

## VEHICLE OF TEACHING

### SIR RABINDRA NATH TAGORE'S ADDRESS NEW IDEAL

On the 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1915, Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore addressed a crowded meeting at the Rammohun Library Hall, the subject of his discourse being the Vehicle of Teaching. He began by a reference to the system of education they have been used to and remarked that they had something still wanting. They feel they were not in their own element as their own mother tongue was not the medium of education. In order to uplift the country, education must be spread more liberally and in order to render it popular it must be rendered cheaper and easy of attainment. The speaker could not conceive why the doors to higher education should be shut against those who were not so fortunate or opulent as to acquire proficiency in the English language. People should learn English as the language of the State and for hundreds of other reasons but at the sacred alter of learning, the vernacular knowing man was no criminal or a sudra. He knew as a teacher that there were students who were naturally wanting in language. They experienced the greatest difficulties in the higher classes and it was no wonder why cramming occupied the

place of real learning. He suggested that the Calcutta University in its teaching branch should have a vernacular section in which education should be given in Bengali. Let it be only a humble beginning and in the course of time it will force itself upon the University and claims its due position as a vehicle of teaching. There was no doubt about the difficulty of books in the vernacular but once the University recognised the vernacular as even an optional medium of education, books would be forthcoming. There was a time, Sir Rabindra remarked, when English educated Bengalis neglected their own mother tongue, but times had changed, they felt pride in their vernacular and he trusted his position would not be inopportune. With these remarks he placed the question before the country for serious consideration of the educational leaders.

An interesting discussion followed in which Dr. Brojendra Nath Seal, Rai Yatindra Nath Chowdhury, Maharajah of Susong and Mr. Surendra Nath Mallick took prominent part. □

**Note by the Editor-in-Chief, *Science and Culture*:** *This is to pay our respectful homage to the great poet Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore (the first Nobel Laureate in Asia and Africa in 1913 in Literature for his book Gitanjali) as the whole country is celebrating 163<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary. This address on Vehicle of Teaching is reproduced here only to mention that it is still relevant to the present Indian scenario.*

Full Report of Sir Rabindra Nath's paper is published in the Magh Number of the *Sabuj Patra*, 1916.