obstacles to leasing a site, yet Wisely's energy and teetotal shipping connections were crucial to fundraising. This explains why even before his company benefited from the heavy traffic between Malta and Alexandria caused by the Abyssinian expedition James Burns of the shipping line G. & J. Burns was prepared almost singlehandedly to finance the building of a manse.⁽¹⁸⁾

One aspect of the teetotal interest in Malta was the involvement of certain Scottish temperance reformers in the anti-popery crusades of the early nineteenth century. In the West of Scotland this hostility had intensified after Catholic Emancipation in reaction to waves of immigration, and subsequent pressures on jobs and housing, following the 1830s potato famines in Ireland. Catholic immigrants were blamed for many urban social problems, including all too evident heavy drinking. The Glasgow shipowner Henderson of Park, an official of the Scottish Temperance League, headed the subscription list for St Andrew's although he was a firm supporter of Scotland's rival *United* Presbyterians. He was also, like the famous Edinburgh reformer John Hope (founder of the British League of Juvenile Abstainers,) profoundly hostile to Catholicism. Such men were proud of Scotland's Covenanting past, protective of oppressed European Protestant minorities, and echoed seventeenth century Puritan critiques of Catholic 'superstition' and 'idolatry', not to mention the supra-national ambitions, and interference of the Pope, increasingly unacceptable to European liberals. Theirs was a 'siege mentality', coloured by lurid rumours of Catholic vice and conspiracy theories, which appears ironic given their genuine interest in many more

17. J. Milne *Sketches from the History of St Andrew's Scottish Church Valletta, Malta*, p.p., Valletta, 1978. Analysis of the S.T.L. leadership appears in Logan (op cit) Chapter II, "The Scottish Temperance League", 10-20 and Chapter III, 67-138.
18. 'Subscription List', manuscript dated 1855-8, St Andrew's archives, Valletta. Its 'Register of Civilian Births' for 1865 records Clason's baptism of Wisely's son Robert. Biographical details are from P. Anderson *Fasti Academiae Mariscallanae Aberdonensis, II*, Aberdeen, n.d., 517, and *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 30.5.1017, 4, col.4-6. George Wisely married at Leghorn in early 1855. His wife was Jessie Tod Miller, related to the teetotal philanthropists to the Clyde company of Tod & MacGregor. The latter were active in the Congregational Union and in the International Order of Good Templars, Isabella Tod being famous in women's temperance. Wisely's obituary in *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 26.5.1917, 4, col.6. Burns advertisements appear in the 1860s *Malta Almanac*.

truly liberal crusades.⁽¹⁹⁾ Henderson's alleged motive for this generosity was desire for Presbyterian unity. Clearly the establishment of the Free Church on Malta reflected the multi-faceted nature of evangelicism - interest in theology and doctrinal purity, an attitude to conversion infused with millennial fervour, in addition to a focus on piety and increased personal morality with strong implications for the community and social reform. Like the Methodists before them the Free Church was convinced of the importance of Malta as a missionary station in the Mediterranean. Conquered by Mecca, and later by Rome, what possibilities might it yet present?

This challenge evidently fired Wisely's work. He was closely associated with the work of the Maltese Protestant College soon after his arrival on the island. Using Italian, learned in his previous work with Dr. Stewart and the Waldensians in Italy, he laboured long, and with minor successes, to convert both Catholics and Muslims. In this he had the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Maltese Bible translators following in the paths of Vassalli, Camilleri and Azzopardi, and several well-educated and under-employed expatriate ladies who translated tract material into both Italian and Maltese. He also shared the evangelical interest in conversion of Jews, a millenarianism profound enough to fascinate the extraordinary busy social and slavery reformers Shaftsbury and Wilberforce, and to prompt foundation of a non-denominational, and later Anglican, London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews in 1809.⁽²⁰⁾

