



*Louis Fischer (1896-1970) was born in Philadelphia. He served as a volunteer in the British Army between 1918 and 1920. Fischer made a career as a journalist and wrote for The New York Times, The Saturday Review and for European and Asian publications. He was also a member of the faculty at Princeton University. The following is an excerpt from his book - The Life of Mahatma Gandhi. The book has been reviewed as one of the best books ever written on Gandhi by Times Educational supplement.*

Notice these expressions in the text. Infer their meaning from the context.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> urge the departure | <input type="checkbox"/> harbour a man like me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conflict of duties | <input type="checkbox"/> seek a prop           |

When I first visited Gandhi in 1942 at his ashram in Sevagram, in central India, he said, "I will tell you how it happened that I decided to urge the departure of the British. It was in 1917."

जब मैंने पहली बार, 1942 में गांधी जी से उनके महा आश्रम में मुंबईवास की ती-उन्नीस वारा, "मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह किस प्रकार हुआ कि मैंने अंग्रेजों के विप्लव को उन्नीसने का आह्वान किया। यह सन् 1917 की बात है।"

He had gone to the December 1916 annual convention of the Indian National Congress party in Lucknow. There were 2,301 delegates and many visitors. During the proceedings, Gandhi recounted, "a peasant came up to me looking like any other peasant in India, poor and emaciated, and said, 'I am Rajkumar Shukla. I am from Champaran, and I want you to come to my district.'" Gandhi had never heard of the place. It was in the foothills of the towering Himalayas, near the kingdom of Nepal.

वे दिसम्बर 1916 में भारतीय राष्ट्रीय कांग्रेस पार्टी के वार्षिक अधिवेशन में भाग लेने गए थे। वहाँ 2,301 प्रतिनिधि व अनेक आगन्तुक थे। अन्नीस आने की क्षणिक कार्रवाई करते हुए गांधी जी ने यह कहने शुरू किया, "एक किसान, भारत के अन्य किसानों की तरह दिखता हुआ, शरीर और दुर्बल, मेरे पास आया और कहने लगा, 'मैं राजकुमार शुक्ला हूँ। मैं चम्पारन से आया हूँ और मैं चाहता हूँ कि आप मेरे जिले में आएं।' गांधी जी ने कभी इस स्थान के बारे में नहीं सुना था। यह समनपुरी विभाग की पहाड़ियों में, नेपाल राज्य के किनारे था।"

Under an ancient arrangement, the Champaran peasants were sharecroppers. Rajkumar Shukla was one of them. He was illiterate but resolute. He had come to the Congress session to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Bihar, and somebody had probably said, "Speak to Gandhi".

एक प्राचीन व्यवस्था के अनुसार, चम्पारन के किसान साझा-कृषक किसान थे। राजकुमार शुक्ला उनमें से एक थे। वह अक्षरिण था किन्तु दृढ़-निश्चयी था। वह वहाँ कांग्रेस सत्र में बिहार में जमींदारी प्रथा के अत्याचार की शिकायत करने के लिए आया था, और किसी ने आह्वान करने कहा था, "गांधी जी से बात करो।"

Gandhi told Shukla he had an appointment in Cawnpore and was also committed to go to other parts of India. Shukla accompanied him everywhere. Then Gandhi returned to his ashram near Ahmedabad. Shukla followed him to the ashram. For weeks he never left Gandhi's side.

"Fix a date," he begged.

Impressed by the sharecropper's tenacity and story Gandhi said, "I have to be in Calcutta on such-and-such a date. Come and meet me and take me from there".

गांधी जी ने शुक्ला को बताया कि उन्हें कानपुर में एक मुलाकात करनी थी और आतुरता से अन्य जगहों में जाने के लिए भी वे तैयार रहेंगे। शुक्ला उनके साथ ही स्थान पर रहा। तब गांधी जी अहमदाबाद के आश्रम अपने आश्रम में वापस लौट आए। शुक्ला ने उनका आश्रम तक अनुसरण किया। कई सप्ताह तक उसने गांधी जी का पीछा नहीं छोड़ा।

"एक तिथि निर्धारित कीजिए," वह निवेदन किया।

उस भूमिदाता कृषक की दृढ़निश्चय और कहानी से दृष्टान्तित होकर गांधी जी ने कहा, "मैं कलकत्ता चला-जाना तारीख को आउँगा। तुम आना और मुझे मिलना और मुझे वहीं से लेना।"

Months passed. Shukla was sitting on his haunches at the appointed spot in Calcutta when Gandhi arrived; he waited till Gandhi was free. Then the two of them boarded a train for the city of Patna in Bihar. There Shukla led him to the house of a lawyer named Rajendra Prasad who later became President of the Congress party and of India. Rajendra Prasad was

...the judge said that he would not deliver the judgment for several weeks...

