

(of whose reputation he had heard of much) did not allow him to have a favourable interview and took him for an *agitator*.

Babu Brijkishore has told Mr. Gandhi that somebody must have black-painted him to Commissioner beforehand.

This information has been given to me in order (I believe) that it may reach Commissioner's ears. I have been told that (though Mr. Gandhi is busy with enquiries in the interior of the Bettiah subdivision) he will be glad to come down here for an hour as soon as he gets an indication that Commissioner will be glad to receive him.

His address for this week will be C/o S.D.O., Bettiah.

S.N. SINGH,
23 4-1917.

[No. 46B.]

*Note, dated 23 April, 1917, from S.N. Singh, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner, Tirhut Division*¹.

I have seen three of the gentlemen who are helping or who have invited Mr. Gandhi.

Everything was pre-arranged. Rs. 10,000 or more was collected in Motihari and the interior of Champaran. The matter was discussed before the Congress Committee at Lucknow last year, but it was lying dormant because Messrs. Madan Mohan Malviya and M. K. Gandhi had no time to come. In March last, while the All-India Congress Committee was sitting in Calcutta and most of the Behar-men such as Messrs. Haq, Sinha, and Brijkishore Prasad were there, Rajkumar Shukla of Champaran went there and narrated the (alleged) grievances of the tenants and Mr. Gandhi undertook to come alone as Malviya was busy with other work. Before leaving Calcutta, Mr. Gandhi had a very long interview with Mr. Gourlay who has promised to talk over matters again with him when he finishes his enquiry.

It is said that the Viceroy's Private Secretary has just written to assure Mr. Gandhi that he will have no more trouble in his mission.

This enquiry will take about 6 months. Mr. Gandhi may go away from Champaran now and there leaving his assistants in charge. His assistants are:—

- (i) Babu Brijkishore Prasad,
- (ii) Babu Rajendra Prasad,

¹ Tirhut Commissioner's Confidential File of 1917 (Mr. Gandhi's Enquiry I).

- (iii) Babu Ramnavami Prasad,
- (iv) Babu Dharni Dhar Prasad,
- (v) Babu Ramanugraha Narayan Sinha, all pleaders who have decided to give up their practice for six months ; other pleaders go now and then to assist.

Messrs. Polak and Andrews also offered their services for six months but Mr. Gandhi has told them they will not be required.

They are recording the statements of witnesses and have given notice to the planters to let them see their own evidence if they please. It is said that two planters have seen Mr. Gandhi.

It is also said that Mr. K.M. Leslie will help Mr. Gandhi.

Mr. Gandhi proposes to place his report after making the enquiry before Lord Chelmsford personally.

S.N. SINGH.

[No. 46-C.]

*Note, dated 24 April, 1917, from S.N. Singh, Personal Assistant to the Commissioner, Tirhut Division, to the Commissioner.*¹

COMMISSIONER,

In my note of yesterday's date re (regarding) Mr. Gandhi, I have said that the All-India Congress Committee met in Calcutta "in March last or towards the end of March". This is a mistake as the Committee met in April during the Easter Holidays. I should, therefore, request that "during Easter holidays last" may be substituted for "in March last", etc., in the note in the Copy of my note on your file and if necessary the C.S. may be asked to do the same or a correct copy may be sent to him.

S.N. SINGH.

[No. 46-D.]

Letter No 271-P.M., dated 24 April, 1917, from the Commissioner, Tirhut Division, to H. Mc Pherson, Chief Secretary to Government of Bihar and Orissa, Ranchi ².

MY DEAR MCPHERSON,

Your D.-O. No. 55-C.T. of the 20th April regarding Gandhi's enquiry. I have expressed regret for embarrassing Government in a previous letter, and will not therefore revert to the subject.

¹ Tirhut Commissioner's Confidential File of 1917 (Mr. Gandhi's Enquiry I).

² *Ibid*