This was Wisely's motive in urging the British and Foreign Bible Society to smuggle bibles into Arab North Africa, where the prosperous Jewish Community tended invariably to identify with European colonizers, notably the Catholic French. Although many Free Church ministers were active in the temperance movement, and the General Assemblies of the Free Church were quicker and more emphatic in condemnation of the 'drink problem' than those of the Church of Scotland, many also paid lip service to their denominational temperance society as it became fashionable, especially as meaningful assault on the drink trade, consistent with their prohibitionist sentiments, was undermined by willingness to accept significantly large donations from men whose fortunes stemmed from that very trade - the classic dilemma of reform depicted by Shaw in *Major Barbara*. Wisely's temperance work therefore was directly connected not only with charitable work for sailors, but also with his militant Protestant evangelicalism, and desire to convert the Maltese. Did not many, like Logan, speak of a "temperance reformation" implying reformation

19. D. Jamie *John Hope, Philanthropist Refomer*, Edinburgh, 1907. Hope bequeathed his fortune to the anti-popery crusade, convinced that temperance as a more fashionable fad would be able to survive his death. E. Norman's *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England*, London, 1968, illuminates post-Emancipation and Maynooth tensions, Henderson's rationale appears in Milne, 3-4.
20. W. Ewing *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland 1843-1900*, Edinburgh, 1914, II, 360. The L.S.P.C.J. is the subject of W. Gidney *The History of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews 1809-1908*, London, 1908, and more recently W. Baker *A Fountain Opened*, London, 1983. Its leaders were Alexander McCaul D.D., the Revd. Lewis May, the Revd. H.A. Stern, Joseph Wolff, and Charles Simeon, a balance of Christians and Jewish converts. Creation of the Anglican see of Jerusalem was achieved by this pressure group of 1840.

of manners and also a religious counter-reformation? If Protestants were to demonstrate superiority to Roman Catholics and the Infidel their witness had to be unblemished by any hint of moral laxity, or even of mere self-indulgence. Concern for one's fellow man and his material and spiritual needs was to be conveyed both by personal abstinence and active temperance work, then rightfully given the status of meaningful social work throughout Northern Europe and America.

According to the *Aberdeen University Review* the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home which Wisely established in 1855 was "the first outside the United Kingdom". This was followed in 1860 by a special Soldiers' Institute and Temperance Hall as a counter-attraction to Malta's cheap wines and spirits, the increasing importation of Scottish beers, the success of the local brewer John Fowler & Co., and proliferating dens of vice, such as wine shops, cigar divans, brothels, and even theatres. The latter were doubly reprehensible to Calvinistic temperance reformers as immoral, and as licensed premises where one could invariably drink 'after hours', in contravention of the local licensing laws.⁽²¹⁾

Wisely's brand of temperance reform resembled that of Laverack only in its use of institutes as 'counter attractions' for servicemen. Their methods were otherwise subtly different. Laverack's 'gospel-temperance' had its origins in American prohibitionist societies often shunned by upper class reformers because of the theatricality of their public meetings and in general the vulgarity of their methods of appealing to the populous. The Blue Ribbon clubs which Laverack encouraged were based for example upon earlier work by one such society, the Good Templars, which began in America in the 1850s and spread through Britain after the 1860s. Its comprehensive abstinence pledge and its total support for prohibition placed it amongst temperance extremism. In organization it closely resembled free-masonry. It had a national branch structure of lodges under a Grand Lodge which was modelled upon the U.S. legislature. Templars were fraternal and passed through a series of 'Degrees', as masons did, which inculcated evangelical virtues. Overwhelmingly working class in membership, it had clerical leadership. This appears surprising given that it was a secret and very exclusive 'labour-aristocrat's club, smacking of sectarian, economic, and social discrimination, with an elaborate ritual which rivalled that of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless ministers from the Methodist, Congregational, and the United Presbyterian and Free Churches were interested in it as an organization keen for General Assembly approval, and moreover as a bridge between churchmen and the narrow but deep vein of working class religiosity which prevailed in spite of declining church attendance. Templary had thrived in the fishing villages and the heavily industrialized areas of Britain alike until it was superseded by and forced

