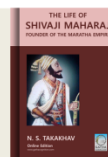




# THE LIFE OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ

FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

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## Chapter 4

# The Education of Shivaji

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A great career is determined by favorable circumstances for the growth of genius. It is also shaped in a great measure by a good education. Both these influences played a great part in moulding the mind and character of Shivaji. The first ten years of his life were spent in his mother's company, an influence of most vital character on the life of a man. It is the age when the mind is most tender and plastic, and the impressions then formed are the very foundation of life. The months and years as they roll on in their course only serve to render these early impressions more deep and vivid, their full development only requiring a train of favorable circumstances and events. Whether these early influences are to be productive of good or evil depends mainly on the character of the father and the mother, more especially on the latter. The virtues and disposition of the mother are strained and filtered into the character of her child, and the goodness or evil of the one depends on that of the other. We can see the foundation of Shivaji's greatness in the circumstances in which he was born. When the future hero was yet in the womb, Jijabai lived through a time of great stress and revolution in the state, and in that revolution her husband and herself played a conspicuous part. Living in the midst of constant alarms, with her husband, once the mainstay of the Nizamshahi state, in flight and exile, and the ungrateful Nizamshahi sultan blindly in league with her husband's and his own enemies, her own scorn and disdain of the puny Mahomedan powers, her contempt of their pusillanimity

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and grovelling incapacity and her indignation at their impotent cruelty and barbarities were at that most delicate period of psychical excitement reflected and transfused into the mind of the future hero. Here then is some explanation of that mysterious and all absorbing anti-Mahomedan passion which possessed Shivaji from his earliest years. Nor was this all. The first ten years of Shivaji's life were passed in the midst of constant alarm and fear of treachery, and naturally enkindled a relentless hatred against those – the Mahomedan powers – who were the authors of these atrocities. Add to this Jijabai's proud and independent spirit, her personal ambition and self-reliance, her strong intellect and penetration. With these intense predisposing causes and influences constantly at play, is it a wonder that the smouldering discontent in Shivaji's breast burst into a flame in the form of an uncompromising anti-Mahomedan passion?

It follows then that Jijabai was the most powerful, influence on the youthful genius of Shivaji. Jijabai was born of a family that had once wielded the sceptre at Devgiri, the same that acquired the name of Dowlatabad on the fall of its Jadhav (Yadav) sovereigns. The once mighty family had fallen upon evil times. It had to serve its Mahomedan lords in those very scenes which had witnessed its power and grandeur. The children of the Jadhav family were not the sort of men to forget its noble past and the grandeur of its traditions, least of all Jijabai, a woman of a haughty and indomitable spirit. The treacherous murder of her father and brother by the vindictive Nizamshahi sultan served to add fuel to the flame of her hatred of Mahomedan rule. Nor was she likely to forget that it was the Mahomedans that had quenched the light of the Sesodia Bhonsle family. Later on for a time by his brilliant genius and valour, her husband Shahaji endeavoured to revive a Hindu sovereignty from the wreck of the Mahomedan state of Ahmednagar, but with all his valour and resources, he was forced to yield to overwhelming odds and remain content as an honoured vassal and feudatory of the Bijapur state. And how nearly had he succeeded! With the puppet of a Nizamshahi prince in his grasp, Shahaji had destroyed one Mogul host after another and stirred up the living remembrances of a not quite forgotten past in the depths of his loyal wife's heart. But inexorable fortune had stood in the way of his ultimate success, and the chagrin and disappointment occasioned by the failure was the crown of all her sorrows. And then the family tradition to which Maloji had given currency, – that the House of Bhonsle would produce a world-compelling hero – ever flashed across her mind, – a prophecy which Shahaji's temporary success had all but verified. Despite her crushing disappointment and suffering, this tradition kept all her passions and aspirations awake. She believed in it with the faith of a woman, with a religious heart, and she looked forward wistfully to its accomplishment.