When the court resumed, the judge said he would not deliver the judgment for several weeks...


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Several days later, Gandhi remained a prisoner...  
Gandhi and his lawyers now proceeded to conduct a five-day inquiry into the government of the farmers...  
In June, Gandhi was summoned to the Governor's court...  
Gandhi remained in Champaran for an initial uninterrupted period of seven months...  
The official inquiry assembled a crushing mountain of evidence against the big planters...  
They thought he would demand repayment in full of the money which they had illegally and deceitfully extorted from the sharecroppers...  
This settlement was adopted unanimously by the commission. Gandhi explained amount of the refund was less important than the fact that the landlords had been obliged to surrender part of the money and, with it, part of their prestige.



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- WORD MEANINGS : Urge - drive forward (2098); Convention - assembly (2098); Delegate - representative (2098); Proceeding - transaction (2098); Emaciated - lean (2098); Sharecropper - one who grows crops in exchange (2098); Resolute - bold (2098); Committed - to perpetrate crime (2098); Accompanied - to attend (2098); Tenacity - firmness (2098); Haunches - hips (2098); Yeoman - small land owner (2098); Postered - to amuse (2098); Indign - a kind of dye (2098); Importing - to give message (2098); Harbour - shelter of ships (2098); Localities - places (2098); Advent - arrival (2098); Convoyance - act of carrying (2098); Clutch - to hold (2098); Crush - to subdue (2098); Stricken - impress (2098); Tenants - farmers (2098); Compell - to force anyone (2098); Thereupon - soon after (2098); Compensation - refund (2098); Irticome - tire some (2098); Resisted - to oppose (2098); Hully - noisy fellow (2098); Maltreated - to treat badly (2098); Compassion - result (2098); Summons - sent for (2098); Influential - one who influences (2098); Complied - to accend, agree (2098); Spontaneous - unadvised (2098); Demonstration - proof, showing (2098); Regulate - to control (2098); Hitherto - till now (2098); Baffled - to fail (2098); Apparently - really (2098); Plead - to lag (2098); Conflict - to fight (2098); Render - to deliver up (2098); Disregard - disrespect (2098); Consistence - sense of right or wrong (2098); Pronounce - deliver judgment (2098); Furnish - to provide (2098); Prominent - distinguished (2098); Conferred - to consult (2098); Upshot - final result (2098); Communications - act of imparting (2098); Province - state (2098); Triumph - to conquer (2098); Disobedience - to not obey (2098); Grievance - hardship (2098); Deposition - (2098); Throbbled - (2098); Vehement - eager (2098); Protracted - prolonged (2098)



## Indigo

Indigo is a story of some poor peasants struggling for justice and equality, set in 1916 Champaran. The story represents how Mahatma Gandhi steps up to help them and bring them justice. Mahatma Gandhi struggles unexpectedly and brings the poor farmer back to the normal state rather than being under the cruel clutches of Englishmen and landlords. The story says that in Champaran the chief crop was Indigo and the peasants were forced to cultivate the crop. Landlords used to take all most of the crop and the peasants had to remain helpless. This had been a process from a long time. As a result the poor farmers were aloof from the basic facilities. They were tortured by the Englishmen and landlords. Thus, one of the peasants, Roy Kumar Shukla met Mahatma Gandhi and explained the entire pathos of the peasants. Mahatma Gandhi assured him to help. Gandhi reached there

with his simple - cut look. At first the Englishmen and the rich land-lords ignored this man but slowly and gradually they recognised Gandhi's inner power hidden within his simple cloths. People of Champaran and outsiders started helping him by raising voice against the Britishers. They included themselves in the protest march done by Gandhi. All though the British government did several efforts to punish Mahatma Gandhi but could not get success.

Finally Mahatma Gandhi was able to win the battle against the Britishers and landlords. They accepted the proposal of Gandhi. As a result the peasants got justice, regarding the share of crop. They got equal opportunity in the sense of cultivation and after crop. Mahatma Gandhi not only made them self sufficient but self confident as well. This was the time when everybody felt the power of Mahatma Gandhi.