21. Wisely's interests appear in his obituary in the *Scottish Temperance Annual*, 1918, a Scottish Temperance League publication. His translation work is the subject of C. Sant 'Protestant Maltese Bible translation: the Gospel of St Mark 1914-15', *Journal of Maltese Studies*, 1979, 80-120. The Church of England had for example been active in Tunis, valued as a Roman centre of Christianity, since 1834. This latter 'Iron Church' was under the Diocese of Gibraltar according to S. Sealy's *St George's Church, Tunis*, p.p., n.d., c.1983. From 1860-1963 the Church Mission to the Jews assumed responsibility for this church -C.M.J. Correspondence 1901-14', St George's Church archives, Tunis.

to absorb the American Francis Murphy's Blue Ribbon Movement. This new wave of temperance fervour combined Templary's aggressive reclamation work, which antagonized the poor and wealthy reformers alike by use of unwelcome home visits, the Blue Ribbon emphasis on huge and highly emotional revival meetings whipped up by touring lecturers.⁽²²⁾

In contrast Wisely preferred the strategies of the Scottish Temperance League, and was a life-long subscriber to the League and its periodical press. This was hardly surprising. His first experience of the ministry had been gained in two of the poorest areas of Scotland - the Wynds of Glasgow and the Leith dock district of Edinburgh. In both areas the League was very active, such that a proportion of the misery in these slums was directly attributable to poor diet, heavy drinking, and exploitation of the ignorance of the poor by wily publicans.

The League was the first non-denominational society for total abstainers in Scotland, created at a time when the temperance movement was deeply divided over policy. Its stance was then more moderate than the prohibitionists', designed to win support from all wings of the movement, personal abstainers, licensing restrictionists, supporters of the Permissive Bill to restrict licences across the nation, and even prohibitionists. Especially after the second Reform Act the League had no qualms about lacking a blend of solutions to the drink problem, which included local and national level pressure group politics and constant use of 'moral suasion'. The latter was no mere strategy. It was the emblem of an evangelical philosophy influenced by the Calvinist concept of 'eternal vigilance'. Status and even religious earnestness alone could not protect against the long arm of Satan. God was also vengeful, and man struggled in inevitable moral flux. Drink was one of many snares. Abstinence was equated with self-denial in Christ's image, the symbol of true service of God, and rejection of sham religion. These notions connected on one level with bourgeois obligation, sometimes more related to social than moral status, and on another with working class identification with Christ's hardships. Indeed the idea of the true spiritual life as God-given in return for service often led on to confidence in the innate 'nobility' of the honest toiler and a class assertiveness contrary to the class collaboration in reform which the majority of temperance reformers sought. Thus the connotations of 'moral suasion' were behind resentment of facile prohibitionist arguments on making people 'sober by Act of Parliament' by Wisely's generation of reformers, an 'old guard' which like the Traditional Radicals of the Liberal Party was fast disappearing on the eve of the Great War.⁽²³⁾

Temperance had aggressive and defence elements. Wisely's work at Cospicua and Vittoriosa prior to his retreat in 1896 was in part a reaction to the increasing strength of the Catholic Church over 1850-1914. "In spite of the loss of some privileges and functions to the government, and weakening of some ties with the population (it

22. Logan Chapter II, 40-2 on the clerical leadership of the I.O.G.T.

23. *Aberdeen University Review*, iv, 1916-17, 281, W. Ewing, 360, and *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 26.5.1917, 1 col.1, and 4, col.6, and 28.5.1917, 1, col.1.

flourished. It was well-organized, more parishes had been created",⁽²⁴⁾ and moreover its English confessors and work among servicemen were expanding under Scicluna and Pace.⁽²⁵⁾ In spite of British attempts to limit Italian influence, by 1807 assurances that future bishops would be Maltese, establishment of their independence from Sicily in 1831, and insistence that gubernatorial approval validate all ecclesiastical appointment, this ever-present influence among the Maltese élite was also resurgent from 1850-70 thanks to Italian unification, the presence of Italian émigrés on the island, Garribaldian propaganda, and the educational work of Sicilian Jesuits, "keen to keep Sicilian culture alive", on Malta.⁽²⁶⁾

