

Under the present system, the young Maltese, up to the third standard, is taught his native tongue; after that, the parents may select either English or Italian as the second language for their children. By reason solely of the commercial supremacy of England, English has gradually ousted

its rivals, and last year 99.4 per cent. of the parents choose English. The local patriots—in this case a bureaucratic oligarchy backed by Italian priests—who were kicking against this natural evolution have no *locus standi*, and are simply "swearing at the equator."

COMMENTS.

EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING.

The April meeting of the New York Educational Council was held at the School of Pedagogy, Saturday, April 20. The subject for discussion was "Normal and Abnormal Methods."

Dr. A. C. McLachlan, of the Jamaica, Long Island, normal school, was the first speaker. He said in part: A defence of the normal schools seems at this time to be somewhat needed. There has been perhaps a little disillusionment in many quarters. Results of normal training are not so good as enthusiastic advocates had predicted. The teachers turned out do not prove to be of high class.

The general reply that must be to such accusations is that very few people can by any conceivable plan of training be made into first-class teachers. Fine scholars frequently lack disciplinary power: they are neurasthenic, perhaps, lacking in warm red corpuscles. Good disciplinarians often prove to be absolutely incapable of intellectual advancement beyond a certain point; and there are those who by nature are weak in discipline and weak in scholarship, yet who have marked natural ability for teaching, since whatever little they get they are promptly impel-

led to give. A person who combines scholarship disciplinary power, and teaching ability is rarely found. The normal school deserves reprobation if it turns out many very poor teachers, but it must of necessity graduate a great many who are only second class.

Now a very common criticism is directed against the teaching of methods in the normal schools. It is said that teachers are stuffed with methods to the injury of their personality. This is nonsense. A personality that is so tender it will be hurt by application of a few sound pedagogical principles is not worthy to survive.

Take any good pedagogical principle, as for instance, Proceed from the concrete to the abstract. By use of specific examples and illustrations that idea can be drilled into a class of a thousand people, everyone of whom will go into a school-room and employ it in a way consistent with her own personality. This means no "ensnaring of the personality in the meshes of method;" it is really a step in the direction of freedom.

The only danger lies in the half application of the principle. Proceed (from *procedo* to walk forward) does not mean to stand still in the region of the concrete. The entire sense of the principle must