DEATH OF LORD LEVERHULME

A GREAT INDUSTRIAL FIGURE

His Wonderful Energy and Constructive Ability

London, May 7.—The death is announced of Viscount Leverhulme, chairman of Lever Bros., and founder of Port Sunlight.— (Reuter's Special Service.)

London, May 7.—Lord Leverhulme died at 4.20 this morning at his residence at Hampstead.

He had been ill with bronchitis for some days, and was unable to fulfil a number of engagements, but only yesterday was it disclosed that his condition was serious.

Following an improvement earlier in the week, the inflammation of the lungs extended, and his condition gradually became worse.

His death casts a gloom over the All-Arts Week, which opened on Monday at Grosvenor-House, which was lent by Lord Leverhulme for the exhibition arranged by the Faculty of Arts, in fulfilment of his announcement when he acquired the mansion that it would be devoted to artistic purposes.—(Reuter's Special Service).

Lord Leverhulme's life was one of great achievements. From a small factory started nearly 40 years ago he built up the present firm of Lever Bros Ltd., one of the biggest industrial enterprises in the world; he conceived and created Port Sunlight, the model industrial town of England; and he introduced a very successful co-partnership scheme for his employes.

Born at Bolton in 1857, the late chairman of Lever Bros. was educated at the Bolton Church Institute, and at 20 entered his father's grocery shop as an assistant. He removed to Wigan in 1877, and in 1885 he started manufacturing soap in a small factory at Warrington. The output was about 20 tons a day, but it grew rapidly, and it was at this time that William Hesketh Lever, as he then was, must have had dreams of the world-wide organisation he was to build up.

SUNLIGHT SOAP.

A remarkable man, he had wonderful energy, and constructive ability, and limitless vision; to dream was to act. His first stroke of genius was the discovery of the recipe for a household soap which would not turn rancid. Sunlight was that soap, and the demand for it was so great that in 1888 the business was transferred to Port Sunlight. Lord Leverhulme's admirers say that one can not appreciate his genius unless one sees Port Sunlight. He was the first industrialist to pay as much attention to the housing and creation of his employees as to the construction of his factory.

His ideas were carried into good effect at Port Sunlight, which is now a self-contained town, governed to a large extent by the inhabitants themselves. Comfortable homes, schools, churches, a library, and recreation grounds enable the worker to live happily near the factory. In 1909 Mr. Lever (he was knighted in 1911, created Baron Leverhulme in 1917, and Viscount in 1922) introduced his co-partnership scheme, which was made retrospective to 1900 setting aside £500,000 worth of the company's stock for the purpose. The founder of the great firm always believed in studying the interests of his employees, and his efforts on their behalf were undoubtedly responsible for the loyal service which characterises Lever Bros. and its associated companies. It was this devoted service that helped him to extend the ramifications of his firm to all parts of the world.

COMPREHENSIVE ORGANISATION.

Thoroughness was one of the secrets of Lord Leverhulme's success. The whole business of the firm was organised on the most comprehensive lines. At an early stage Lord Leverhulme directed his attention to the sources of raw material. He also began establishing his factories nearest the markets—in Germany, in France, Belgium and Switzerland, and with the Dominions.

The Durban works were built in 1910, and although at that time the prospects of the market may not have justified the expenditure, the works were planned and built on the most extensive lines. To-day the Sunlight works at Capetown and Durban are the most up to date in the country.

In building up his great enterprise Lord Leverhulme had setbacks and experienced difficulties, but he overcame them with characteristic fearlessness.

FAMOUS LIBEL ACTION.

In 1907 he figured in what was described as one of the greatest law suits in the history of British legal procedure. His policy

as one of the greatest law suits in the history of British legal procedure. His policy was attacked by the Northcliffe Press, and he instituted proceedings for libel. The action was a costly one, but Lord Leverhulme won, and he gave the £100,000 damages he was awarded to the Liverpool University. Sir Edward Carson, who was leading counsel for Lord Leverhulme, described the Press campaign as "a libel of a most deliberate character, carried on for weeks, with the deliberate object of smashing Lever Bros."

Lord Leverhulme was mayor of Bolton from 1918 to 1919. He unsuccessfully essayed to enter Parliament in 1892, 1894 and 1895 at Birkenhead, and again at Worral in 1900, but he was elected at Worral as a Liberal in 1906. In 1913 he presented Stafford House to the nation. He was keenly interested in art and architecture, but his association with the former was not a happy one, and he was criticised for his original method of expressing disapproval of a portrait painted by a distinguished artist.

Lord Leverhulme was the owner of large estates in the Isle of Lewis. His London residence was at the Hill, Hamstead Heath. The grounds of the Hill were renowned for their beauty. Illustrations of his estates are published on page 15.

Lord Leverhulme travelled a good deal, and his independent expressions of opinion often aroused controversy. He visited South Africa in 1920.

Lady Lever died in July 1913. Lord Leverhulme is succeeded by his only son, the Hon. William Hulme Lever.

LOCAL WORKS CLOSED.

As soon as the cable news of the death of Lord Leverhulme was received in Durban the local works were closed for the day.

Mr. F. Goodall, the managing director, who is at present absent in Capetown, will have a poignant reminder of his friendship with his late chief; for by a recent mail Lord Leverhulme sent Mr. Goodall a fine full length portrait of himself painted by Philip A. de Laszlo, M.V.O.