**"THE FRUITS OF PHILOSOPHY."**

**SENTENCE ON THE PRISONERS.**

Judgment was given by the Queen's Bench Division on Thursday, in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, who had been convicted of publishing an indecent book. The application of the defendants for a new trial was refused, and an objection to the form of the indictment was overuled. The Lord Chief Justice, after consultation with Mr. Justice Mellor, remarked that had the defendants not defied the law by selling the pamphlet after the verdict, he would have discharged them upon their own recognisances; but as they had done so, he sentenced them to be imprisoned for six months, to pay a fine of £200 each to the Queen, and to enter into their own recognisances in £500 each to be of good behaviour for two years. Defendants were allowed out on bail, pending an appeal.

The *Daily News* of Friday says.:—" Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, having been guilty of publishing an obscene pamphlet, were on Thursday sentenced by the Court of Queen's Bench to be imprisoned for six calendar months and to pay a fine of £200. The sentence certainly does not err on the side of lenity. Considering that the jury acquitted the defendants of corrupt intent, the question may be asked. What penalty would have been inflicted if the jury had not borne its testimony in their favour? It might have been expected that something would have been said in the course of the trial to mark the limits of discussion which the defendants have transgressed. The healthy tastes of the public will always, we trust, be the best security against the prevalence of such literature as “The Fruits of Philosophy." but it is perhaps as well that those tastes should be fortified by the influence and authority of law. At the same time it must be remembered that interests of a very real kind were involved in the question which the defendants however, unwisely, discussed, at the Court of Queen's Bench admitted, and the good faith of the defendants was not called in question, not for their sakes, but for the sake of others who may find it necessary to address the public on subjects which do not commend themselves at first sight, we must express regret that nothing was said by the Court to guard the interests of legitimate discussion. It will be a lamentable day fur justice as well as for freedom when it becomes the practice of our Courts to deliver up an unpopular defendant to a jury without the protection of a clear declaration of the law. A lamely-conducted trial, ending in an extemporised and vindictive sentence, can add nothing to the dignity of the British bench."