**THE BRADLAUGH CASE.**

**FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.**

To-day the indictment for misdemeanour against Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, charring them, with publishing an alleged obscene book named the “Fruits of Philosophy,” was commenced in the Queens' Bench Division, of the High Court the Chief Justice, before the Lord Chief Justice and a special jury. The pre-cinets of the court were crowded to excess. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant sat together at a table on the floor of Court. When the Jury were about to be sworn Mr. Bradlaugh rose and stated that he had a motion to quash the indictment on the ground. The Lord Chief Justice (interrupting): I cannot hear that now; I am sitting at Nisi prius. Mr. Bradlaugh then quoted the 13th and 14th vic., which enacted that any indictment for any apparent defect in the face of the indictment should be taken by demurrer or motion to quash it, but the Jury should be sworn and not afterwards. The Lord Chief Justice: surely that contemplates a motion in Banco. The Solicitor General, who appeared for the corporation of London to prosecute, said: I take it that that would be the incurring of the statute; the pleadings were in the Crown Office and he should have demurrer there. Mr. Bradlaugh: I do not intend to demur, but I do intend to move to quash the indictment. The Lord Chief Justice: I will reserve that point if it is competent for me to do so—Mrs. Besant claimed the same in her own behalf, which was granted by the court. The Solicitor General (with him Mr. Douglas Straight and Mr. Mead) appeared for the prosecution, and Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant were undefended. The Lord Chief Justice said he had looked through the book, and it would be necessary but of the actual words used. A copy of the book was then handed to each of the Jurymen. The Solicitor General then proceeded to say that the defendants were indicted for publishing an obscene libel calculated to corrupt and destroy public morals. The only question would be whether this was an obscene book. The Lord Chief Justice: It may not be obscene or prurient, or open to objection in that respect; yet, if it corrupts some great principle of morals, may it not be properly the object of this indictment? – the Solicitor-General said this book was published 10 years ago as a companion to married couples, and now it was published under the guise of philosophy as an essay on population. The defece was that population might involve something like national interest, and its discussion elicits truth. – The Lord Chief Justice remarked that the Queen v. Hicklin was replied the other day in the House of Lords. The Solicitor-General: it was held that the motive was no answer to the character of the population, -- The Lord Chief Justice: you must prove that the book was obscene, either inflaming the passions or recommending some course of conduct inconsistent with public morals. – The Solicitor-General concluded his speech, and then formal evidence was given of the publication. The book was also put in as evidence, although Mr. Bradlaugh objected, desiring that specific quotations should be made, and that was the point on which he took objection to the indictment. This closed the case for the prosecution—

(Case proceeding.)

(The remainder will appear in later edition).