The effect of Laverack and Wisely's work was the construction of an alternative, Protestant leisure framework. This was buttressed by several Scottish-run private schools. These aimed to prepare pupils for coveted business opportunities expanding from the 1840s onwards and especially after the 1870s in response to increasing British defence spending on Malta and its importance as a steamship coaling and trading station. They also prepared candidates for university entrance, Maltese and 'Oxbridge', and for the well-attended competitive examinations for the Maltese and imperial civil service instituted by Reid in the 1850s and made more lucrative by Le Merchant's restructuring of the Maltese service in the 1860s. The Indian Civil Service was of particular interest to the Maltese, and doubtless proven sobriety and an English-style education were invaluable assets here. At home the civil administration was a great source of opportunities. By 1874 nearly 90% of such posts were occupied by Maltese. Yet the patronage of men like Strickland was a force to be reckoned with, thus reinforcing the value of Anglophile credentials in general. Even the ordinary islander was aware of these pressures. Malta's importance to India after the opening of the Suez Canal also meant demand for skilled and "steady" dock labour, and competition for service sector opportunities was fierce given the way in which the school population trebled over 1847-91. As Maltese Italian speakers and writers outnumbered those literate in English 2:1 and around 8:1 respectively even in 1870 this made English culture the key to social mobility for many.

These institutions included Lawson's Melita House Academy, and the English Commercial and Classical Academy of Hugh Gavin, "alumnus of Glasgow University", a friend, relative by marriage, and communicant of Wisely's from Johnstone, a Scottish town associated with the former Chartist and temperance reformer John Fraser (1794-1879). This in particular was a counterpoise to British Jesuit education, the Italian commercial schools, and the pervasive influence of Italian in business and the professions, notably law. Focussing on promotion of English, its classes in Italian and French were 2/6d extra! Later institutions like M.J. Dillon's, "on purely English lines", blossomed in reaction to the Anglicisation of the educational system spearheaded

24. *Malta Almanac* 1892, 62-3, and A. Koster *Priests, Prelates and Politics in Malta*, Assen, 1984, 78.

25. *Steven's Almanac*, 1873, 55-7, *Malta Almanac*, 1881, 41, and 1886, 44-5.

26. A. Koster 56-61.

by Savona after 1879 a policy which elevated rivalry for opportunities into a major political question.⁽²⁷⁾

By relentless activity in several reform spheres, eg. temperance, vegetarianism, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, professionalisation of nursing, and hospital provision, evangelical virtue gained an extensive influence. This had the side-effect of spurring the Catholic Church to imitate teetotal initiatives, just as the Church Missinary Society and S.P.C.K. work in Protestant Bible translation over 1822-47, echoed by Wisely from 1893-1914, prompted work, culminating in a Catholic Maltese Bible by the 1930s. Anglican temperance work, led by the Scots-born temperance reformer Charles Sandford who was the Maltese Archbishop in 1870s, had caught Catholic attention at a time when the hierarchy was concerned about the numbers of young Maltese "spending their time in coffeehouses, (drinking and) planning a liberal constitution for the republic of Malta"⁽²⁸⁾. The Catholic reply to Dissenting counter-attractions in the 1890s was the establishment of a Catholic Soldiers' and Sailors' Institute, also at Floriana, and promotion of the League of the Cross, a denominational temperance society made famous by the charismatic pledge campaigns of the Irish reformer Father Mathew and the more subtle work of Cardinal Manning in England. A new broader-based Catholic leisure structure, epitomised by the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the philharmonic or band clubs, now complemented traditional charitable and educational activity. Given the interrelationship of religion and recreation at all social levels for Maltese Catholics, this was an important element in the evolution of "patria" from a religious to a secular outlook. At the very point when the Churches reached consensus on temperance as vital social work sectarian rivalries and cultural tensions were institutionalised in separate, and rival leisure structures.⁽²⁹⁾

