



THE LIFE OF SHIVAJI MAHARAJ FOUNDER OF THE MARATHA EMPIRE

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Chapter 29

With Saint and Seer

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The story that we have hitherto traced of this noble career is found chequered with many an incident of marvellous heroism, of romantic enterprise, of generous magnanimity, and of filial affection. It remains now to present succinctly in a brief review a few illustrations of the intense piety and spiritual experiences of the great king.

The religious enthusiasm and fervour which characterized the king in all his life had their germ in the associations of his earliest childhood. Brought up under the watchful eye of a loving and pious mother, he had imbibed from his infant years a growing passion for the recitals of the puranas, those eloquent records of the Indian ideals of chivalry, of self-surrender, of the triumphs of faith and devotion. The religious instinct which thus at an early period was impressed upon his plastic mind was cherished and developed in the critical period of adolescence under a guide and philosopher of the undeviating rectitude and conscientiousness of Dadaji Kondadev. The spiritual bias that was given to his mind at this stage of growing inquisitiveness and rationalism remained unobliterated to the end of his life. He was always haunted with an everpresent feeling of the vanity of earthly splendours and the wealth of spiritual hopes and promises. The religion of love had been fervently preached by many generations of saints among the people of Maharashtra, and the consolations of this creed had been made

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accessible to all castes and classes of society. Of Mukundraj¹, of Dnyanadev², of Namdev³, of Eknath⁴, of many other saints and bards of the olden Maharashtra, Shivaji had heard from the eloquent lips of preachers and rhapsodists, - he had heard both the sweet persuasiveness of their rhythmic strains and the subtle rhetoric of their gentle deeds. In his own days the names of Mukteshwar⁵, of Ramdas⁶, of Waman⁷, of Tukaram⁸, of Jayaram Swami⁹,

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1. Mukundraj lived between 1200 and 1300 A. D. He is generally reckoned as the first saint-poet to write in pure Marathi. His chief works are *Paramamrit* (the Highest Nectar) and *Viveka Sindhu* (the Ocean of Reason). The poems deal with the problem of spiritual salvation.
 2. Dnyanadev (1271 to 1296 A. D.), was one of a quartette of three brothers and one sister, all noted for the purity and saintliness of their lives and the extraordinary extent of their intellectual powers. They all died under thirty years of age. Dnyanadev's chief work is the *Dnyaneshwari*, which is a commentary on the *Bhagwat-Gita* and one of the greatest poetical works in the Marathi language. Dnyanadev and his brothers were born at Alandi and were subjected to much persecution at the hands of the orthodox Brahman community at Paithan, where they lived afterwards, on account of the circumstance that their father Vithalpant having become a *sannyasi* or hermit had renounced his sanyasa and lived with his wife again, and in that state had begotten his children, which was considered to be incompatible with orthodox law and custom.
 3. Namdev (about 1275 A. D.) belonged to the *Shimpi* or Tailor caste. He wrote in the *Abhanga* metre or stanza. His *Abhangas* are popularly believed to have run to a crore! Devotion to Vithal and contempt of all manner of fraud and hypocrisy are the distinguishing features of his poetry.
 4. Eknath, (1528- 1599), published a commentary on the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagwat* in the *Ovi* metre. He was a disciple of Janardan Swami governor of the fort of Devgiri or Daulatabad, under the Nizamshah sultans.
 5. Mukteshwar, (1609-53), was a grand-son of Eknath and a master of the *Ovi* metre, and of pure poetical effects. He translated parts of the Mahabharat.
 6. Ramdas (1608-82), the spiritual preceptor of Shivaji, and the author of the *Das-Bodh* a poem unique in Marathi literature as being almost the only work in which spiritual ideas are blended with political aspirations, eventually the result of (1) the contemporary triumphs of Shivaji and of (2) his intimate intercourse with him. *Vide* Prof. Bhate's Marathi work, "Sajjangad and Samarth Ramdas."
 7. Waman Pandit (1636-96) is said to have been for some time a disciple of Ramdas Swami. He was a Sanskrit scholar of considerable attainments and wrote in the different varieties of *Shloka* metre.
 8. Tukaram (1568-1649), was a native of Dehu, near Poona. He was a Maratha Kshatriya by caste and a Vaishya or tradesman by vocation. He continued his father's grocery trade, but lost heavily in business. He was a most pathetic figure, and the most popular poet in Maharashtra. He wrote *Abhangas* and like Dnyanadev and Namdev was a votary of the god Vithal of Pandharpur.
 9. Jayaram Swami died about 1672. He was a disciple of Ramdas.

of Ranganath Swami¹⁰, of Anand Murti, of Keshav Swami, and of a host of other saints, poets¹¹, and *litterateurs* had fallen upon his ears. Nor was he quite a stranger to their poetry. There was an all-pervading religious awakening throughout Maharashtra, the visible symbols of which were the vast congregations that assembled twice a year at Pandharpur, chanting songs of praise in honour of the god Vithoba¹², in the hallowed strains of Dnyanadev, Namdev and other poets. The religious renaissance, which stirred all Maharashtra society to its depths, could not but operate with an intensity of spiritual enthusiasm on a mind already instinct with religious emotions, like that of Shivaji.

Almost within the bounds of the new principality which he planned for himself, marking the first stage of his scheme of empire, lay the hallowed towns of Alandi and Dehu, consecrated to the memory of the poet-saints, Dnyanadev and Tukaram. It was natural, therefore, that from his early boyhood Shivaji should come to hear of the stories and anecdotes told about these saints and listen to the recitations of their soul-stirring verses. As regards Tukaram, Shivaji had the additional advantage from his childhood of listening personally to his religious discourses and abhangas as uttered by his saintly lips on the inspiration of the moment. He had thus conceived at a very early age a high admiration for Tukaram, a saint who was not only the prince of the psalmists and religious orators - *kirtankars* of his time, but who was also endowed with a faculty of melodious and inspired verse, the product of his profound religious experience and the earnestness of his message of love. Shivaji took a keen delight in the *kirtans* or psalmodic discourses of Tukaram, who often came to Poona to deliver them. On such occasions, as also when word was brought that the saint was going to address an audience in one of the outlying villages around Poona, Shivaji attended his discourses. The following story is an apt illustration of the great fascination Tukaram's oratory and personality exercised upon Shivaji.

Once on a time Tukaram was invited by some of his ardent admirers to Poona and a programme of his kirtans was arranged from house to house. Shivaji was then residing at Sinhagad, but on hearing of the kirtan cycle

10. Ranganath Swami lived near Nasik, about 1606 and wrote commentaries on the Bhagwat-Gita etc. Another Swami of the same name lived at Nazare near Pandharpur and was the uncle to the later poet Shridhar. He and Keshav Swami were followers of Ramdas.

