

THE  
LAW OF POPULATION.  
ITS CONSEQUENCES

AND

Its Bearing Upon Human Conduct and Morals.

BY

ANNIE BESANT

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**SECOND TEN THOUSAND.**

Author's American Edition from the 35th thousand,  
English Edition.

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NEW YORK:  
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1879.



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# THE OF POPULATION. ITS CONSEQUENCES AND

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ANNIE BESANT

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1878.



TO THE POOR  
IN GREAT CITIES AND AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS,  
DWELLERS IN STIFLING COURT OR CROWDED  
HOVEL,  
IN THE HOPE  
THAT IT MAY POINT OUT A PATH FROM POVERTY, AND  
MAY MAKE EASIER THE LIFE OF  
BRITISH MOTHERS,  
TO THEM  
I DEDICATE THIS ESSAY.

## THE LAW OF POPULATION.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE LAW OF POPULATION.

THE law of population first laid down in this country by the Rev. T. R. Malthus in his great work, entitled "The Principle of Population," has long been known to every student, and accepted by every thinker. It is, however, but very recently that this question has become ventilated among the many, instead of being discussed only by the few. Acknowledged as an axiom by the naturalist and by the political economist, the law of population has never been appreciated by the mass of the people. The free press pioneers of the last generation, Richard Carlile, James Watson, Robert Dale Owen—these men had seen its importance and had endeavored, by cheap publications dealing with it from its practical side, to arouse attention and to instruct those for whom they worked. But the lesson fell on stony ground and passed almost unheeded; it would, perhaps, be fairer to say that the fierce political conflicts of the time threw all other questions into a comparative shade; nor must the strong prejudice against Malthus be forgotten—the prejudice which regarded him as a hard, cold theorist, who wrote in the interest of the richer classes, and would deny to the poor man the comfort of wife and home. The books issued at this period—such as Carlile's "Every Woman's Book," Knowlton's "Fruits of Philosophy," R. D. Owen's "Moral Physiology"—passed unchallenged by authority, but obtained only a limited circulation; here and there they did their work, and the result was seen in the greater comfort and respectability of the families who took advantage of their teachings, but the great mass of the people went on in their ignorance and their ever-increasing poverty, conscious that mouths multiply more rapidly than wages, but dimly supposing that Providence was the responsible agent, and that where "God sends mouths" he ought to "send meat."



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