What though Shahaji had at last failed and seceded to the Mahomedan dynasty of Bijapur? Had not his temporary success proved that the defeat of the Mahomedans was no mirage, no idle phantom flitting before a fevered mind, but a tangible thing within the range of practical accomplishment? This was the subject to which she constantly reoccurred in her conversation with her son. She poured forth into his eager ears the story of the fall from royal power of both the Jadhav and Bhonsle Houses and pictured to him their former greatness, with the inevitable contrast of the inglorious present that could not but obtrude itself upon his sensitive mind. Again by repeated recitals of the story of Shahaji's heroic achievements, she sought to enkindle in his heart the same noble ambition and love of heroic enterprise. In her daily discourses she ever laid stress on the inherent degradation, however great the worldly splendours, of service to an alien Mahomedan power, the steps of whose rise had been marked by the overthrow of many a Hindu sovereignty and whose progress was attended with the slaughter of kine, the pollution of temples and shrines and the violation of the Brahmans, – cruelty and treachery in all forms and guises. To these were added readings from the *puranas* and the sacred texts, the main theme of which is the struggle of virtue and the ultimate triumph of good over evil. Shivaji from his earliest infancy developed a strong taste for these readings, listening with rapt attention to the recitals. It was these readings which infused in him an overpowering sense of piety, religious zeal, and enthusiasm. His eyes kindled and his breast throbbed with religious fervour as he listened to the tales of chivalry and self-sacrifice from the Ramayan and the Mahabharat and he followed every tone and undulation of his mother's voice, as she related the inspiring legends. It was as if she had said in so many words: "Go thou and do likewise". The seed was not cast upon rocky soil, for, from the time he began to understand things, these repeated counsels and exhortations began to take root, and by imperceptible degrees, a strong passion was kindled in his breast to emulate not only his father's exploits, but the epic chivalry of the puranas.

By nature Shivaji was a man of great intellectual strength and alertness. His powers both of understanding and memory were of a high order. Jijabai was a woman of great earnestness and courage, and the instinct for honour and esteem was the great motive force in all her actions. By daily contact and conversation with his mother, Shivaji had assimilated these noble virtues in all their perfection. She watched over him with all her maternal solicitude and was careful to see that he followed the best example, moved in good company and kept away from the snares and blandishments of vice in all its forms. From early boyhood, she made provision for his military education. Thus the highest impulses of life and human character were evolved in Shivaji's heart by his close contact with this noble matron, – bravery, enterprise, courage,

love of truth and religious fervor. But more important than all the rest, there was one impulse that came to him from his mother, – an impulse upon which all his greatness was founded, and which will for ever obtain for him a niche in the temple of fame and an honoured place in the world's great roll of patriots – his unquenchable thirst for liberty. He never faltered in his opinion of the intrinsic unworthiness of the highest glory and honour that a servile allegiance to a Mahomedan prince could bring to a man, that indifference and ingratitude were the invariable return for the most loyal and devoted service to the sultan, and that an alien despotism like that of the Mahomedan states stood for all that was mean, vindictive and tyrannical. Of this the days of his own childhood had given him sufficient proof. Personal experience combined with maternal exhortation to inflame him with a passion for freedom. In boyhood already he had made up his mind to defy foreign domination even if it should cost him his life. It is well known how Dadaji Kondadev endeavoured to turn him aside from his determined course, but we find no account in any of the extant chronicles of any attempt to dissuade him on the part of Jijabai. This very circumstance strengthens the view that it was Jijabai herself who was primarily instrumental in inspiring Shivaji with the enthusiasm and enterprise of revolting from the domination of Islam and unfurling the standard of Maratha liberty. That Jijabai endeavored at Bijapur to persuade Shivaji to suppress his anti-Mahomedan sentiments does not in any manner militate against this conclusion, nor need her conduct upon that occasion be taken to stand as an indication of her real opinion upon this subject. As a Hindu wife, to whom devotion and obedience to the husband is the highest dower, she had to carry out the instructions of her husband and become his mouth-piece, whatever her feelings on the subject might be. In short, it was due to the rare combination of a mother, who with her noble convictions and ideals could inspire and dominate her son's future, and of a son, who while allowing himself to be stirred to the noblest moods and passions could lead and impress the world with the resources of his master mind, that the record of a career was made possible, by which the Hindu population of peninsular India was liberated from the yoke of Islam.