11. The English reader will find more information about some of these saints in Chapters XI and XVII of Mr. Kincaid's "History of the Maratha People", vol. I.

12. *Vithoba*, Dr. Bhandarkar in his "Vaishnavism and Shaivism" derives this name from Vittu, a Capareae corruption of Vishnu.

commenced by Tukaram among the citizens of Poona, he made it a point to attend every night, returning again to Sinhagad on the conclusion of each kirtan¹³.

His Mahomedan foes came to learn about this and prepared an ambush to capture him by surprise. The Mahomedan governor of Chakan Fort received detailed information that on a particular night Shivaji was to be present at a kirtan of Tukaram which was arranged to be performed at the house of a certain Banyan. The commander detached forthwith a body of two thousand Pathans to surprise and arrest Shivaji. The Pathans came and surrounded the Banyan's house, but ignorant as to the identity of Shivaji they prepared to lay hold of every man present and take them away prisoners. Aware of the peril with which they stood menaced, the audience got frightened and excited, and on Tukaram inquiring into the cause of the disturbance, they explained the situation and requested that they might be permitted to ensure Shivaji's safety by flight. But the saint protested against that idea, maintaining that it would not do to leave the hall in the midst of prayer and on that day in particular, it being the day of the *ekadashi*¹⁴, an auspicious day for fast, prayer, or solemn meditation. Death on such a day while listening to the praises of God, exclaimed the saint-poet, was a thing to be desired. Such a death would assuredly lead to salvation and put a period for ever to the travails of future births. Thus he exhorted his audience to remain in their places. The poet addressed himself to a solemn invocation of the Almighty, praying for an instant intervention in the moment of trial, and the audience hall rang with the cry of "*Vithal! Vithal!*" Shivaji decided not to leave the kirtan-hall under such circumstances but to await patiently the sequel, whatever it might be, without moving from his place. One of his faithful followers, however, devised a brilliant plan to rescue his master and executed it with the utmost composure and adroitness. He donned Shivaji's ornamented crest and head-dress and swiftly mounting his horse galloped away, obtruding his action deliberately on the notice of the Pathans. The latter saw him escaping in this stealthy manner and mistook him for the prince Shivaji. Away they hurried in pursuit, putting spurs to their horses. Under a moonlit night the chase lasted a long time while they could see the Maratha cavalier flying before them. But he eluded their pursuit until the moon set and under cover of the darkness he became invisible. The few Pathans who had remained at the banyan's house joined in the pursuit, and the persons

13. It is stated by another bakhar that these kirtans took place at Lohagaun. The number of the Pathans is exaggerated.

14. The eleventh day of the first or second half of the lunar month is regarded as a fast day by pious Vaishnavas.

assembled at the kirtan returned safely to their respective homes. Shivaji too paid his respects to the preacher and returned to Sinhagad that very night¹⁵.

Here is another anecdote illustrative of the powerful impression Tukaram's exhortations could make on the youthful Shivaji. Once on a time when Tukaram was conducting a series of kirtans at Lohagaun, Shivaji attended one of them with his retinue. As the kirtan began Shivaji was thrilled with Tukaram's delivery of the opening verses. The same effect was produced on the pious audience who were exalted to such an impassioned frenzy of divine love that forgetting all thoughts of self, of place and circumstance, they sprang to their feet in a state of spiritual ecstasy, uttering the cry, Vithal! Vithal! clapping their hands and dancing rhythmically. Such a scene, so full of the spirit of divine love, had never before been witnessed by Shivaji. The preacher proceeded to expound the text he had chosen for his thesis. His exposition turned on the glorification of the ascetic ideal and its true tests and character, and he concluded with a demonstration of the greatness of Vithal, than whom nothing is greater, and he exhorted his audience to leave all other paths and to love Him and cleave to Him, if they would have the crown of human life, life's full worth. These earnest precepts he illuminated with apt quotations from the great masters and ever and anon with the inspired outpouring of his own melodious and impromptu verses. The impressive oratory of the preacher, exposing the evanescence of worldly pomp and vanity, the evil of sensual gratification, and the transitoriness of human life, wrought powerfully on the imagination of his audience and created a change of outlook in Shivaji. Endowed with the liveliest religious emotion as he was, he was enraptured with the thrilling eloquence of the preacher and he resolved to follow his spiritual advice and act upon his precepts to the very letter, in all his actions in life.

When, therefore, at the conclusion of the kirtan, the audience dispersed and Shivaji returned home, he betook himself to the woods and began to meditate on the words of the preacher amidst the solitude of the wilderness. His counsellors sought to dissuade him from this course of life, representing to him the impropriety of pursuing such an ascetic ideal at this time of his youthful career. But with all their reasoning and advice, they could not persuade Shivaji to change his mind. He dismissed them from his presence, saying that they might dispose of his worldly possessions as they pleased, he was no longer interested in them and that, life being short and evanescent, he

15. The credulous people of Shivaji's time believed that the Deity saved Shivaji by assuming his form and luring away the Pathans in a vain pursuit. Mahipati and Chitnis in their respective works have followed this legend. But in Shivaji's time there was no dearth of loyal servants to risk their lives or the sake of their master.

was resolved to spend every minute of it in thoughts of eternity, which he would forfeit, if he allowed himself to be entangled in the labyrinths of war and politics. The ministers were in great perplexity and communicated to Jijabai the whole story as it had occurred. She forthwith came down in a palanquin to Lohagaun and, obtaining an audience of Tukaram, besought him to bring round her son to a sense of his temporal duties, relating to him how he had retired to the woods and was spending his days there, brooding on the exhortations of the saint. She urged upon the holy man that there was no one else to look after the state, the watchword of which was the restoration of freedom, civil and religious, from the oppressive Mahomedans. Tukaram listened to her humble appeal and bade her depart with a contented mind, assuring her that as Shivaji was expected to be present at that very night's kirtan, he would snatch the opportunity to address to him a few words and make him again attend to the duties of his vocation in life.

