

HISTORY OF PERFIN USERS

SIR TITUS SALT OF SALTAIRE near BRADFORD, YORKSHIRE

By Rosemary Smith.

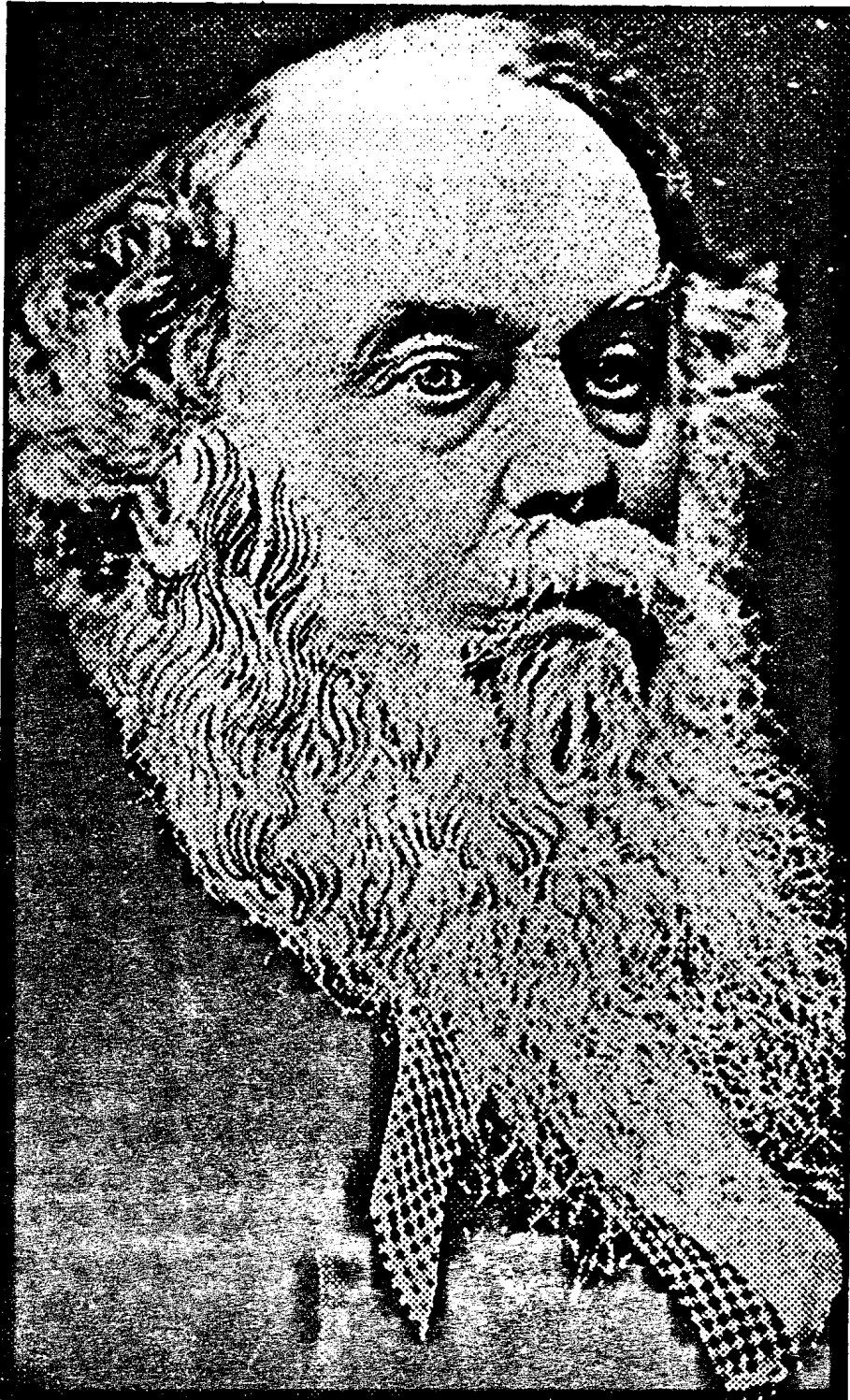
Sir Titus Salt - 1803 to 1876 - ranks equally with contemporary social philanthropists such as Rowntree and Bournville. He was one of the foremost employers of labour in the country and his business ability, flair and imagination helped to establish Bradford as the international centre of the worsted textile trade. Salt, senior, came to Bradford with his family in 1822 and started business as a woolstapler. Titus trained with Rouse & Son for two years and then joined his father's firm. In 1834 he started his own business as a worsted stuff manufacturer. By 1843 he had made a fortune exploiting the use of new fibres in the worsted trade - for example, alpaca. He had six mills on the go at one time and employed many outworkers.

By 1850, new machinery being invented and the depression of the 30's and 40's at an end, he wanted to expand, but the town of Bradford was too crowded, communications poor and water supplies inadequate. He therefore looked to the surrounding countryside and chose a site on the river Aire a few miles to the west of Bradford.

Time Industrial Revolution had spawned much dirt, filth and unhealthy conditions for the working classes as well as vast wealth for factory owners. Titus Salt knew that something had to be done to improve the lives of the working classes, socially, morally and financially. His close working relationships within Bradford had given him first hand experience of the problems of poor housing, inadequate water supplies and unsanitary refuse disposal.

His plans for his new works had to include the whole community. He wanted decent housing for his workers, larger houses for the foremen, a school for the children, a church to cater for the moral well being of his workers, an almshouse for the elderly needy, a baths and washhouse, works dining room, shops and a public park and recreation ground. Every need was catered for; in fact 'from the cradle to the grave' in microcosm. It was the most famous of the Victorian 'model' villages and many national and international politicians and social innovators visited Saltaire.

One building was conspicuous by its absence: especially in the prevalence of such places in the Industrial Slums: this was a public house. Saltaire remained 'dry' until September 1993 when for the first time Bradford magistrates granted a liquor license to a restaurant in Sir Titus' old boathouse. It was seeing this tiny item of news in The Daily Mail which reminded me of my covers from Salt's of Saltaire.



SIR TITUS

SALT

BARONET

1803-1876