In 1637 Dadaji Kondadev was entrusted with the administration of the jaghir lands by Shahaji, and the charge of young Shivaji's education was also made over to him. From this time forth, therefore, the burden of Shivaji's education fell upon Dadaji, and his mother's influence became secondary. This does not of course mean that Jijabai ceased altogether to look after the upbringing of her son. He was all in all to her, the prop of all her hopes and ambitions. The mysterious instincts of the maternal heart had enabled her to foresee his future greatness. In her impassioned moods, she often thought with ecstasy that Shivaji might be just the man to whom the restoration of the

Jadhav and Bhonsle sovereignties had been reserved by fate, the hero whom the divine prophecy current in the family had ever been beckoning on to the task of national emancipation. She, therefore, continued to watch over him in spirit, with all the zeal of maternal solicitude. It was left, however, to Dadaji to initiate Shivaji in those arts and sciences and that practical knowledge which was essential to a person in his position.

It will not be out of place to give a brief account of the great man to whom the education of Shivaji was thus confided. It is not known at what period Dadaji Kondadev entered into Shahaji's service. Shahaji was early satisfied with his tact, abilities and uprightness and appointed him to the management of his jahgir estates at Poona, Supa, Baramati, Indapur and the Maval tracts in Maharashtra. These districts he administered with great efficiency. The long wars of the Moguls and the Deccan Mahomedans had reduced these parts to mere wildernesses. To this were added the horrors of a most terrible famine in the year 1630.<sup>1</sup> Dadaji re-populated these districts and reclaimed them for cultivation by holding forth the inducement of immunity from the land-tax for a succession of years. There was at once an influx of cultivators from the adjoining districts, and the lands in a short time had changed their forlorn aspect. The people were contented and happy. Bumper crops swelled the granaries. Dadaji then instituted a survey and classification of the land and introduced the revenue system of Malik Ambar, the essence of which was that the revenue dues were to be based on the ascertained crops of the year. This gave a great stimulus to agriculture. The settlements made with the agriculturists gave them permanent proprietary rights subject to the payment of revenue, and a large residue of the income after the deduction of revenue still remained for the enjoyment of the prosperous peasantry.

The district of Maval was inhabited by a poverty-stricken people called the Mavalis. Even by toiling day and night these semi-civilized people found it difficult to earn enough to provide food and clothing. Dadaji saw the fidelity and industrious habits of these people and assiduously set to work to ameliorate their condition. He encouraged them to till their rocky and barren soil by granting remissions of revenue taxes. Many of them he enlisted in his service as peons or soldiers and engaged them in the collection of revenue. They were satisfied with the most meagre pay, one or two rupees a month, and a bushel or two of the coarsest millet, such as *nachni* or *vari*. It was a mountainous country infested by wild animals. To put an end to the mischief they caused from year to year, Dadaji maintained a corps of Mavali javelin-

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1. This terrible famine is referred to in Jedhe's Chronology (page 178) and in the Padishahnamah of Abdul Hamid.

men and gave them a reward for each tiger or wolf that was slain. Many wild beasts were exterminated in this way, and the country became more settled.

The country was also infested with brigands. Dadaji end endeavoured to minimise the evil by establishing watches and a sort of rude police.<sup>2</sup> He encouraged the plantation of fruit-trees and orchards. Groves of mango and other trees grew on all sides. He kept the fortresses under Shahaji in an excellent state of repair, installed suitable garrisons in each of them, and recruited a small army of Maval is for general defence. In this way Dadaji administered the jahgir and considerably augmented its income. All the balance, that accrued to Shahaji's credit after payment of the different charges, such as salaries of peons and soldiers, clerks and executive officers and other incidental expenses, was faithfully remitted to Shahaji's headquarters. An anecdote illustrating Dadaji's extraordinary sense of duty and uprightness has been recorded by the Maratha chroniclers. It is said that while Dadaji was going one day in the company of Shivaji through one of Shahaji's orchards he happened quite casually to pluck off a mango from its stem. Instantly it occurred to his mind that what he had done was a misdemeanour, and he commanded his attendants to mutilate the hand with which he had committed the offence. Shivaji replied that his reasoning was not correct, that he had cultivated the park and was its master. On hearing this reply he shortened one of the sleeves of his robe and to the time of his death he wore a shortened sleeve<sup>3</sup>.

Dadaji was then a man of extraordinary integrity; and devotion to his master was the ruling passion of his life. He was already advanced in age and experience when Shaliaji nominated him to the jahgir. He was very pure in his morals and pious in the observances of his religion. It was an article of faith with him that his personal interests and prosperity were identical with those of his master. It was natural that Shahaji felt not the slightest misgivings in his heart in giving over his son to the tutelage of such a man, who united with a most exalted sense of righteousness a complete devotion to his master's person and interests. Needless to say that Dadaji acquitted himself of the trust beyond the most sanguine expectations of his master.