That night Jijabai attended the kirtan. Shivaji too came as usual. The preacher expounded the concept of *Karma*, or a life of action, its necessity, its true meaning. He defined duty as action according to one's vocation in life. There was no imperative necessity to retire from temporal interests and betake oneself to the solitudes of the wilderness for the true worship of God. It was a test of true manhood to live in the world and carry on one's affair in the spirit of integrity and humanity and to labour day and night for the welfare, be it ever so humbly, of mankind at large. To see the absolute wretchedness and misery of the people every moment of one's life, and to turn away from the forlorn multitude and seek the shades and solitudes of caves and of mountains in quest of salvation - this was not the true spirit of human duty and conduct. To live in the world in order to improve it, there was nothing so effective as the family life. Those that leave the world, and child and wife, and mortify the flesh, smearing themselves with ashes, are constantly tried by temptations, and as the frailty of the flesh rarely permits them to resist for long, they only expose themselves to the ridicule of society. Such a man forfeits all honour on earth. He forfeits his hopes of salvation in heaven. This luminous exposition of the doctrines of *Karma* and *Dharma*, Action and Duty, was followed up by a dissertation upon the duties of a king. The orator set forth the lines of princely beneficence and social service that could be fitly exercised by a sovereign who was virtuous in his private relations and had the welfare of his subjects at heart. He quoted the great examples of *puranic* fame of Ambarish, of Janak, of Dharma, each one of whom had earned the title of a royal sage (*rajarshi*) by his holiness and wisdom, and proved by these examples that even a king had no necessity to abdicate his sovereignty in order to cultivate the love of God and the pursuits of virtue. This exhortation illuminated by many an apt illustration and enforced with religious fervour, enthralled and

captivated the mind of Shivaji. He was impressed with the truth and sincerity of the precepts and determined to practise them in his conduct in life. Prostrating himself in devout affection at the feet of Tukaram and Jijabai, he returned home to his palace, and resumed his career of conquest and empire.

Having such faith in the sanctity and worth of Tukaram, it was but natural that Shivaji should feel a strong desire to live in close contact with the saintly man and enjoy the constant opportunity of listening to his inspiring discourses. With this view he addressed a letter of invitation to the saint and despatched it by a civilian officer, who took with him a horse, an umbrella, and other state paraphernalia to escort the saint to Shivaji's court with due honour and ceremony. Much as he appreciated the prince's motives, the saint declined the invitation in verses that are well known among his countrymen, and some of the stanzas may well bear translation:-

“God has created the world, full of strange wonders and devices.

“The wise philosopher is the inspirer of the intellect, but only by faith does one attain and love his guide.

“Seeing the writing in your letter, I see you have some affection of that sort.

“Rightly are you named Shiva, a holy name, lord of the umbrella, the wielder of the reins of the universe!

“You have passed through the probation of vows, rites, penances, meditation, and mystic arts.

“You are now bent on meeting me: this is the import of your letter.

“Hear then the answer, Sir King; hear our most sincere request.

“Aimless let us wander the woods; in appearance, mean and repulsive.

“Sparely clad, our person is smeared with dust; sparely fed, we live on fruits.

“Our limbs are lean and crabbed and no fit display for anybody's eyes.

“Tuka makes a friendly request, talk not to him of a visit.

“What's the good of our coming to your presence? It will only tire our legs.

“For food, alms suffice; for raiment, rags.

“For sleep, a couch of stone; for covering the sky.

“Then why need I fix my hopes on anybody? It would be a mere waste of life.

“Should we, for honour, go to court, contentment dwelleth not there.

“At the king’s palace, the rich are honoured: honour for others is none.

“But the sight of men gaudily decked and apparelled, is death to us.

“Hearing this though you should grow estranged, still God is never indifferent to us.

“This is the secret we would disclose unto you, no greater happiness than to live upon alms.

“Fettered by desire the great live miserably, performing vows, penances, and sacrifices.

“But, says Tuka, we are the rich in mind, the rich inheritors of divine love, the accumulated merit of our past lives¹⁶.”

This frank refusal put an end to Shivaji’s solicitation, and though his desire remained unquenched, he did not feel any resentment towards the great ascetic. Far from feeling any anger, his respect and admiration for him were all the more heightened. And as long as the saint was alive Shivaji never wasted a single opportunity of paying him a visit or listening to his discourse. It was his great desire to settle a permanent grant upon the holy man and ease the last days of a life which had been spent in the midst of worldly misfortunes. But before Shivaji could do anything in this direction, the great master had died. However as a humble acknowledgment of the words of wisdom that had flowed from the copious springs of his poesy, and the noble lessons of virtue and faith he had inculcated upon the masses all through his strenuous and self-denying life, Shivaji made a grant of three villages to his son. The revenues of these villages are still enjoyed by his descendants¹⁷.

Shivaji’s desire to make Tukaram his *guru* or spiritual preceptor, and spend his days in holy communion with him was left unrealised owing to the premature death of the saint. There were many other saintly men among his

16. The epistle, as it has come to us, consists of six stanzas or Abhangas. Some of the stanzas, however, refer to the constitution of the Ashta Pradhan Cabinet and to Ramdas Swami, and the author is persuaded to believe that these are interpolated. The constitution of the Ashta Pradhan was not completed at the time, nor had the meeting between Shivaji and Ramdas taken place. It is now almost certain that Tukaram died in 1649. Mr. Kincaid quotes five of these stanzas from the pen of Messrs. Nelson Fraser and Marathe.

17. This narrative about Tukaram is taken without any material alteration from Mr. Keluskar’s biography (in Marathi) of that poet.

contemporaries, but none equalled Tukaram or appeared capable to fill the void created by his death. It is an accepted creed of orthodox Hinduism that without the guidance of such a spiritual mentor, the attainment of salvation is impossible. This was impressed upon Shivaji, at a *kirtan*, which he happened to attend at Mahad, when the preacher described the triumph of spiritual fortitude by the classical example of the Prince Dhruva, which however, as Shivaji saw, was not realized without the mediation of his preceptor, the Sage Narad. But having experience of the unrivalled sanctity and the spiritual faith of Tukaram, his standard of preceptorial requirements was much too high to be approached by other sages. Nor was Shivaji, with all the distractions of state affairs, able to find time to cultivate anything like a deep intimacy with the saintly personages of his time or enroll himself as a disciple of any great spiritual thinker. It was just to fill up this void that he had invited Tukaram to come and reside at his court. But that great man could not be induced by the king's pomp or importunity to give up his ascetic ideal. From this Shivaji inferred that the true saint cares for nobody and seeks nobody's patronage, and that it would, therefore, be difficult for him to come across a man of sanctity who would answer his highest expectation and yet deign to reside at his court. But he never gave up the pious hope of being able to discover such a man and to live in his society. With this view, wherever persons of acknowledged sanctity were known to live, Shivaji did not fail to pay them a visit and provide for their earthly comforts.

