**THE PROSECUTION OF MR. BRADLAUGH**

At Guildhall Police Court, on Tuesday, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, and Mrs. Annie Besant, editor and sub-editor of the National Reformer, surrendered to their bail before Alderman Figgins, to answer the charge of publishing an obscene book, entitled “The Fruits of Philosophy,” which related to the population question. Mr. Straight and Mr. Mead, instructed by the City Solicitor, prosecuted; Mr. Bradlaugh defended himself and Mrs. Besant. Long before the time arrived for commencing proceedings a crowd assembled in Guildhall Yard, and as many persons as the body of the Court could hold were admitted. Among them were several ladies. Mr. Straight said he was instructed by the City Solicitor to put the case in such a form as would enables the Bench to send it to the Central Criminal Court. He was not there to impart any acrimonious feeling into the prosecution, but simply to discharge a duty which had devolved upon the City authorities of preventing the publication of a work of an obscene character. The contention of the defendants was that it was published for the benefit of the public and for a good purpose, and that this would purge it of its obscene character, but he would show that the book was indecent and unbecoming. Alderman Figgins said it was a question with his brother magistrates and himself whether ladies should be allowed to remain in Court. Mr. Bradlaugh said that some of the ladies who were present were witnesses, and if the matter was unfit for them to hear it was unfit for the lady who was a defendant with him to hear. Two of his daughters were present, and all the ladies claimed their right as citizens to remain and bear the evidence. Mr. Straight, in continuation, said that no matter how good the intention with which the work was published might be, if it was obscene the defendants would have committed the offence imputed to them. The work showed how the increase of the population might be checked. The chief clerk asked Mr. Straight to point out the objectionable parts of the book. Mr. Straight said they were in pp 15, 16, 22, 24, 25, 26, 33, and the whole of chapters 3-4. James Keniston, detective constable, said he was present at the Central Criminal Court on the 8th of February when Mr. Watts was tried before the Recorder for the publication of the book. Mr. Bradlaugh was then present. Mr. Watts pleaded guilty. Mr. Bradlaugh, in reply, said he would admit that the two books were practically identical. The learned counsel had said the book dealt with population, a subject of great public interest, and although innocuous in itself, might do a good deal of mischief. Mr. Bradlaugh contended that if the work in itself were innocuous, he would not be responsible for the use made of it after it had left his hands. If a razor were made use of to cut throats, they would never think of prosecuting the cutler for the crime of the murderer. He then referred to various medical works to show that the language used was grosser than anything in the “Fruits of Philosophy,” and that the subjects they dealt with were of a more indelicate character. Further, he argued that the subject of population was a most important question, and he quoted from Mr. John Stuart Mill, Professor Fawcett, and Mr. Montague Cookson in support of his views. It has been said that the price at which the book was sold was an element of the offence. He maintained that the book was intended for the poor, for they were the people who suffered. It was not the rich who suffered, but the poor, who were unable to maintain their offspring and for whose guidance the book was intended. The case was adjourned until yesterday.