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2. Vide Chitnis, page 29 and the Tarikh-i-Shivaji (page 9 (a)).

3. The Rairi bakhar gives a slightly different version of the story, by making the mango the property of a peasant cultivator. Shahaji is reported to have heard of the incident and marked his sense of appreciation of Dadaji's integrity by a present of 700 pagodas and urged him to wear his sleeves as usual. The version followed in the text is that of Chitnis (P. 29).

He spared no pains to see that Shivaji and Jijabai should labour under no privation. He thought that a warrior's son should have the best military education obtainable, and provided every facility towards this object. He made him go through a regular system of drill and physical discipline. Jijabai had laid the foundation of this discipline. Dadaji carried it forward with great zeal. Besides physical culture Dadaji arranged for a course of intellectual discipline<sup>4</sup>. This too had been anticipated by Jijabai and was promoted with greater zeal by Dadaji, on the mother and son coming to reside at Poona. Shivaji made considerable progress in Urdu and Persian and had made a beginning in the elements of the Sanskrit language<sup>5</sup>. It is said that certain devotional odes composed by Shivaji contain a number of Urdu words. Dadaji's religious temperament served to foster Shivaji's own instincts for piety. He got many opportunities to listen to religious lectures and rhapsodies from the puranas. His natural enthusiasm for religion was stimulated by Dadaji's example.

The seed of all this had already been sown by Jijabai. But there was another department in which Dadaji was a past master, and that was finance. He knew the art of keeping the peasantry happy while doubling and trebling the revenue. He had the tact and courtesy to extract the best work from his servants without wounding their feelings. He excelled as a judge, and his decisions were conclusive and impartial. He took a paternal interest in the welfare of the people. Shivaji studied with close and minute observation these arts of administration under Dadaji. Shivaji's faculty of observation was very early developed. His questions were at times very trying even to the experts in the various subjects. He paid to Dadaji the honour due to his position and experience and made it a point to acquire from him his varied knowledge of affairs. Now there were some affairs which Dadaji used to transact without Shivaji's knowledge. Shivaji took this to heart and one day expressed himself rather frankly upon this subject. "What though I am young?" said he, "Your

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4. Vide Chitnis's *bakhar* (page 28). While it may be admitted that the account in the *Shivdigvijaya* is too extravagant for credence, it is not too much to assume that if the warrior class of the time of the puranas could successfully unite an all round intellectual culture with the military craft, a boy brought up with such an absorbing admiration of the puranic lore might have received a fairly good literary education.

5. Vide Mr. Rajwade's work in Marathi, entitled "Materials for the history of the Maratha", Vol. IV, page 74. The same author in a learned article on the subject of Shivaji's literary education contributed to the Marathi Magazine, "Saraswati Mandir" (Vol. 5, No. 5), has completely exploded Grant Duff's hypothesis of Shivaji's illiteracy. Most of the Maratha mobility contemporaneous with Shivaji, as also those who preceded or followed him in point of time, knew the simple arts of reading and writing. This is the contention of Mr. Rajwade, and the present author has no hesitation in endorsing that opinion.

duty it is to acquaint me with all affairs, that I may acquire experience under your guidance. For are you not to me in the position of a father? How could I otherwise learn wisdom? ” Dadaji admired this boyish curiosity and consulted him thereafter upon all affairs. Young Shivaji discussed the pros and cons of every question with the gravity of an elder. Dadaji trained him to give decisions in disputes, where the most complicated issues were involved. With his wonderful grasp and penetration the most complex problem could never elude his judgment, and he could use these precedents in dealing with similar questions that recurred from time to time. It was thus under the kind guidance of Dadaji that Shivaji mastered the various subjects of finance, agriculture, the discipline of his infantry and cavalry, and supervision over the various grades of servants in his service. This early knowledge and experience, it is needless to say, was of immense service to him in the near future.