Ramdas Swami was a saint of this order. An ascetic of the most austere habits, he wandered over woods and mountains, having nothing like a permanent dwelling-place. Hearing that he was generally to be found at a certain hermitage and temple of Rama, in the glen of Chafal, Shivaji proceeded to this place to pay his respects to the holy man. On his arrival there, the civilian officer of the place, Narsomalnath, came to receive him and said that the Swami did not habitually reside at the hermitage, but generally led a lonely life in the forest and that at that moment he was to be found at Bahiravgad, near the ravine of Kondwan. As Shivaji was making further inquiries about the sage, two of his disciples, Vithal Gosavi and Bhanji Gosavi, appeared on the scene and presented offerings of fruits and flowers to Shivaji, as a mark of propitious favour on the part of the deity of the temple. Accepting the sacred offerings, Shivaji asked the disciples who had built the temple, and expressed his surprise that though the Swami had resided so long at that place, he had not till then come into his presence or rendered him any service. Upon this the disciples of the Swami made answer that though he had indeed not yet come to the presence of their master, all the same the money spent upon the temple had come from him. At this, the king was astonished and saying that it was only their courtesy that made them say so, he asked

when and how he had supplied the funds for the erection of the temple. The disciples reminded Shivaji of a forgotten incident, how on one occasion he had attended a kirtan at the house of his family priest at Poona, when a certain Giri Gosavi Nasikkar preached in such a charming style that he was pleased to make him a present of three hundred pagodas, which the preacher hermit had refused as he had nothing to do with the money, and how, on Shivaji's declaring that the money having been offered to him he might dispose of it for any charitable purpose, the preacher had recommended that the sum be forwarded to Ramdas Swami, who was erecting at Chafal a temple in honour of Rama. This sum, said the disciples, had been duly remitted by Shivaji through Narsomalnath, the mamlatdar or revenue officer. Shivaji now remembered the incident and proceeded to inspect the foundations, which, he found, were endangered by a brook flowing from the north of the temple grounds. Narsomalnath was commanded to divert the course of the current and erect a bridge over it and debit the charge to the limit of five hundred pagodas to the treasury. Having given these orders, Shivaji proceeded to the ravine of Kondwan in quest of the hermit, but here too he was disappointed. Upon this Shivaji returned dejected to Pratapgad, thence he proceeded to the holy shrine at Mahableshwar, from which he descended again to Wai, where he performed many acts of piety and charity, and came away to Mahuli. At Mahuli Shivaji was engaged in similar acts of piety, it being deemed a holy place on account of the confluence of the Krishna and the Vena, when a letter from Ramdas, expressed in the *Ovi* metre, was placed in his hands. It was to the following effect:-

“O Meru¹⁸ of resolution, the support of many people, the institutor of a changeless order, rich master mind!

“O thou, whose benefactions form a mighty pile; no rival to thy virtues.

“O Lord of men, of horses, of elephants; O Lord of forts, of land, of water; of cities and thrones, thou bearest these burdens on thy massive shoulders.

“Thou art victorious and glorious, mighty and meritorious, holy and virtuous, a king of wisdom.

“Thou art rich in thought and action, in charity and religion, in knowledge and good behaviour towards all.

“Thou art brave and magnanimous, prompt in thy chivalry; by thy statesmanship thou hast spurned the princes.

18. Meru is the fabled mountain at the center of the earth.

“The holy shrines were lying desolate; the Brahman resorts, polluted; the earth; in convulsions; religion was nought.

“To save the gods, the rites, the Brahmans, Narayan enthroned himself in thy heart and inspired it.

“Countless pandits and puraniks, poets and vedic scholars, logicians that lead the assembly, thrive at thy court.

“On the face of this earth, there is none to defend religion; the Maharashtra religion has lingered in some measure owing to thee.

“Other pieties cease not, under thy rule; and many seek thy patronage. Honour to thy glory that has pervaded the universe!

“Some wicked ones are slain, some are trembling with fear, others again are pardoned; blessed is the king Shiva!

“I have lived in thy country, but thou hast failed to ask for me; whether, by the mystic law of fate, thou hast forgotten me, I know not.

“But wise are thy counsellors and they are images of piety. What more need I say? Keep alive thy glory as the establisher of religion.

“The strain of state-craft has distracted thy mind. Pray excuse me for writing thus, without occasion.”

Shivaji eagerly perused this epistle and courteously entertained the disciple who had brought it to him. He composed a reply to this effect: “Great sage. I plead guilty. Your heart abounds with forgiveness. Your benedictory epistle has filled me with joy. How can I describe it? You have sung my praises, but I am not at all worthy of them. For many days I have had an ardent desire to see you. Even now I propose to come forth into your presence. May you be pleased to receive me in your presence and appease my enduring thirst.” This reply he presented to the disciple and inquired of him where the holy man was then residing. The disciple replied that the Swami was then at Chafal, but there was no knowing where he would be, as he changed from place to place, as it pleased his fancy. With these words, the disciple departed bearing Shivaji’s reply.

Next day, Shivaji proceeded to Chafal with his suite, and paying a devotional visit to the temple of Ram, he made his inquiries as to the whereabouts of the saint. The disciples present told him that the Swami was at the temple of Hanuman at Shinganwadi and that his letter which had reached them the previous day about sunset had been taken over to him that very morning, by his disciple Kalyan Gosavi. They suggested, moreover, that he should not hasten his journey to the place where the Swami was at the

moment, but that he should partake of the dishes which were being prepared in honour of the deity of the temple, and after they had been duly offered up to the god, he should then proceed in a leisurely manner to pay his homage to the saint, whom in the meantime they would inform of the Rajah's arrival. Shivaji however replied that, as that day was Thursday, a day specially dedicated to the worship of one's preceptor, he was resolved not to taste a particle of food before seeing the Swami. Upon this the disciples present advised Shivaji to go without a big retinue, lest the noise should scare away the holy man. Upon this Shivaji proceeded with only two officers of his suite and one of the disciples of the saint, Divakar Bhat, for his guide. In this way he came to the temple of Hanuman at Shinganwadi, where he learnt that Ramdas Swami had descended to the garden below. Shivaji directed his foot-steps thither. The Swami was found seated beneath a fig-tree. He had just been reading Shivaji's letter delivered by Kalyan Gosavi and had broken into a ripple of laughter, when Shivaji presented himself, Divakar Bhat leading the way. Shivaji advanced before the sage, presented the votive cocoa-nut, and having prostrated himself humbly to the ground, stood silent before him. The Swami, in great amazement, addressed himself to Shivaji, observing that he had come at the same moment with his letter, a thing that bespoke his impatience. The Swami went on to say that he had been living for a long time in Shivaji's kingdom, and the king had not seemed to care much for him during all that time. He wondered therefore, why he had called on him that day. Upon this, Shivaji made an apologetic reply to the effect that he had been seeking for a long time to come into his presence, but had not succeeded till that day, and he could only beg to be forgiven for his misfortune. He then requested him to be good enough to initiate him solemnly into the circle of his spiritual disciples, a favour he ardently longed for and which it was in the power of the Swami to bestow upon him. The Swami acceded to the request, and upon the suggestion of Kalyan Gosavi, Shivaji ordered the sacramental requisites for the initiation ceremony to be immediately procured. When these were ready, Shivaji underwent a purificatory bath and then went through all the solemn rites of a *puja* in honour of the preceptor of his choice, Divakar Bhat, the guide, officiating as priest at the ceremony. As the solemn rite was completed, Shivaji bowed his head upon the feet of the master. The latter then delivered into his ears the mystic words which were to be the *mantra* for his spiritual meditation, accompanied by an exhortation, which, it is said, has been incorporated under the name of the "Laghu Bodha" or the Brief Instruction in the *magnum opus* of this poet, viz.: the "*Das-Bodh*" or the "Counsel of Ramdas." It forms the sixth *samas* or section of the thirteenth *dashak* or chapter of this great poem.