The basic cultural tension was that between Anglicised and Italianate élite interests. In spite of British rule Malta remained a thoroughly Italianate culture in the 19th century. Even in 1914 the *Malta Government Gazette* was published half in English, half in Italian. Attachment to English and things English was by comparison superficial. Italian culture symbolised everything central to Maltese mores - attitudes not only to religion and education, but also to business, the family, and the position of women. Increasing Italian influence, plus the late 19th century political

27. B. Blouet *The Story of Malta*, Valletta, 1984, 154 and 162, Koster, 165, on Gavin see the St Andrew's archives manuscript, 'Register of Civilian Births', (he too married a Henderson,) and on Fraser J.R. Fraser *John Fraser of Newfield*, Paisley, 1879. Such institutions' advertisements can be found in *Malta Times* 31.12.1840 and 5.1.1900, *Steven's Almanac* 1870, p.158, and 1881, 16. On this theme of pressure for opportunities a thought provoking article, is C. Lee 'Modern Economic Growth and Structural Change the Service Sector' *Scottish Social and Economic Research*, 13, 1983.
28. A. Mackinnon *Malta, Nurse of the Mediterranean*, London, 1935, 44-60, *Malta Almanac* 1886, 65, and 1893, 116-7, Sant 1977, p.127, and quoted here is an observation from William Senior, noted in Koster 53.
29. The League of the Cross was established in Feb. 1872 and received papal recognition in 1874. Its British organiser was Fr. Nugent of Liverpool (1822-1905) -see Cannon Bennet *Fr. Nugent of Liverpool*, Liverpool, 1949. These Maltese organisations advertised in *Malta Almanac* 1893, 114, and *Stevens' Almanac* 1894, 59.

controversies over language and Catholic marriage, had created an anti-British élite of nobles, higher clergy, and professionals, and a pro-British middle class of civil servants, merchants, and tradesmen. Promotion of English culture aroused status fears especially within the professions, easily the most dynamic force in politics, capable of obstructing much-needed reform programmes by abstention, non-cooperation, and discrediting of elections in attempts to create the first truly representative political parties on the island. In this milieu assertive Protestantism only underlined the increasing tendency of the lower Catholic clergy to ally with pro-Italian nationalists and become important in politics, with the potential to activate the Maltese working class - whose language and interests, ironically, had long been neglected by the Italian and pro-British factions alike.

As for Maltese temperance's success, several comments may be made. No membership figures exist for any of the organisations mentioned, yet the 'catchment area' was undoubtedly restricted. Laverack aimed at the serviceman and the labour aristocrat, i.e. principally those resident in the harbour areas dependent on overseas trade and commerce and open to English ideas. The subsistence farmers and landless peasantry of the interior were too poor and too insular to be approached by reformers. His work was also circumscribed by the problems of literacy which frustrated evangelical tract distribution: only in Valletta, Floriana, and the 'Three Cities' were literacy levels high. Wisely's work met similar problems. His strategy was aimed at the middle class, yet the relatively large Maltese class was not interested in temperance. Commercial men knew the value of the wine trade with Italy, and preferred liquor tax to income tax, while professionals were increasingly anti-British. 'Temperanza' to this class meant moderation rather than sobriety, as with the British aristocracy, effectively restricting temperance to the expatriate community.

Maltese temperance failed entirely to become a movement, with distinct licensing, legislative, medical and educational wings on the British and American models. The colonial government blocked Protestant 'cultural imperialism'. Governors were invariably British generals and admirals. Temperance was useful to them only to the extent to which it could reinforce discipline within the "fortress colony". Housing projects reminiscent of British '5% philanthropy' for example were similarly vetoed because they would interfere with defence in the face of a grave shortage of working class housing and increasing overcrowding. Protestant evangelisation in general was also discouraged as contrary to British pledges to protect Catholics from insult in addition to promises of religious freedom. Governors exercised great firmness here, with good reason. Evangelicals like Wolff, for example, felt that as the Maltese were less "pagan" than certain other Mediterranean peoples they were also more immune to insult. Indeed although individual governors, like the sabbatarian Stuart who tried unsuccessfully to abolish the Sunday Carnival or "pagan Bacchanalia" at a time when a Sunday trains controversy also raged in Britain, may have harboured Puritanical tendencies, London was very sensitive to the imaginary threat of Protestantisation as in Ireland. This was exemplified by the appointment of governors like Moore O'Ferrall (1847-51), an Irish Catholic who countered republican sentiment with a new Constitution and reform, of the administrator Strickland an Anglo-Maltese Catholic, the opening up of administration to the Maltese, and the influence permitted Maltese

