**THE PROSECUTION OF MR. BRADLAUGH.**

The case of "The Queen v. Bradlaugh and Besant" commenced on Monday in the Queen's Bench Division, before Lord Chief Justice Cockburn and a special jury. The trial excited great interest, the court being crowded at an early hour, and its approaches densely thronged. There was a large attendance of the members of the bar. The defendants were accommodated with seats in front of the bar, and the table before them was loaded with law books and legal documents, which both of them referred to from time to time. The Solicitor-General, Mr. Douglas Straight, and Mr. Mead appeared for the prosecution. The defendants conducted their own defence. A preliminary application to quash the indictment was refused, the point being reserved. The Solicitor-General then opened the ease, referring to "The Confessional Unmasked" to show that it was not necessary that there should be an intention to vitiate public morals, supposing that such was the general effect of the book. His lordship said in that case they would be criminally liable. Formal evidence of the publication having been given, Mrs. Besant addressed the Court for her defence, leaving it to Mr. Bradlaugh to establish that a similar course had been taken by a large number of eminent writers. She denied that the work was obscene, and argued that the information it conveyed was useful and necessary, and that opinion honestly expressed should not be put down because some police agents did not agree with it. She denounced the prosecution as a disgrace to English justice. Mrs. Besant had not concluded when the Court rose.

On Tuesday Mrs. Besant concluded her address and was followed by the codefendant, who was still addressing the Court when the adjournment took place. The Lord Chief Justice during the day admitted that the first chapter of the book, taken by itself, was perfectly honest and pure.

On Wednesday Mr. Bradlaugh concluded his address to the jury, and, having called witnesses, the case for the defence was brought to a close, and the Court adjourned.

On Thursday Mrs. Besant summed up the evidence which bad been adduced for the defence, being followed by Mr. Bradlaugh, who but brifly addressed the jury. In summing up the case, the Lord Chief Justice commented upon what he described as the mischievous character and effect of the prosecution, remarking that a more ill-advised or a more injudicious proceeding in the way of a prosecution bad probably never been brought into a court of justice. His Lordship further observed—was this book written with the intention of exciting improper passions and wantonness? There was not a single word from the beginning to the end of the work, dealing as it did with dry physical technicalities, which could have that effect. The question therefore was whether the cheeks advocated in this work were each as were opposed to morality. The Solicitor General said that they were contrary to the law of God and man-it was for the jury to say whether they took that view of the matter. Of the bond fides of the defendants in publishing the work with the view of relieving the misery of the poor and for bettering the condition of humanity there could be no doubt. But even if the use of the checks advocated in the pamphlet were legitimate, it was a question whether injury might not be done to the public morally by indicating to unmarried people how they might avoid the consequences of immorality. If the jury were of opinion that this work was calculated to injure public morals on any grounds, then, however pure and good the intention of the defendants might have been in publishing the work, it would be their duty to find them guilty. The jury occupied upwards of an hour and a half in considering their verdict, and they came to the conclusion that the book which was the subject of the prosecution was calculated to deprave public morals, bat they entirely exonerated the defendants from the charge of having had a corrupt motive in publishing it. Upon this the Lord Chief Justice directed the jury to find a verdict of Guilty. This having been done, the Lord Chief Justice postponed his sentence until next Thursday, the defendants being liberated on their own recognisances.