The exhortation of the preceptor wrought an immediate change in Shivaji, and addressing himself to the Swami he exclaimed he was now tired of the labours of empire and desired to spend the rest of his life in peace, in the society of the sage, serving him in whatever capacity along with the rest of his disciples, and he prayed that he might be permitted to live, as he desired, in immediate attendance upon the sage. This provoked a strong remonstrance from the Swami. "Is it for this," said he, "that you have come hither, a suppliant? Your proper vocation is that of a Kshatriya. The Kshatriya or warrior has to defend the country and keep the people from harm. It is also a part of the Kshatriya's duty to serve the gods and the Brahmans. Many great exploits are yet expected of your hands. The alien Mahomedan has overrun the earth. It is for you to deliver the land from them. Thus does Rama will. Bethink yourself of the sage advice that Shri Krishna gave to Arjun in the song of the *Bhagvad-Gita*. It is the warrior's path that you must tread in general. The stories of the sage kings of antiquity have doubtless come to your ears. The valorous deeds of your immediate ancestors have doubtless not escaped your understanding. Remember them and mould your conduct on the true pattern of a warrior. It is scarcely to be thought that you should turn away into any other course." These counsels quieted all the uneasiness in Shivaji's mind and he returned home, having for the present given up all intention of becoming a hermit.

After this event Shivaji used to visit Ramdas from time to time, snatching every opportunity when he could do so without detriment to state affairs. He listened to the spiritual discourses of the sage with great interest, and had the highest faith in his teaching. However the worries of his active life and the capricious wanderings of the sage from place to place prevented Shivaji from meeting him as often as he liked. He had first to send his couriers to make sure about the whereabouts of the holy man, and thus only could he propose to himself the consolation of direct communion with him. With these difficulties in the way of a more frequent intercourse, Shivaji desired to give a nearer place of residence to the Swami and often urged him to adopt such a place for his abode. At length the Swami complied with his request and it was arranged that he should reside at a place called Parali. Shivaji brought the sage with great ceremony to this fort. There was a mansion upon the fort which Shivaji proposed should be the saint's residence, but the latter refused saying that it was old and dismantled, and asking that a new one should be erected. "Meanwhile," said the saint, "we shall stay in the chambers to the north of the castle-gates."

This fort had but recently come into Shivaji's hands and its administrative arrangements were yet in a disorganized state. These things were now first settle and an officer named Jijoji Katkar was appointed

havaladar, with instructions to act in all instances under the orders of the Swami. The garrison in the fort and the civil population immediately within and without it, were under similar orders to obey the saint. The village of Vavardare was assigned to meet the maintenance charges of the little spiritual colony at Parali, the revenue accounts being looked after by a civilian officer, Kondopant by name, who was always to reside at the fort near the person of the Swami. On Ramdas taking up his residence upon it, the fort came to be known as Sajjangad, the Sage's Fort. Holy men from various parts began to frequent the fort, coming on purpose to pay their homage to Ramdas Swami and thus incidentally the circle of Shivaji's acquaintance with such saintly men began to expand. Gradually the colony of the disciples and followers of the saint became so large that the revenue assigned for their maintenance were found to be insufficient. In consequence, Shivaji augmented the annual grant, and it is stated in the bakhar of Ramdas Swami that the addition to the previous grant was made in the same year in which Shivaji embarked upon his Karnatic Campaign. It follows, therefore, that this addition was made in 1676¹⁹.

This bakhar or biography of Ramdas Swami gives stories of the different occasions on which the king and the sage were brought together. But as most of these narratives are full of fables and miracles of the kind that abound in the orthodox legends of Indian saints in general, it seems more appropriate, considering the nature of this work, to pass over them in silence. But from all these accounts, however credible or otherwise, this inference may.

It is necessary at this stage to return to a controversial point. On the basis of the acknowledged fact that Shivaji enrolled himself as a disciple of Ramdas Swami and had the highest faith in his teaching, it has been maintained that the Swami was his constant mentor in affairs of policy and statesmanship. Much insistence is laid on this assertion in the extant biographies of the Swami, which ante-date the spiritual allegiance of Shivaji to his preceptor as early as 1649 A. D., when they say Shivaji was formally enrolled as a disciple of Ramdas Swami and from which date they attribute

19. Prof. Bhate publishes from the Chandorkar papers a letter from Dattaji Trimal, the Waknis or home secretary of Shivaji, giving a schedule of inam lands conferred by Shivaji upon the Swami for the benefit of the temple and hermitage. The letter bears the date 3rd September 1677, but it expressly states that the gift was made in the previous year, but that the sanad papers had not been executed, which being prepared in 1677 were by this letter communicated to the local subhedar, Venkaji Rudra (*Vide* Bhate's Monograph on Ramdas, pp.123-125).

his success in political affairs to his preceptor's counsel. But in the first place, the assumed date, 1649 A.D., when Shivaji is alleged to have joined the select circle of Ramdas's disciples, is absolutely incorrect. The chronology of most of the dates mentioned in these biographies²⁰ is for the most part unreliable. And the suspicion irresistibly forces itself upon our mind either that from the amiable motive of aggrandizing the glory of the object of their adulation, the biographers have deliberately perverted the real facts of the case, or, at best, that following blind tradition as their guide in the most uncritical spirit they have put their faith in idle and exaggerated tales and given to them a semblance of truth by incorporating them in their biographies. These old writers pursuing the biographical methods of the Marathi poet Mahipati have retailed the most mythical romances and miracles in their so-called histories. This circumstance alone may be taken as a fair index of their love of historical truth. It being the fancy of the lay mind in India that the life of a great saint must be full of miraculous incidents, the chronicler of such a life is irresistibly drawn into the temptation of the most absurd exaggeration, but the tinsel products of such minds cannot stand for the sterling gold of history. However a good deal of truth may be found mingled with the fables of these histories of the saints, and a sympathetic and critical faculty has to be actively exercised to separate the one from the other. It is not, however, all modern critics who are mindful or capable of this function. The delusions of superstition thus continue to triumph over the feeble minds of the multitude.

