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## FOREWORD

BY SIR GILBERT VYLE

OPPORTUNITY! It is the fashion of the time to sigh for it and to recall the good old days of the Merchant-Adventurers, the Conquistadores, the Nabobs, the Forty-niners, or simply "pre-war," when a man of initiative, determination, and resource could earn a living. And yet I cannot believe that the present is any less fruitful of opportunities than the past. I do not observe that successful men of today behave as if opportunities were only to be discovered in museums. But neither do they sit still and wait for opportunity to open the office door and deliver the order with cash in advance.

I suppose the fundamental principle of business is: Find out what the people want and give it them, of the highest possible quality and at the lowest possible price. The man who discovers a new want creates a new industry. He is a public benefactor. So is he who fills an existing want more adequately than it has been filled before.

What we need, therefore, is more knowledge about each other. We hear a great deal about "lost markets," and, indeed, the merchant or manufacturer may survey the world literally from China to Brazil and find it a gloomy prospect. And if anyone were to tell him that there exists, within the British Empire, an area eight times the size of Great Britain, with a population the size of Germany, ripe for economic development, possessed of vast natural resources, and yet almost unknown and commercially almost unscratched, he simply would not believe it.

Yet it is true. The Indian States, which are not part of British India, whose peoples are within the Empire but are

not British subjects, whose rulers are "sovereign" but in close treaty alliance with the British Crown (wherein the writ of Congress does not run), which have been left in the background but which are now being rediscovered by statesmen as a number of *terra firma* in the quicksands of Indian politics—these States are such an area. Politically they provide a problem without precedent or analogy. Economically they offer unexampled opportunities.

It was to discover facts about the States, their history, their problems, their prospects and their possibilities that the Indian States Business Group was formed some time ago. That Group had the advantage of listening to papers read by men having first-hand knowledge of the States; and it is with the object of giving wider publicity to the contents of those papers that this volume has been compiled. I wholeheartedly commend it to all those, whether they be statesmen, politicians, merchants, manufacturers, or merely men-in-the-street, by whose wants and activities all the others are set and maintained in motion and even in being. I think its contents will be to them, as they were to me, a revelation of opportunity both for statesmanship and commerce.

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