But there was one subject upon which there was the greatest divergence of opinion between Dadaji and Shivaji, and that was the attitude of Shivaji towards the Mahomedan rulers. The hatred of Islam which he had almost literally sucked in with his mother’s milk, and his ambitious plans of the restoration of a Hindu sovereignty were never approved of by Dadaji. Dadaji was not a man who could even dream of the great ambitions of his ward. He never possessed that wide outlook of vision. His was a philosophy of simple contentment. He thought, and from the ordinary stand-point of human prudence rightly thought, that his duty was in the first place to behave with submission and humility towards that power, owing to whose favour and benevolence, his master enjoyed his jahgir, and in the second place to protect and administer the jahgir to the highest advantage of his master. To incur the wrath of the Mahomedan rulers-were it only by seeking to expand the jahgir-was too audacious an enterprise for the placid mind of Dadaji to think of. Soon after the return of Shivaji and Jijabai from Bijapur in the company of Dadaji Kondadev, Shivaji communicated his ambitious plans to the trusty confidante of his father. “I do not consider it proper,” said Shivaji, “to live as an underling of the Mahomedans on the wealth my father has earned in their service. I am resolved to carve out my fortune with my own right hand. What good is it to have been born in the Bhonsle family, if I add no new honors to the family escutcheon. The worth of a manly life, what is it to be found in, if not in a life of toil? Not surely in fortune’s smiles? Do you not see how the Mahomedan domination has crushed the life out of Hindu society and religion? Kina and Brahmans, gods and shrines have been polluted and desecrated in all the land, and no champion has sprung forth from the groaning soil. I have pondered deep over this subject and have resolved to devote my life to this object of reviving our independence and our religion. I cannot recall the past; but the future is in my hands.” Dadaji was astonished at

the proposal and tried to divert his mind from the project. “How impossible”, he exclaimed, “is the task you speak of and how dreadful! The whole land lies panting under the oppression of Islam. All forts and positions of strategic value are commanded by them. Their armies man the garrisons. Enough for you to have and keep what your father has wrested from the general wreck. Try to think of aggrandising your fortunes and that moment you will be declared a public enemy, and you will involve your father in your ruin. Just think of your father and his fiery valour! Even he had to bend before the Mahomedans.”

Later on when Shivaji began to realize his plans of forming an independent Hindu state and in pursuance of the same to make expeditions against the Bijapur territory, Dadaji was filled with consternation. He called Shivaji and began to expostulate with him in the most vehement terms. “You have embarked,” he said to Shivaji, “on a most hazardous enterprise, which will one day bring you and your jahgir to ruin. On the four sides of the continent, the great Mahomedan sovereignties are holding undisputed sway, each in the plenitude of its power and glory. What are you and your puny resources before their power? Don’t you see that you are only jeopardising your father’s position? He is there in the midst of the enemy, in the power of the sultan. For your rash acts the sultan is sure to retaliate on your father. You will be evicted from your jahgir and will be a bye-word in the land. It is to your own interest to maintain loyal relations with the Adilshahi dynasty, if indeed you value your estates.” This chilling advice was repeated from time to time. Shivaji, as was his wont, always listened in calm silence, but to the eternal good fortune of all Maharashtrians, he did not allow himself in the least to be swerved from his glorious enterprise.

It is said that when Dadaji saw how ineffective all his counsels to Shivaji upon this one subject were, the upright man was filled with dismay, not knowing what to do. Shivaji’s conduct preyed upon his heart, and the good man could only think of the consequences with a shudder. The boy had been confided to his care, to be brought up as a youth of character and noble promise. But he had conceived this wayward passion and lent countenance to lawless acts. The excesses of the son were bound to recoil upon the innocent head of the father. And had not Shahaji the right to ask of him how he, of whom he had expected so much, had allowed his son to run wild, governed by a frenzied passion for liberty? Yes, the blame would rightly fall on him, and

not all his past services would avail to atone for it. With such remorseful thoughts the good man sickened and slowly pined away.<sup>6</sup>

Dadaji indeed did the only thing he could do under the circumstances, to shield himself from blame, and that was to inform Shahaji of the strange passion for liberty now awakened in Shivaji's breast, warning him to take the proper steps to suppress it in time. Shahaji did not take particular notice of the warning and ordered no change whatever in Shivaji's discipline or mode of living. The truth is that Shahaji knew the true state of affairs at Bijapur better than any man of his time, and he was himself secretly preparing for the inauguration of an independent sovereignty, of which more will be said at its appropriate place. The conclusion, therefore, which thrusts itself inevitably upon our minds is that the glorious thoughts of founding a new Hindu dynasty were not implanted in Shivaji's mind by Dadaji Kondadev, who on the other hand laboured hard to counteract them; and indeed had Dadaji to deal with a common man without insight, the current of those thoughts would have been stopped for ever. The real impulse then came from Jijabai. How true is it that one sweet and loving word from the lips of a mother makes a deeper impression on the heart than ten thousand speeches!