A word must be said here as regards the orthodox date of Shivaji's first enrolment into the circle of the Swami's disciples. The first meeting of the king with the *guru* took place, as we are told in these biographies of Ramdas, in the glen of Chafal. Further we are assured that this place then belonged to Shivaji and was actually administered by one of his mamlatdars or revenue officers. It is also related that Shivaji on his way to Chafal passed through Karhad, Wai and Mahuli, and that at the last two of these places Shivaji made many religious charities and gave banquets to Brahmans. It would seem, therefore, from these chronicles of Ramdas that at the time when Shivaji first visited the saint to obtain the favor of spiritual discipleship, he possessed and ruled over the localities mentioned above. But the facts of history actually are

20. The leading bakhar of Ramdas is the biography of the saint by Hanuman Swami, upon which Messrs. Kincaid and Parasnis in their "History of the Maratha People, Vol. I" has relied so much. The untrustworthiness of this book for purposes of history is exposed by Prof. Bhate in his recent monograph and has been severely criticised by other scholars. Messrs. Dev and Rajwade, however, follow the chronology adopted in this bakhar. Mr. Sardesai, author of "Marathi Riyasat" is now in almost complete accord with the views of Prof. Bhate and Mr. Keluskar.

that these districts were conquered by Shivaji not earlier than 1672-78 A.D.²¹ They were never before in his possession. Further, we are informed that one or two years after Shivaji's admission to the circle of the saint's disciples, the latter was invited to take up his residence at Parali Fort, and that the celebrated transfer by gift of Shivaji's kingdom took place at Satara. But both the forts of Parali and Satara were first captured by Shivaji in 1673. These historic dates cut down like cold steel right across the whole web of fiction spun together by the romancing admirers of the Swami.

On the other hand the authentic chronicles of the career of Shivaji are singularly free from excrescences of myth and miracle and, on the whole, present a continuous narrative of the events of history. Their credibility, therefore, is beyond suspicion. But in none of them is there any record of Shivaji's having consulted Ramdas in state affairs. To be absolutely correct, we may except one case, viz. the coronation ceremony in which matter, it is said, Shivaji did consult Ramdas²². As against this, it may be objected, that two of the chronicles of Shivaji, viz. Chitnis's bakhar and the Shiv-digvijaya, have given the date 1649 as the year when Shivaji became the Swami's disciple. There is but one answer and that a decisive one to this question. That is that the date in question is borrowed by these chroniclers on the authority of the romancing biographies of Ramdas. A circumstance that lends great support to this view is the fact that the other old and authentic chronicles of Shivaji make no reference to Shivaji's becoming a disciple of the saint at all²³. The final decision upon the disputed date has been given by the publication of certain authentic letters in the possession of the descendants²⁴ of Divakar

21. *Vide* Chapter XXII, p. 341, *supra*.

22. Chitnis also states that Shivaji visited Ramdas before starting for Delhi (Agra). But even he omits the incident mentioned in Hanuman's bakhar of Shivaji's visiting the sage at Parali immediately after the tragedy of Afzul khan and of giving him certain lands in inam. As will be seen from the text such a visit was impossible. However by a strange perversity Mr. Kincaid, accepting the date 1649, not only believes in the visit of Shivaji to Ramdas after the Afzul Khan incident but actually makes it the principal argument to exculpate Shivaji from the charge of murder (*Vide* Kincaid, p. 164).

23. The oldest chronicler, Sabhasad, wrote his bakhar only 14 years after the death of Shivaji. He does not refer to Ramdas at all. Chitragupta refers to Ramdas only twice, and the only serious statement made by him is that Ramdas gave counsel to Shivaji on the "Duties of a King", after his coronation i. e. 1674. *Vide* p. 92.

24. These letters have been published by Mr. G. K. Chandorkar in his letter published in the Marathi weekly, the Kesari, in its issue of 26th June, 1906. From these two passages may be briefly quoted here:-

a) Reply of Keshav Gosavi to Divakar Gosavi: - "I understand what you write, viz.: that the Raja Shivaji Bhonsle is coming to visit the Samartha (i. e. Ramdas). It is his first

Gosavi, the disciple of Ramdas who figures in the orthodox version of Shivaji's first personal interview with the Swami. These letters establish the date of this interview and of the consequent enrolment of Shivaji as a disciple of the sage at 1672, and that of the Swami's taking up residence at Parali in 1676. Against this view, it may, of course, be urged that though the year 1672 may be accepted as the date of Shivaji's first visit to Ramdas, he might have come to know about him much earlier. To this it may be answered that there is positive evidence that at any rate before 1658, he had no knowledge whatever of the great sage²⁵, and even for some years thereafter, he does not seem to have kept in his memory a strong impression about him. For, as we have seen, when Shivaji first made his fruitless journey to Chafal to visit the saint, he asked in surprise, as recorded in the orthodox bakhars of the Swami, "How it

visit..... I understand what you write about there being nobody to make arrangements. Engage the people of the Wadi (i. e. village of Shingan-wadi?) to make arrangements....." dated the 1st of the latter half of Chaitra, of the Shaka 1594 (i. e. 4th April, 1672 A. D.)

- b) Extract from Shivaji's letter to Jijaji Katkar, the havaldar karkun at the fort of Sajjangad: - "Shri Ramdas Gosavi residing at Shivthar, will come for a few days to the fort, when you shall permit him to do so, to live as long as he pleases, and leave when he pleases to leave..... dated, 8 *jamadilakhar*, *san saba sabain* 1677, of the *Shaka* 1598 (i. e. 1676 A. D.).

25. Letter of Bhaskar Gosarvi to Divakar Gosavi: - "We went to beg for alms at the residence of the Raja Shivaji. He asked, 'Who and whence are you?' Upon which we replied we were the disciples of the Shri Samarth Ramdas and lived at Chafal. He asked where Ramdas lived and whence he originally came from. We told him he was originally a resident of Jamb on the banks of the Ganga (i.e. Godavari) and that at present he had formed a hermitage at Chafal with a temple of God Rama, and having instituted solemn worship and celebrations there, had bidden us all go forth for alms for the performance of the solemn rites; wherefore we were thus rambling about. On our saying this, the raja wrote a letter to Dattaji Wanknis to grant an annual sum of two hundred pagodas for the celebration of the temple solemnities. The money will reach in time. Be this known. Dated, the 2nd of the first half of *Falgun*, of the *Shaka* 1580" (13th February 1659 A. D.). This letter has been published at page 46 of the preface of Mr. Dev's edition of the *Das-Bodh*. It is worthy of remark that the annuity of two hundred pagodas mentioned in this letter is not referred to in the interesting conversation between Shivaji and the Swami's disciples at the former's first but unsuccessful visit to Chafal (*Vide* page 526, *supra*). It may also be observed that the dialogue etc. given on that page are based on the authority of the orthodox bakhars of Ramdas Mr. Chandorkar, in his letter to the Kesari referred to in the preceding note, observes that among the sanads granted to the Swami by Shivaji there is not one earlier than the Shaka 1594 (i. e. 1672 A. D.). From this it follows that the annuity mentioned in Bhaskar Gosavi's letter, as quoted above, was perhaps not regularly paid and at any rate not settled in perpetuity by a regular sanad or deed of grant.

