

CHAPTER - II

PRATAPSIKH'S EARLY CAREER

Raja Pratapsinh was the eldest son of Chhatrapati Shahu II. Shahu II, popularly known as Abasaheb Maharaj, was the eldest son of Trimbakji Bhosale of Wari who belonged to the branch of Vithoji the great uncle of Shivaji. Pratapsinh was born on 18th January 1793 in the fort of Satara. Shahu II had three sons from his queen Anandibai Maisaheb, viz. Pratapsinh Baba, Ramchandra Bhausaheb and Shahaji Appasaheb.¹ Being an eldest son of the Chhatrapati of the Marathas, Pratapsinh was a natural successor to the throne. But after the death of Chhatrapati Shahu I Maratha kings were not in a position to assert their rights. During the reign of Shahu I the Peshwas gradually became powerful and after the death of Shahu I they virtually became the rulers of the Maratha kingdom. Naturally the position of the Chhatrapatis became very weak and they remained only the titular heads of the State. The Peshwa even tried to neglect the order of Chhatrapati and they took the whole administration of the state in their own hands.

Pratapsinh's father king Shahu II came to know the real position of Chhatrapati. He was a shrewd and spirited man. He wanted to retrieve the lost prestige of the Maratha Chhatrapati. He was helped in this endeavour by his spirited brother Chaturising Bhosale. At the time of the appointment of Bajirao II to the post of Peshwa, Bajirao even promised to give due respect to Chhatrapati of Satara. He promised

Chhatrapati Shahu II,

" If I get the robes of Peshwaship you will gain prestige and authority like the late Chhatrapati Shahu and under your control, I will spread Maratha power like Bajirao I".²

But after his appointment as the Peshwa, Bajirao II did not keep his promise. Like his predecessors Bajirao II also tried to concentrate the power of the State in his own hands and neglect the position of Chhatrapati. Naturally the relations of Bajirao II and King Shahu II remained from the beginning far from satisfactory. Bajirao II tried to impose each and every kind of restriction on the Chhatrapati. Raja Shahu II and his family lived at fort Satara under the control of Nana Phadnis. Only for a formal occasion such as marriage ceremony of the Peshwa he was invited. Chhatrapati had no authority to do any administrative work. The Chhatrapatis who succeeded Shahu after 1749, were the titular rulers of the Maratha kingdom, and the Peshwas or their Karbharies had usurped the royal authority.

Pratapsinh was no exception to this. Like his father, he also spent his early life as a prisoner in the hands of the Peshwa. Peshwa Bajirao II purposefully tried to see that Pratapsinh did not receive good and proper education.³ He wished to keep the successor to the Maratha throne in ignorance. So the two men Kashi Shivaram Bendre and Visaji Pant Kaluskar, who were appointed by the Peshwa to keep watch on the activities of Shahu II, made every attempt to see that

he did not get a teacher to teach Pratapsinh.⁴ Moreover nobody came forward to teach the son of Chhatrapati because of the Peshwa's fear.

Nevertheless king Shahu II and his queen and Pratapsinh's mother Anandibai Maisaheb proved to be skilful and shrewd parents. Both of them understood Maratha politics very well. Even the administrator like Mountstuart Elphinstone had very high regards for Maisaheb. He discribed her as, "an intelligent lady, a woman of talent and address, prossessing good manners and good qualities".⁵

Anandibai Maisaheb was the fourth rani of king Shahu II. His first rani Laxmibai was the daughter of Narayan Mohite, Kamallabai the second rani was the sister of Narsinh-rao Gujar, his third rani Gunvantabai was the sister of Abbajiraje Mahadik and the forth rani Anandibai Maisaheb came from the famous Shirke family of Sangmeshwar. She was the daughter of Bhavanji Raje Shirke.⁶ She was married to Shahu II on 25th March 1786. She was kept in confinement in fort of Satara along with her husband from 1798 to 1808. During this period she gave birth to three sons. After her husband's death in 1808, she was set free and thereafter she began to live in Satara along with her sons.