"mandarins". Governors worked hard to maintain good relations with the Holy See, well aware of the importance of moderately pro-British appointments, the nationalist threat to use the clergy to foment unrest, and the Bishop's ability to control his clergy and use Church disapproval as a brake upon irredentism and socialism.⁽³⁰⁾

Temperance could not become a political pressure group. Governors upheld the Roman Catholic monopoly of education, (any interference here caused a furore more intense than even the 'catechism question' in Britain), of charity, areas like prisoners' welfare being the preserve of Maltese doctors and lawyers, and even dominance of the licencing courts was denied Protestant clerics. Furthermore Maltese politics simply were not open to any pressure, thanks to British refusal to delegate power on the principle that Malta was not an ordinary colony but a fortress vital to the Empire's protection. Civil rights were subjugated to military needs, yet the need to secure Maltese loyalty meant that at time (eg. 1870-98) clergy men were admitted to the Executive Council, subject to their Bishop's approval. Protestant influence, even of "King Wisely", was restricted to informal channels. The new Maltese parties rejected Britain's cultural and philanthropic mission as hypocritical.

Temperance was not even an important medical pressure group. The clearcut identification of health with reform typical of the 19th century British city was frustrated by the identification of Maltese medicine with the Catholic religious orders, and the Italian universities. In spite of the existence of a Medical Society of Encouragement from 1837 onwards, not to mention Nichol the health reformer's work with Wisely in the 1870s, it seems unlikely that doctors took teetotalism seriously until the formation of a Maltese branch of the British Medical Association in the 1890s under a British Surgeon Major. Whereas in Britain the medical profession deferred to the B.M.A.'s teetotal wing in *Lancet* articles, in Malta temperance was relegated to the realms of quackery and patent medicines which padded out the pages of the expatriate *Malta Times*. The latter refrained from comment on the sobriety of the island and no temperance press developed. Indeed the greatest press development in this area was the rise of the Italian and later Maltese press, voicing the grievances of the Maltese and contradicting the expatriate press.⁽³¹⁾

This said, the longevity of temperance and of Maltese Protestantism was remarkable. Teetotalism, at first impractical because of poor water supplies and the risk of cholera and nowadays anathema to Malta's tourists, thrived amongst the

30. Teetotal reformers were often involved in building societies, friendly society mortgage schemes, and the model housing described by J. Tarn in *5% Philanthropy* Cambridge, 1974. Quoted here the Revd. J. Wolff *Journal of the Revd. Joseph Wolff in a series of Letters to Sir Thomas Baring*, London, 1839, 69-81. The label "pagan Bacchanalia" however appears in the Revd. S.S. Wilson *A Narrative of the Greek Mission* London, 1839, 41-43. The trains controversy is discussed in E. Robertson 'Early Scottish Railways and Observance of the Sabbath', *Scottish Historical Review*, 57, 1978, 151. H. Frenco *Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: the Maltese Experience*, Valletta, 1979, 47-61 on Xuereb and Buhagiar.
31. *Malta Almanac* 1889, 93, *Stevens' Almanac* 1868, 35, B. Aspinwall "Dr and Mrs T.L. Nichol", *Studies in Church History*, 19, 1982, *Malta Almanac* 1886, 64, and 1893, 117, and the *Malta Times* 5.1.1900. On the press see H. Frenco 79-80 and 104-5.