(However the annuity is referred to in the letter of Keshav Gosavi to Divakar Gosavi in 1672 from which a portion is quoted in the note to, p. 536).

was he had not yet rendered any service to the sage?" And this lapse of memory as regards whatever knowledge he ever had about the Swami is further confirmed by the language used by the latter at the end of his poetic letter to Shivaji: "Thou hast failed to ask for me; whether by the mystic law of fate, thou hast forgotten me I know not." Such is the plaintive note sounded in that epistle. Further, the praises lavished upon the king by Ramdas in that celebrated letter are scarcely such as by any stretch of imagination Shivaji could be said to have merited as early as 1649, or for the matter of that, even for fifteen years or more thereafter²⁶. In short, we may conclude that till 1672, at any rate, Shivaji had no direct personal interview with Ramdas. Whether immediately after the first interview the king entered into a relation of spiritual discipleship under Ramdas is more than can be stated in definite terms. Reading the orthodox story of Shivaji's first introduction to his preceptor in the light of history, it would seem that the conquest of Wai, Karhad, etc. took place in 1672, and the capture of the forts of Parali and Satara may be put down at 1673 A. D. However an independent piece of evidence, a letter from Divakar Gosavi, the disciple of Ramdas, addressed to his son Bhairav Bhat²⁷, expressly states that the Rajah Shri Shivaji Bhonsle was admitted to spiritual discipleship at the hermitage at Shinganwadi, in the year with the cyclic name *Paridhavi*. The Shaka year of that name in the period with which we are concerned coincided with 1672 A. D. Assuming that it lasted till the beginning of 1673, that is to say, till about April in the latter

26. Prof. Bhate rightly points out that the expression "*Jalapati*" or "Lord of water" is used with reference to a period after he had equipped a navy and erected his sea-ports, which activities belong to the year 1663-1664. The expression "Some wicked ones are slain" evidently suggests knowledge of the king's triumphs over Afzul Khan and other Mahomedan generals, and the sentence "Thou hast spurned the princes" certainly points to a much later period than 1649.

27. An extract from this letter is published by Mr. Chandorkar in his letter referred to above. The letters published by Mr. Chandorkar were obtained by him from the descendants of Divakar Gosavi, who was for some time the manager of the hermitage at Chafal in the lifetime of Ramdas and even after his death. When the Chafal estates were finally made over by King Shahu to a descendant of Ramdas Swami's brother, for the maintenance of the hermitage etc. in hereditary succession, in order to put a stop to the existing quarrels between some of the Swami's disciples, the original papers relating to the hermitage at Chafal remained in the family of the Gosavi, the quondam manager, along with his personal papers. Prof. Bhate in his monograph on Ramdas declares that he has examined the papers bearing upon this question and that he is quite satisfied about their authenticity. He reproduces them in full at pages 108 to 119 of his monograph. Though the protagonists of the earlier date, (viz. the year 1649 as the date of Shivaji's becoming a disciple of Ramdas) like Mr. Dev of Dhulia and Mr. Rajwade still cling to the traditional view by trying to explain away the objections and difficulties raised, there cannot be any doubt that these letters completely establish the view taken by Mr. Keluskar. Prof. Bhate enforces it with greater wealth of argument and illustration (*Vide* Bhate, pp. 96 to 105).

year, this would perhaps coincide almost exactly with the date of the conquest of these districts adopted by us on chronicle authority in Chapter XXII.

It may however be sought to establish the orthodox view upon the answer sent by the poet Tukaram to Shivaji's letter inviting him to come and reside at his court. It is urged that to Tukaram's reply, out of which two stanzas have been given above in translation form, there was a reference to Ramdas Swami, and an exhortation to Shivaji that he should devote his attention solely to that saint; and from this it is argued that Shivaji must already, previous to the date of this epistle of Tukaram, have seen Ramdas and entered into a pupillary relation with him in matters spiritual. Very little reliance, however, can be placed upon this part of Tukaram's epistle to Shivaji, as long as the foregoing historical evidences remain unanswered. Secondly, if the orthodox date 1649 indicates truly the time when Shivaji was acknowledged as a disciple of Ramdas, it will have to be admitted that this event took place in the same year as Tukaram's death. But if we admit the authority of the orthodox version in the matter of the date of the discipleship, we shall have further to take for gospel truth the legends of various meetings between Shivaji, the Swami and Tukaram after Shivaji's enrolment as a disciple, and in particular the story of a great solemnity at Parali which Tukaram is alleged to have attended. In consequence, the date of Tukaram's death will have to be deferred to an indefinitely later time, but it is now proved to a certainty that this date cannot be extended beyond 1649. Thirdly, it is natural to suppose that Tukaram's letter to Shivaji must have preceded his death by a few days, but according to the bakhar of Ramdas, a fairly long time must be taken to have elapsed from the discipleship of Shivaji down to the date of Tukaram's epistle. In Chitnis's bakhar of Shivaji, the same version is given as regards the post-dating of Tukaram's letter after the date of Shivaji's enrolment in the circle of the disciples of the Swami. More than that, here we have proof of a more elaborate process of tampering with the simple message of Tukaram, if we examine the manner in which it is presented in this bakhar. The stanzas constituting the epistle are here divided into two groups. The first group consisting of two stanzas is here quoted as Tukaram's answer to Shivaji's solicitations at a time prior to his coming in contact with Ramdas. The second group of four stanzas is quoted as an answer to fresh importunities for a visit on the part of Shivaji after the latter had entered into bonds of discipleship under Ramdas. A proceeding that stands discredited by the very nature of things! For if at the time Shivaji had such a firm faith in Ramdas, why go running after the elusive Tukaram? If Shivaji, after acknowledging the discipleship of Ramdas desired nothing more than just to see Tukaram, where was the necessity of sending a special mission to invite and escort him to his capital? For at various times upon his tours and otherwise Shivaji had found

numerous occasions to see and hear Tukaram. The account in Chitnis's bakhar must, therefore, be condemned as a transparent gloss.