Eventhough Peshwa Bajirao II and his men tried to see that Pratapsinh did not get proper education; the shrewd Anandibai Maisaheb made every arrangement of her son's education. It was true that Pratapsinh did not get formal education from a teacher appointed for that purpose, but

Maisaheb taught him everything about administration of the State. She did this work during the late hours at night.⁷ So that Peshwa and his men did not notice their activities. One English writer pointed out, " the queen mother managed her horse with great dexterity. She bore the traces of great beauty, wore a rich dress of embroidered muslin. She did not conceal her face and was both familiar and talkative with such officers as approached her. She had none of that timidity, which one naturally supposes to belong to Hindu ladies. In short she appeared to be woman possessed of much natural ability and greater presence of mind. She was intelligent spiritly and beautiful."⁸

Coronation of Pratapsinh (1808) :

King Shahu II died on 4th May 1808 in the Satara fort. He was succeeded by his eldest son Pratapsinh who was coronated on 16th May 1808. Pratapsinh was hardly fifteen years old when he was coronated. In the presence of Peshwa Bajirao II and Trimbakji Dingle an amount of Rs.8000/- was spent for the coronation ceremony and 100 shots were fired from a cannon to celebrate the occasion and it was done at the behest of the Peshwa Bajirao II.⁹ The coronation ceremony of Pratapsinh was performed in accordance with the 'Puranoc Mantras' which meant that the Chhatrapati of Satara was not a true Kshatriya. This coronation in accordance with the Puranoc Mantras was also performed according to the orders of Peshwa Bajirao II.¹⁰ Pratapsinh's mother Anandibai Maisaheb understood the intentions of Peshwa but at that time as she was

helpless, she could not oppose the Peshwa. Therefore, she calmly accepted the 'Puranoc' way of coronation.¹¹ Pratapsinh was ignorant about the administration. ^{So} ~~She~~ naturally it was the queen mother popularly known as Maisaheb who helped him in administering the state during the early years of his career.

Raja Pratapsinh had three wives. His first wife named Ambikabai, belonged to Mohite family. She was married to Pratapsinh on 16th May 1808 the day of his coronation. She died in 1821. The second wife named Laxmibai was the younger sister of his first wife. She died at Banaras. His third wife's name was Rajasbai.¹²

Pratapsinh's Relations with the Peshwa :

Peshwa who was originally one of the eight ministers under Shivaji carved out his own special position in the beginning of Shahu's regime and consequently the Peshwa dynasty was founded at Poona. This significant change had two important consequences. It relegated the system of Ashta-pradhan Council to the background. Secondly it created two distinct classes of Sardars in the Maratha Empire. One created by the Chhatrapati and another by the Peshwas. Gaikwads, Dabhades and the Bhosales of Nagpur asserted that they held their possessions by virtue of the grants or sanadas issued by Shahu and were naturally equals of the Peshwas. The new Sardars like the Shindes, the Holkars, the Rastas, the Phadkes, the Patwardhans, the Bundelas and the Purandares

thought that the Peshwa was their master whom they were bound to serve. In course of time all these Sardars began to think themselves as independent rulers of their own jagirs. Thus the Maratha Empire was converted from an 'Organic Whole' into an 'Inorganic Mass'. Such was the effect of the rise of the Peshwas under whose leadership the transfer of power from Chhatrapati to Peshwa took place and generated effect on the overall social situation in Maharashtra.