expatriate community from the 1850s to the Great War, aided latterly by youth organisations like Y.M.C.A. and possibly by expatriate conservatism and tendency to inter-marriage. This paralleled the course of the movement in Britain where 1906 and 1914 were turning points for the churches' social and political power. Thereafter social reform was superseded by state intervention and, even although the temperance movement successfully called polls to veto or restrict licensing in the 1920s, interest in the campaign was ebbing, overshadowed by more serious social problems. In Malta temperance faded with the retirements of John Laverack and George Wisely, the rise of nationalism, and of class politics. 1905, the year of jubilee celebrations for Wisely attended by the Governor, marked the beginning of serious inflation and unemployment. As Malta lost the coaling business to Tunis and Algiers, and also the entrepôt trade, migration and especially emigration seemed more realistic solutions to working class problems.⁽³²⁾

No Protestant assault on "the great apostasy", as envisaged by early 19th century evangelicals, took place in spite of periodic revivals. Clergymen, like Laverack and Wisely seem to have preferred social reform to arid theological debate in spite of Wolff's advice that they familiarise themselves thoroughly with the theologians Fullo, Hubert, Bellarmine, and Cornelius à Lapide in order to undermine Catholicism. Yet amazingly Protestantism did not wither through gubernatorial neglect, nor as a result of the Catholic mentality which connected terrestrial and spiritual loyalties with ostracism of Protestants. Only the declining importance of Malta as a British "fortress" in the 1960s forced the Wesleyans and Presbyterians to find strength in formal unity.⁽³³⁾

Given unabated interest in Maltese nationalism it is tempting to contend Protestant influence on figures like Naudi, a moderate nationalist later Crown Advocate, and Dimech (1860-1921). In this sense Protestant evangelicals might be regarded as perpetuating the train of anti-clerical thought begun by the French in Malta. Inspiration is difficult to trace and prove: Dimech's individualism for example may have been influenced more by Rousseau, and Italian and Irish nationalism, than any aspect of British Liberalism, and the unionism and socialist tendencies of the "Three Cities" probably reflect labour aristocrat dynamism rather than Protestant activities in that area. Dimech certainly copied "rational recreation" strategies, typical not only of British Nonconformity but also of the British Independent Labour Party and the Clarionites, to attract support. On the other hand the 1906 incident with the Scottish evangelist John MacNeill made clear the nationalist antipathy to Protestants. Consensus on saints' days as pagan opiates of the people, and on the Catholic Church as mercenary and oppressive, seems to have been restricted to Dimech and the anti-clerical Senglea Dockers. The issue was clouded however by hierarchy readiness to brand Dimech as "a Protestant, a Freemason, and a devil", to denounce Mizzi's party

32. D. Bebbington *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics 1870-1914* London, 1982, S. Koss *Nonconformity in Modern British Politics* London, 1975, and I. Donnachie "The First World War and the Drink Question: State Control of the Drink Trade" *Journal of the Scottish Labour History Society* 17, 1982.

33. J. Wolff 74-75.

as “full of heretics and masons”, and to doom recalcitrant nationalist critics to Protestant burial by overly hasty excommunication.⁽³⁴⁾ The Protestant Evangelical Alliance’s admiration of anti-clerical nationalists, many of whose utterances were reminiscent of radical prohibitionists like Edwin Scrymgeour of Dundee, was not reciprocated. The 1912 riots were notably anti-clerical *and* anti-British!

