

So Clean

So clean

Lord Leverhulme, soap
and civilisation

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This book is an unorthodox biography of William Hesketh Lever, 1st Lord Leverhulme (1851-1925), the founder of the Lever Brothers' Sunlight Soap empire. Unlike previous biographies, which have focused on the man's life story and eccentricities, or just considered one aspect of his career, *So Clean* places him squarely in his social and cultural context and is fully informed by recent historical scholarship. Much more than a warts-and-all biography, the book uses Lever as an entry-point for contextualized and comparative essays on the history of advertising; on factory paternalism, town planning, the Garden City movement and their ramifications across the twentieth century; and on colonialism and forced labour in the Belgian Congo and the South Pacific. It concludes with a discussion of his extraordinary attempt, in his final years, to transform crofting and fishing in the Outer Hebrides. Written in an engaging and accessible style, *So Clean* will appeal to academics and students working in business, social, cultural and imperial history.

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