The Chhatrapatis who came to power after 1749 were the titular rulers of the Maratha kingdom and the Peshwas or their Sardars usurped the royal power. At the time of his coronation Pratapsinh was a young boy of sixteen. He did not have previous experience of administration of the state. He was then immatur too. So his mother Anandibai Maisaheb carried on the work of administration on behalf of Pratapsinh. Peshwa Bajirao II was present at Satara at the time of Pratapsinh's coronation. He recognised Pratapsinh as the Chhatrapati of the Marathas. But he did not want to transfer his own power and authority to the Chhatrapati. He also wished that the Chhatrapati should remain only the nominal head of the State and real authority should concentrate in the hands of the Peshwa. Correspondence is available between Bajirao II and Maisaheb from which it can be concluded that the relations between them were quite normal upto 1812. However in 1811, Peshwa Bajirao II succeeded in capturing Chautrsingh Bhosale the late Chhatrapati Shahu II's brother who had raised a standard of revolt against the domination of the Peshwas.

This event adversely affected the then existing relationship between the royal family of Satara and Peshwa Bajirao II. After Chatursing's arrest and imprisonment in Kangori fort relationship between the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa was much strained. Consequently Chhatrapati Pratapsinh along with his family was confined in the fort of Satara from 1812 to 1818 A.D. Number of Yadis are also available which reveal that after 1812 complaints were often made by the Chhatrapati to Peshwa Bajirao II about non-fulfilment of the needs of the royal family. Bajirao made no arrangements for his proper education. He was also kept ignorant about the administration.¹⁴ In spite of being a Chhatrapati he had no power or independence.

Chhatrapati Pratapsinh wished to retrieve the lost prestige of the Chhatrapati. He wanted to become the real head of the State. He knew that Chhatrapati was the real master of the State and the Peshwa was merely a servant of the Chhatrapati, and he wanted to establish these facts. After 1812 the strain in the relations of the two became very evident.¹⁵

Pratapsinh's relations with Mountstuart Elphinstone :

Chhatrapati Pratapsinh was well aware of the fact that he would not secure justice from Peshwa Bajirao II. He knew that Bajirao would not allow the Chhatrapati to become independent and powerful. So Pratapsinh and his mother

Maisaheb made secret approaches to Mountstuart Elphinstone the British resident at Poona requesting for his help against Bajirao II.

Mountstuart Elphinstone is one of the most cherished and honoured names in East India Company's annals of civil service. He came to India in 1796, then a lad of sixteen years, to serve as a writer in the civil Establishment of Bengal. He always felt warmed and inspired by the mention of Homer. It was during the critical years of the Company's struggle for political supremacy in India that his talents gradually unfolded. Uncanny command of statecraft, remarkable organising capacity, administrative calibre and perfect composure of mind led him from one position to the next higher, till he became the British Resident at Poona in 1811. He was undoubtedly the chief architect of the consolidation of British power in Western India.¹⁶

In 1817 Pratapsinh sent his agent Narsu Kakade to meet Elphinstone for seeking his help against Bajirao II. Accordingly Narsu Kakade met Elphinstone at Poona. In that meeting Elphinstone told Narsu Kakade that the British would soon wage a war against Peshwa Bajirao II and at that time the Chhatrapati should act cleverly and rush to the help of the British.¹⁷ Pratapsinh and his mother thus opened secret negotiation with Elphinstone and General Smith. In this connection the Chhatrapati's envoys Narsu Kakade and Balwant Malhar Chitnis¹⁸ called on Elphinstone at Pune and

Rahimatpur and they also called on General Smith at Akhuj. At Rahimatpur Elphinstone suggested that the forces would make a surprise night attack on the Peshwa and taking advantage of the confusion created by this Raja should escape and join the British.¹⁹

Third Anglo-Maratha War :

The third Anglo-Maratha war of 1817-1818 is important in the history of the Marathas mainly for two reasons. Firstly it wiped out the Maratha power and brought the Maratha country under the direct administration of the East India Company and secondly, it created the new State of Satara.

