CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Central Provinces of the nineteenth century was situated in the centre of India, comprising hills and plateaus which separated the plains of Hindustan from the Deccan. The province lay between $17^\circ 47'$ and $24^\circ 27'$ North and between $75^\circ 57'$ and $94^\circ 24'$ East. It was shaped rectangular, being broader at the lower than the upper extreme. The length from north to south was about 800 kilometres and from east to west was also about the same. The total area was 18,124.9 square kilometres, of which 13,134.8 square kilometres was the British territory and the rest belonged to the feudatory chiefs. The province was surrounded on the north and north-west by the Central India States and a small area of Sagar District by the United Provinces. It was bounded on the west by the States of Bhopal and Indore and the Bombay Presidency. On the south, there were Berar and the Nizam's Dominions, and on the south-east, the northern parts of the Madras Presidency. In the east, it was bounded by the tributary States of Bihar and Orissa in the Bengal Presidency. The Central Provinces thus was generally surrounded by the Princely States and casually by several British provinces.¹

The province was divided into several tracts of highlands of 458 to 610 metres in height and fertile plains of different dimensions. In the north, there was a vast expanse of the Vindhyan plateau interspersed by small plains of varying fertility. The rivers of this area, flowing northward, constitute the tributaries of the Jamuna.