Thus in conclusion British Protestant temperance reformers’ attempts to erect an alternative leisure framework on Malta between 1815-1914, spurred by the challenge to convert islanders, resulted paradoxically in creation of two, rival structures, Protestant and Catholic, similar, yet embittered by a ‘siege mentality’ on both sides. Aggressive evangelisation, and latterly challenge to hegemony of expatriates, was reflected in Protestant teetotal strategies. Fear of Protestantism, of republicanism, irredentism, and socialism, plus competition with the evangelical example, prompted Catholic initiatives to encourage self-help, counter apathy, and return drunkards to the Church’s fold. This paralleled developments in British Catholicism, wherein a devotional ‘revolution’ was accompanied by a ‘cult of respectability’ fostered by ultramontanes to encourage an educated middle class distanced from militant nationalism and socialism. Temperance contributed to Protestant ‘church unity’ on one hand and a polarisation of the evangelical and ultramontane stance on the other. For Protestant clerics like Laverack and Wisely it was a tool in the work of conversion obviating the “unworthy conduct of native professors” complained of by the Revd. S.S. Wilson, and countering charges of interference in Maltese culture by placing evangelists beyond reproach for “profligacy, licentiousness, and drunkenness”, or so Wolff thought. Teetotalism was more than mere Bible liberalism. It was a means of recapturing the excitement and more certainties of early 19th century church questions and missionary adventures, and towards discovery of new pastoral perspectives.⁽³⁵⁾

For Malta’s governors however it was an unacceptable facet of ‘cultural imperialism’ which jeopardised defence of the “fortress-colony”, hence the restriction of Protestant influence to informal channels. Temperance was not allowed to become a pressure group. No attempt was made to staunch the flow of imported wines and beers. This would have provoked the Maltese upper-classes and the expatriates alike. Teetotal ‘success’ was limited to moderation of drinking habits and of licensing, i.e. moderate beer-drinking as opposed to spirit-drinking, and careful licensing of modern urban Malta. This was unintentional and highly ironic. “Moderation” was the slogan not of temperance but of the British drink trade! Most islanders saw it as an odious

34. Socialist use of leisure organisations to gain support is discussed in D. Allen ‘Culture and the Scottish Labour Movement’, *Journal of the Scottish Labour History Society* 14, 1980. The defamations quoted here are noted in Koster, 73 and Frendo, 159 respectively. On anti-clerical thought compare French thoughts (eg. Blouet, op cit, p.136) with similar remarks on Church property and individual rights in Wilson, 144-7. Frendo, 149-59 attempts to link Dimech with Protestantism, The Mac Neill incident concerned use of the National Theatre for revival meetings at a time when the nationalists had been forbidden to use it to rehearse a new national anthem, see *Glasgow Herald* 30.5.1906, ‘John MacNeill’s Treatment in Malta’.

35. Quoted here Wilson 162, and Wolff 80.

bid for 'social control' which smacked of overweening Protestant pride, if not outright bigotry, self-advertisement, and personal and national 'empire-building'. Increasingly they rejected British culture, seeing it not as an avenue to opportunities for the Maltese, but as a device for the British and Anglophile to blatantly reserve all opportunities for themselves, using the private schools, the churches, and Protestant leisure to this end. Quasi-Masonic temperance societies like the Templars and the Rechabites were particularly suspect here. Toleration of this control of patronage endured only so long as there were rewards to be won in this way by the middle class and the 'labour aristocrats', while Anglicisation of Maltese unskilled workers had always been thwarted by poverty and an illiteracy which necessitated special English classes for Australia-bound emigrants even after 1918.

In the crescendo of violent protest after the 1890s Maltese slogans included 'Bread and Land', as in imperial Russia, rather than 'Drink and Land Reform' as in the Celtic fringes of Britain where temperance and the 'Nonconformists Conscience' thrived. Maltese people wanted economic opportunities and above all constitutional reform, not expensive British reform packages geared primarily to defence, and certainly not a patronising 'reformation of manners' - epitomised by Governor Grenfell's inane dog and flower shows. In this respect it was no accident that the rioters of 1919 attacked the symbols of the rival agents of bourgeois 'respectability', the Malta Union Club and the Casino Maltese. More successful in its outreach to the people was the new Catholic leisure framework. It however quickly dropped temperance: the latter, like tramways, was an imported 'fad' which did not catch on. After the 'roaring twenties' on the notion of the desirability of counter-attractive leisure remained, carrying within it the seeds of a secularisation of society more destructive by far to Catholicism than the Protestant reformers of the period 1815 - 1914.