In the year 1817 Peshwa Bajirao II started war against the British. When the Peshwa was compelled to leave Poona he first came to Satara and removed the Chhatrapati along with his family from Satara. Thereafter Bajirao put them in a lonely fort of Wassota under the pretext of greater security but in reality it was done with the view of making Pratapsinh's communication with Elphinstone more difficult.²⁰

On 5th November 1817, Bajirao II attacked the British forces at Pune without success. On 16th November Bajirao precipitately retreated to Pandharpur, and on 17th November, the British flag was hoisted on the Shaniwar Wada the seat of the Peshwas at Pune. The Peshwa proceeded via Jejuri to the south with the intention of securing the Chhatrapati and his family lest they should desert to the English. On reaching Mahuli he sent Naro Apte to fetch the Chhatrapati from the

Wassota Fort.²¹ On 14th December 1817, the Chhatrapati with his mother and two brothers joined Bajirao at Sidhatek near Shrigonda. On 1st January 1818, the British won a victory against Bajirao's forces at Koregaoh.

Elphinstone emphasised the importance of the capture of Satara. He argued that as Satara was the seat of the Chhatrapati and the capital of the Maratha Empire the loss of Satara, therefore, would injure the Peshwa's cause much than that of any other stronger places. This would not only prevent the Peshwa from recruiting and refreshing his army but more important still was the impression it would create on the people that he was only a fugitive or a mere adventurer.²²

In consonance with the suggestion made by Elphinstone, the movements of the British army were directed in February 1818 towards the capture of Satara. On 7th February 1818 Pritzler's force joined the army of Smith and they together besieged Satara on the 10th February 1818. The fort was surrendered to the British the same evening after receiving a few shells.

At noon the British flag was flown but was soon replaced by the Raja's. On 11th February 1818, a Maratha Proclamation was issued by Elphinstone stating the British case against Peshwa Bajirao II.²³ It declared that the British Government was compelled to take military measures to drive the Peshwa from his dominions because of his act of perfidy and violence; and that in justice they had decided to

restore the Chhatrapati, as the sovereign of the Maratha / State, which rightfully belonged to him.²⁴

Satara Proclamation :

The proclamation issued on the 11th February 1818 by Mountstuart Elphinstone runs as under :

"From the time when Bajerao ascended the Musnud, his country was a prey to faction, and there was no efficient Government to protect the people. At length Bajerao was expelled from his dominions, and took refuge in Bassein where he was dependant on the bounty of Khunderao Rastia. At this time he entered into alliance with the British Government, and was immediately restored to the full possession of his authority. The tranquillity that has been enjoyed since that period is known to all ranks of men. At Bajerao's restoration, the country was laid waste by war and famine, the people were reduced to misery, and the Government derived scarcely any revenue from its lands.

Since then, in spite of the farming system and the exactions of Bajerao's officers, the country has completely recovered, though the protection afforded it by the British Government and Bajerao has accumulated those treasurers which he is now employing against his benefactors. The British Government not only protected the Peshwa's own possessions, but maintained his rights abroad. It could not only, without injury to the right of others, restore his authority over the Maratha Chiefs, which had expired long before its alliance

with him, but it paid the greatest attention to satisfying his admissible demands, and had succeeded in spite of many difficulties in adjusting some and putting others in a train of settlement. Among these were Bajerao's claims on the Gaekwar. The British Government prevailed on that prince to send his Prime Minister to Poona for the express purpose of settling those demands, and they were on the eve of adjustment with great profit to the Peshwa, when Gungadhar Shastrey, the Gaekwar's Vakeel, was murdered by Trimbuckjee Dainglia the Peshwa's minister, while in actual attendance on his court, and during the solemn pilgrimage of Pandharpur..... Strong suspicious rested on Bajerao, who was accused by the voice of the whole country, but the British Government, unwilling to credit such charges against a prince and an ally, contented itself with demanding the punishment of Trimbukjee. This was refused, until the British Government had marched an army to support its demand. Yet it made no claim on the Peshwa for its expenses, and inflicted no punishment for his protection of a murderer; it simply required the surrender of the criminal; and on Bajerao's compliance, it restored him to the undiminished enjoyment of all the benefits of the alliance. Notwithstanding this generosity Bajerao immediately commenced on a new system of intrigues and used every exertion to turn all the powers of India against the British Government. At length he gave the signal of disturbances by fomenting an insurrection in his own dominions, and prepared to support the insurgents by open force. The British Government