It is more natural to assume that at the time when Shivaji was importuning Tukaram to satisfy the spiritual hunger of his soul, he probably had not even heard of the name of Ramdas. But then what about the fact that the name of Ramdas does occur in Tukaram's epistle? The answer to this is that some of the stanzas alleged to constitute a part of Tukaram's epistle are decidedly spurious, or to speak without equivocation were subsequently interpolated - interpolated undoubtedly after Shivaji's coronation by the blind admirers of the Swami, as is amply borne out by the epithet "*Chhatrapati*" (Lord of the royal umbrella or sovereign of a canopied throne), used of Shivaji, and by the allusion to the Ashta-Pradhan or Shivaji's cabinet of eight ministers. For as long as Tukaram lived, Shivaji had never assumed any such title and the constitution of the regular Ashta-Pradhan was not so much as dreamt of. However admirable the motives of these interpolators might have been - and it was misdirected zeal to promote the glory of their great preceptor - their glosses and perversions of the truth have led to the deplorable consequence of circulating throughout Maharashtra a hypothesis that depreciates the glory of Shivaji by transferring it to the credit of another. For the hypothesis is that whatever Shivaji did accomplish in the direction of the restoration of a national government and the national religion to Maharashtra, he accomplished by the inspiration and under the guidance of Ramdas Swami.

There is one more objection to be considered ere we close this discussion. If it is held that Shivaji's first interview with Ramdas took place in 1672, and his enrolment as a disciple in that or the following year, it may be asked what must be the date of the composition of those chapters in the Das-Bodh that deal with politics and other cognate subjects, and which evidently seem to have been compiled for the purpose of giving him advice? For it appears from a letter of Divakar Gosavi addressed to one Bahiram Bhat²⁸ that from the Shaka 1576 (1654 A. D.) for ten years onwards the Swami was engaged in the composition of the Das-Bodh. The letter in question was written in the Shaka 1576 and the passage that has bearing on this subject is as follows: - "Shri Samarth (*i. e.* Ramdas Swami) has proceeded with Kalyan Gosavi, Chimanabai, Aka, (the last two being female disciples of the Swami), and Ananta Kavi, (*i. e.* the poet Ananta) to the ravine of Shivthar, to stay there

28. Bahiram Bhat is probably the same as Bhairav Bhat and was the name of the son of Divakar Gosavi. The word *chiranjiv* is used in this letter (which is by Prof. Bhate at p. 108 of his Monograph), showing the relation between the parties to the correspondence.

for ten years, for the purpose of literary composition.”²⁹ The answer to this objection is that of the twenty *dashakas*, or chapters of the Das-Bodh, as accepted by the orthodox, the first eight comprise the original Das-Bodh, which consisted only of these parts, and the others were composed subsequently and superadded to the original, either by the disciples or by the Swami himself as occasion arose. Mr. S. S. Dev in the preface to his edition of the Das-Bodh has succinctly stated the reasons and arguments that lead to this conclusion. They may be briefly restated as follows:-

(1) There is a sustained and continuous flow of argument in the first eight chapters, without any repetitions. It is after the eighth chapter that frequent repetitions occur. The object of Ramdas’s counsels was to make a dissertation on spiritual welfare. The first eight chapters comprehend nothing within their scope except spiritual wisdom. The word “*rajkaran*” or politics obtrudes itself nowhere up to these eight chapters. The stream of thought induced by contact with Shivaji has not yet mingled itself with the flow of the argument. In the ninth chapter for the first time, the word “*rajkaran*” does occur and that in a casual manner.

(2) The 42nd verse of the tenth section of the seventh chapter reads as follows: - “The jingle of words is come to an end: the work is come to its conclusion. Herein we have given a clear dissertation on the love of one’s spiritual preceptor.” And indeed the work was now ready for a conclusion, except for the chapter on spiritual knowledge, which would have been the final chapter of the entire work.

(3) The second verse of the sixth section of the ninth chapter runs as follows: - “*This has been discoursed upon in the Das-Bodh*; it has been made clear in the section on spiritual knowledge; the five primary elements have been described in their primordial condition.” It is clear from the portion italicized that this verse and the chapter of which it is a part, were not composed originally as forming a part of the Das-Bodh³⁰.

The same law must be applied to the chapters that follow; and in as much as it is said that the latter twelve chapters contained here and there

29. In the letter of Mr. Chandorkar referred to in the previous foot-notes, this letter is quoted as authentic.

30. Prof. Bhate in his monograph on Ramdas makes a similar analysis and comes to a similar conclusion viz. that the portion of the Das-Bodh from the 9th Chapter onwards must have been written separately from the first seven and also from the eighth, which last he thinks must have been written independently by itself (*Vide* Bhate’s monograph, pages 26 to 40). He also shows that some of the political or quasi-political dissertations are apparently addressed to the life-members of the Ramdas conventicles.

counsels addressed to Shivaji, it must be inferred that these chapters were composed after 1672. From the whole disquisition, therefore, it would follow that the counsels which are made so much of by the admirers of the Swami were really addressed to Shivaji at a time when he had almost completed the establishment of national independence and the freedom of religion, and the composition of them was perhaps made possible by the enlivening effects which the triumphs of the great king produced on the poetical imagination of Ramdas Swami. The attempt to transfer to the poet-saint the whole credit of the warrior king's achievements is a part of the same campaign that has led certain modern scholars to attribute the first beginnings of his power to Dadaji Kondadev, nay, even to the ministers and advisers of the Raja Shahaji, a refutation of which has already been attempted at the beginning of the sixth chapter³¹. And we hope that the array of facts and dates, that we have been able to bring together in the present chapter, will enable the reader to arrive at an impartial decision, as to the extent of Shivaji's indebtedness to his preceptor, in the matter of the foundation and consolidation of his power.

It is pleasant to turn from this controversy to the policy of liberal tolerance which Shivaji extended towards Islam and which he sought in vain from Aurangzeb. At the time of the defection of Sambhaji, in the midst of his last campaign against the Moguls, the great king made a stirring appeal to Aurangzeb against the imposition of the *Jazia*. This letter reveals a lofty outlook on religion and is a passionate plea for tolerance. Shivaji reminds Aurangzeb that even in the Koran God is styled the "Lord of all men" and not the "Lord of Mahomedans" only. "If it be a mosque," wrote Shivaji, "the call to prayer is chanted in remembrance of Him. If it be a temple, the bell is rung in yearning for Him only. To show bigotry for any man's creed is really altering the words of the Holy Book....."³²

31. None of the recognized bakhars of Shivaji quotes specific instances of the king consulting Ramdas Swami for his advice before starting upon any particular enterprise (the consultation, with reference to the proposed coronation, which by the way comes after 1672, being alone excepted). Chitnis does mention, however, that before going to Delhi (Agra) Shivaji visited Ramdas for the favour of his benediction. But there has been enough criticism of Chitnis.

32. Sarkar's *Aurangzeb*, vol. III, 325-329.