**THE PROSECUTION OF MR. BRADLAUGH AND MRS. BESANT,**

For printing and publishing an alleged obscene book-" The Fruits of Philosophy” --formed the subject of a long hearing on Tuesday and Thursday at the Landon Guildhall. Which was densely crowded. After the prosecuting counsel. Mr. Straight, had commenced to discuss the contents of the work, which is on the population question, the magistrate on the bench held a consultation. And Mr. Alderman Figgins said that he thought the ladies, who formed the majority of the audience, should retire, as the language used was scarcely fit for the area – Mr. Bradlaugh said that many of the ladies should have to be called as witnesses, and his own daughter were present; and for them he claimed the right of remaining in court,-- A consultation took place, and ultimately Mr. Figgins said he was sorry, after the remarks which had been made, that any woman should remain in court, He would however, state that no exercise would be allowed to be read from the work,-- After the case for the prosecution had closed, Mr. Bradlaugh said he was afraid it would be unless for him to ask the bench to **(UNREADABLE TEXT)** the charge without its going before a jury. It had been urged that the book was indecent. But they must make out a much at longer were against him before they could put him in peril of a verdict. He questioned the interpretation of the word “obscene” as given by the counsel for the prosecution, and quoted exclusively from many law books as to its proper definition, pointing principally to that of Lord Campbell that the word referred to “words written for the single purpose of corrupting the morals of youth” coming to the case of the Queen V. Hiking, referred to by Mr. Straight, he urged that the present prosecution did not come within the definition given there, as if he thought so it would he idle to take up the (UNREADABLE TEXT) of the court by offering any comments on his conduct. He then called attention to a work published by Masers. Churchill’s work being an expensive one, and his being only sixpences – should act in his favour. He would also call various other booksellers of high standing to show that works similar to their nature to that published by him had been issued by them—Mr. Straight said he should object to any such evidence being called, as the fact of absence works being published did not justify the defendants conduct –Mr. Bradlaugh said that they were not obscene. He then proceeded to quote extensively from John Stuart Mill’s “Principles of Political Economy,” and from the works of Mrs. Garrett Alderman, Mrs. Fawcett, and others, and urged that the pamphlet which he had published was directly without the scope of such a prosecution as had been instituted against him. People had urged that he had taken the matter up as a matter of notoriety; but that was far from his object, which was simply to ratio such a discussion as would set at rest the legality of the publication. He demanded that every one ought to show respect for the law of the country in which he lived. And he had no desire or intention of breaking it. He would call before them a lady with special experience of the subject to which the pamphlet referred, and who would give them her opinion as to its character. It required great courage on the part of a lady to go into the witness-box, and more especially as one of the newspaper had (UNEADABLE TEXT) in bitter terms a lady who had written to Mrs. Besant. Mr. Bradlaugh added that from many poor mothers throughout the country he had received numerous letters thanking him for issuing the work, -- The case was remanded until Thursday, when Mr. Bradlaugh said as he and Mrs. Besant had determined to abridge the case as far as possible, understanding that he would go to another place, he would now call some of the witnesses, so that they could be formally objected to, and he would finish his evidence after he had concluded his speech,--Dr. Robert Drysdale was then called, and said he was the author of several medical works, and had been in practice for many years, He had read the pamphlet—the subject of the present charge—twenty years ago—Mr. Bradlaugh: As a medical man, what is your opinion of that work?—Mr. Straight objected to the question, on the ground that it asked the witness to decide a question which the magistrates had to decide now and the jury afterwards,--Ald. Figgins decided that he could not receive simple opinions, and this decision would apply to all witnesses of the same case,--Mr. Bradlaugh then resumed his address. He said he would again draw attention to Carpenter’s “Human Physiology” and on his trial he would call several boys and girls who had that book given to them as a prize at school. He also referred to Kirk’s “Animal Philosophy” and said he hoped after that he should hear no more of the arguments about his pamphlet falling into hands of boys and girls. He contended that the common law never intended so bring such works within the meaning of these classed as “obscene” He and his co-defendant combated this case in no spirit of bravado. A medical journal published on the previous day used words of terrorism against witnesses, who were likely to be called, and described himself and Mrs. Besant in a manner that would not be approved of by that court. He was arbitrator the other day in a wages dispute in the north of England, and he was compelled by a sense of justice to reduce the poor men’s wages 15 per cent, they submitted to his award; their wages had been already reduced 35 per cent, and with routs increasing and taxation heavier, if he could not tell those poor men and poor women how they were to prevent hungry children growing up to live lives of misery—if the law said to him , “your mouth is closed,” what remedy was there for such an evil? (Applause.)—Ald. Figgins said he must commit the case for trial because he believed the book was not published in the interest of society –Mrs. Besant, replying to the question whether she had anything to say in answer to the charge, read a long statement, in which she said she was not without hope that the grand jury might dismiss the charge, which could never have been brought against them at all had the former publisher done his duty in defending the book he had issued. If a book were obscene a high price could not purity it, and ought not to put it above law; if not obscene a law price could not sell it and bring it within the law. Medical knowledge conveyed in long words, wrapped up in foreign language, priced in gold, might be useful to the members of the medical profession, but was not useful to the people. Medical knowledge was wanted by the poor and ought to be put within their reach. (Applause.) It ought to be accepted as an axiom that no person should have more children than they could support and educate, and that unhealthy persons should not weaken the next generation by perpetuating their own diseases. It was not right that about one-half of our children should be born only to die; and—to put it with almost a brutal plainness—we had only two possibilities before us—either to prevent the over multiplication of children or to murder them after birth by overcrowding , by diseases, and by starvation, the defendants preferring the former alternatives, believing it to be the more moral, the more humane, the more rational, had determined to spread such knowledge among the people as should make that alternatives possible, and for so doing they stood committed for trial on a criminal charge. (Applause)—The defendant’s were then bound over in their own recognisances to appear at the Central Criminal Court on May 7th