had then no remedy but to arm in turn. Its troops entered Bajerao's territories at all points, and surrounded him in his capital, before any of those with whom he had intrigued had time to stir. Bajerao's life was now in the hands of the British Government; but that Government moved by Bajerao's professions of gratitude for past favours and of entire dependence on its moderation, once more resolved to continue him on his throne, after imposing such terms on him as might secure it from his future perfidy. The principal of these terms was a commutation of the contingent which the Peshwa was bound to furnish, for money equal to the pay of a similar body of troops; and on their being agreed to, the British Government restored Bajerao to its friendship and proceeded to settle the Pindarries who had so long been the pest of the peaceable inhabitants of India and of none more than the Peshwa's own subjects. Bajerao affected to enter with zeal into an enterprise so worthy of a great Government and assembled a large army on pretence of cordially assisting in the contest. But in the midst of all his professions he spared neither pains nor money to engage the powers of Hindoostan to combine against the British; and no sooner had the British troops marched towards the haunts of the Pindaries, than he seized the opportunity to commence a war without a declaration, and without even an alleged ground of complaint. He attacked and burned the house of the British Resident, contrary to the laws of nations and the practice of India, plundered and seized one peaceable travellers and put two British officers to an

ignominious death. Bajerao himself found the last transaction too barbarous to avow, but as the perpetrators are still unpunished and retain their command in his army, the guilt remains with him. After the commencement of the war Bajerao threw off the mask regarding the murder of Gungadhar Shastri and avowed his participation in the crime by uniting his cause with that of the murderer. By these acts of perfidy and violence, Bajerao has compelled the British Government to drive him from his Musnud and to conquer his dominions. For this purpose a force has gone in pursuit of Bajerao, which will allow him to rest; another is employed in taking his forts, a third has arrived by the way of Ahmednagur and a greater force than either is now entering by Khandesh under the personal command of His Excellency Sir Thomas Hislop. A force under General Munro is reducing the Carnatic, and a force from Bombay is taking the forts in the Konkun, and occupying that country, so that in a shorttime no trace of Bajerao will remain.

The Raja of Satara who is now a prisoner in Bajerao's hands will be released and placed at the head of an independent sovereignty of such an extent as may maintain the Raja / and his family in comfort and dignity. With this view the fort of Satara has been taken, the Raja's flag has been set up in it, and his former ministers have been called into employment. Whatever country is assigned to the Raja will be administered by him and he will be bound to establish a system of justice and order. The rest of the country will be held by the Honorable Company. The revenue will be collected for the

Government, but all property real or personal will be secured. All Wuttuns and Inams (hereditary lands) Wurshasuns (annual stipends) and all religious and charitable establishments will be protected, and all religious sects will be tolerated and their customs maintained as far as is just and reasonable. The farming system is abolished, officers shall be forthwith appointed to collect a regular and moderate revenue on the part of the British Government, to administer justice and to encourage the cultivators of the soil; they will be authorized to allow remissions in considerations of the circumstances of the times. All persons are prohibited paying revenue to Bajerao or his adherents, or assisting them in any shape; no reduction will be made from the revenue on account of such payments. Wuttundars and other holders of lands are required to quit his standard, and return to their villages within two months from this time. The zamindars will report the names of those who remain and all who fail to appear in that time shall forfeit their lands, and shall be pursued without remission, until they are entirely crushed.