Filled with the ambition to do great deeds, Shivaji did not hearken to Dadaji's advice. But this disobedience only affected his master passion. In other regards nobody could be more docile. Shivaji honoured him like a father, did whatever he commanded him and always remembered in his actions that Dadaji was the trusted friend of Shahaji. Dadaji sought to wean Shivaji from his violent enterprise by occupying his mind with other subjects. He took him round the different jahgir villages, explaining the revenue systems and the forms of administration. He entrusted many of his duties to Shivaji who executed them with great skill and enthusiasm. But this did not divert his mind from his cherished schemes. It only brought him into immediate contact with the revenue officers, administrators and other persons of rank within the limits of the jahgir and created in him a greater sense of confidence for administrative work.

Dadaji's spirit groaned in him to see that nothing could stop or stem Shivaji's violent ambition. He was agitated with a devouring anxiety, which shortly affected his health. Jijabai and Shivaji attended him with assiduity. Shivaji was always by his bed-side. They tried all remedies that were suggested to them. But medicine and attendance notwithstanding Dadaji kept

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6. In the bakhar, called the Bakhar of the Marathi Swarajya (Chronicle of the Maratha Empire) Dadaji is represented to have resorted to poison and committed suicide, being unable to withstand this consuming anxiety. The *Tarikh-i-Shivaji* tells the same story.

steadily sinking. When the moment of death was at hand, Dadaji confided the keys of the treasury to Shivaji and described the management of the hill-forts, the districts and the army, exhorting him to deal kindly with the officers, and expatiating on the merits of every individual. He also had the clerks and officers brought into his presence and with his dying voice exhorted them to serve Shahaji with loyalty and devotion, and making them clasp young Shivaji's hand he adjured them to look upon him as their master. Having settled these public duties, he is said to have exhorted Shivaji to look after his family and dependents and to have expressed a cordial wish for his happiness and glory and the fulfilment of his noble vow to inaugurate a new state, for the protection of cows and Brahmans and the higher glory of his religion. With these words on his lips, the loyal Dadaji Kondadev expired. He was seventy years old at his death.

We have so far described two sources of Shivaji's education, the one being Jijabai and the other Dadaji Kondadev. But there was a third source, and that was Shahaji himself. True, the period of the operation of this educative force was brief, but, brief as it was, it was of the highest value in its effect upon Shivaji's career. In his short sojourn at Bijapur Shivaji had endless opportunities to watch the working of the various departments of the Bijapur government, the methods of administration, the etiquette of the court and the manners and fashions of the nobility. Shahaji commanded great influence at the Bijapur court and was on terms of cordiality with many of the leading Mahomedan and Maratha nobles, and Shivaji, instead of idling his time like the sons of the other nobles, turned these opportunities to good account. He frequently visited and made constant observation of the cantonments, the war-horses, the artillery parks and the batteries, and, constantly making inquiries of expert officers, he resolved his doubts and registered all vital information upon the tablets of his memory. Shahaji himself was gratified at his son's desire to learn and indulged him in these pursuits. Shahaji had often his son beside him when arguing subtle questions of war or diplomacy. He had him in his company when attending the durbar, where his remarkable faculties of comprehension and observation found active exercise. All this produced two general effects: first, by being always in the company of his father, he got much useful information of vital influence upon his subsequent career; and secondly, his disgust of Mahomedan rule was accentuated and embittered by all he had witnessed, and became the master passion of his life.

Such was the discipline by which a great career was moulded and made possible. It was more or less a moral and an administrative discipline. As to whether, in addition to this, he made a systematic study of any great authors or not, we have no information in the authentic chronicles. The account in the

chronicle called the Shivdigvijaya is very much exaggerated and is not supported by any other sources of, information. From the praises of Shivaji by such saintly poets as Vaman, Tukaram and Ramdas, among his contemporaries, it might be inferred that he had a fair acquaintance with books. But it is plain that the biographers of Shivaji, being more or less men of action, set little store by bookish, knowledge and scarcely, if ever, refer to it. And the life of this great man has to convey, among others, this lesson that practical wisdom is often times a more efficient factor of success than literary knowledge.

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