All persons, whether belonging to the enemy or otherwise, who may attempt to lay waste the country, or to plunder the roads, will be put to death, whenever they are found."²⁵

Captain Grant Duff who played an important part in the fall of Satara gives a fine description of the lull before the fall of Satara and its condition afterwards in his journal right from the 10th February to the 22nd May 1818.²⁶

Battle of Ashti (19th February 1818) :

In the battle of Ashti Bapu Gokhale the Senapati of Peshwa was overtaken by General Smith and was killed in a stiff action on 19th February 1818, and it marked the end of rule of Peshwa Bajirao II. The Peshwa lost all hopes of recovering his position and his jagirdars too came to the same conclusion. Raja Pratapsinh along with his mother and two brothers fell into the hands of the English after the defeat of Bajirao II at Ashti as per the pre-plan.²⁷ Therefore, after this battle they submitted, and sent their respective envoys to Munro asking for an agreement. One of the important political outcome of the battle of Ashti was the liberation of Chhatrapati of Satara and his family from the Peshwa's captivity. 'British India Advocate' the contemporary Anglo-India journal expressed the view regarding the rescue of Pratapsinh from Peshwa's custody in the following words,

" The rescue of the Raja or rather his giving | himself to us at the battle of Ashti terminated the Deccan War. The tributary chiefs of the Maratha Empire owed obedience to Bajeerao, the Peshwa, only in so far as he was the organ of the Raja. Our victory at Ashti owed its importance not to the gallant action, or to the defeat of the Peshwa, or to the death of Gokhale, but our good fortune in obtaining the person of the Raja. The

Hon'ble Mr. Elphinstone, the Political Agent with the army, foresaw this, the Government of Bombay also foresaw it, and, in consequence sent an over-land express to communicate it, with their congratulation to the Government at home. An over-land express in those days was only had recourse to upon some rare and important occasion".²⁸

Bajirao surrendered to the British on June 3, 1818 bringing the story of Maratha statehood to an end. Bajirao II was exiled from Maharashtra and was given a pension of Rs. 8 lakhs and was asked to reside at Bithur on the bank of Ganga.²⁹ Mountstuart Elphinstone was a clever statesman. He very shrewdly used this event for the advantage of the British rule in Maharashtra. Elphinstone's idea of diplomacy was based on morality rather than expediency as the basis of politics. He was undoubtedly the chief architect of the consolidation of British power in Western India.³⁰ His role in the British victory over the Marathas in the third Anglo-Maratha war was very vital one.

Restoration of Satara Gadi :

During the third Anglo-Maratha war Elphinstone and General Pritzler captured the fort of Satara on 10th February 1818, and declared their intention to restore Pratapsinh to his ancestral position. At the battle of Ashti Chhatrapati Pratapsinh along with his mother and two brothers fell into the hands of the English. After his rescue from the captivity

of the Peshwa Pratapsinh and Elphinstone exchanged cordial visits at Belsar near Saswad on 4th March 1818.³¹ In that meeting Elphinstone was accompanied by James Grant, Gen. Smith, Russel, Bilimore and Balajipant Natu. Elphinstone for the first time met the Raja and his family. In this respect he writes,

" the Raja is about 20 years of age and seems frank and good humoured, not destitute of intelligence."³²

Thereafter Gen. Pritzler took charge of the Raja on 9th March 1818, and towards the end of the month, the Raja escorted by Elphinstone and General Pritzler left for Satara. On 10th April 1818 the Raja entered his capital in procession with the pomp of a prince and the delight of a school boy.^{33/} Then Pratapsinh formally ascended the throne of Satara in full 'Darbar' on April 10, 1818.³⁴ The Raja and his brothers mounted upon elephants, went in procession through the town. When he dismounted at the palace, three or four sheep were > killed and a quantity of holy water poured out. A pavilion or mandap had been created in the court of the palace. The Raja ascended the throne of Shivaji; and then rose water and flowers were distributed. Later Elphinstone and his party took their leave. The next day the Raja paid him a visit./ Elphinstone gave presents of jewels and cloth to the Raja his brothers and his retinue.³⁵ On 12th April several proclamations were issued speaking of the friendship between company's Government and the Raja's Government. On 13th April, Raja Pratapsinh gave a banquet in honour of Elphinstone and

honoured him by giving jewels and clothes. A diamond ring was presented by Raja's mother Maisaheb to Elphinstone on his leaving Satara.³⁶

Elphinstone appointed Captain James Grant an army officer on his own staff as the collector and political agent of Satara. He played a prominent part in the late war and was present in all the three battles, Grant's task was more difficult than that of other collectors. He had to lead the Raja into the ways of the British Administrative practice.³⁷ Elphinstone instructed him that the Raja's flag might be hoisted in the villages and that it might also explained to the inhabitants that they were the Raja's subjects. Further Elphinstone added,

" it will be proper to impress on them as well as /
on the Raja that it is not intended to revive even
in name the Empire of Sheevajee".

Grant was to secure Raja's good will, but he was to make it quite clear that the authority of the British Government was in reality supreme. 'Otherwise' he said, "the machine we are setting up will be liable to be turned against us."⁴¹ →

The Raja immediately issued a proclamation announcing his friendly relations with the British Government and revealing the particular ill treatment that he had been meted out by Bajirao II. On 14th April, a proclamation was issued in his name from Satara. It declared, "Bajirao had placed ourselves and families under restraint and according to information

received from his Kamdar, he had it in contemplation to put → us to death. But a regard for a condition of the late Maharaja prompted them to release us from the custody of Bajerao, and replace us on the throne, with every demonstration of consideration".⁴² Though the Raja was installed on 10th April 1818, a treaty of 'perpetual friendship and alliance' was concluded on 25th September 1819. Raja Pratapsinh made over the entire powers to the British Resident for the proper organisation of his state establishment till such time, he and his officers developed full acquaintance with those novel mechanics of administration and had collected substantial revenue for self propelled sufficiency.

Thus Pratapsinh came on the Gadi of Satara with the help of the British and their resident in Poona Mountstuart Elphinstone. But Elphinstone shrewdly kept the reigns of administration of the Satara state in British hands. He told Pratapsinh that the British are interested only in destroying the authority of rebellious Peshwa Bajirao II and they would install Pratapsinh on the Gadi of Satara. Elphinstone described

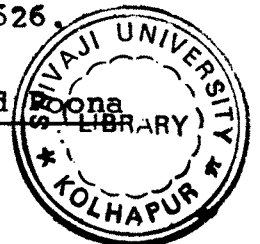
"The Bombay government's aim in setting up a small → state of Satara ruled by Raja Pratapsinh was to afford an honourable maintenance to the representative of the ancient princes of this country, and to establish among the Marathas a counterpoise to the remaining influence of the former Brahmin Government."⁴²

But soon Pratapsinh came to know that he was deceived by the British, and that he had got very limited powers regarding the administration of the State. Pratapsinh was not prepared to accept this arrangement. He wanted to be a real head of sovereign State. He did not want to remain as a puppet in the hands of the British. Later on this resentment in Pratapsinh's mind proved to be the main cause of conflict between the Chhatrapati and the British during the latter half of Pratapsinh's regime.

Thus it is clear that Raja Pratapsinh didn't get an opportunity to receive education in his tender age. During these years his parents especially his mother acted as his teacher who taught him a few basic things. When he was crowned as Chhatrapati in 1808 he was only a figure-head of the Marathas. Like his father he too had to live in Peshwa's captivity. Pratapsinh's relations, with Peshwa Bajirao II worsened after Latursing's arrest in 1811. The Raja in order to liberate himself from the Peshwa's tyranny secretly approached the British resident at Poona. It was due to his cordial relations with the British that after the final defeat of Peshwa Bajirao II a small state of Satara was carved out and the Raja was installed on its throne. Thus Pratapsinh owed the revival of his position as Chhatrapati of the Marathas though only in a limited sense to the British.

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