

Experiments on animals in Great Britain during 1906.

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Experiments on Animals in Great Britain during 1906.

The latest figures, up to the present time (March, 1908) are those for 1906, ordered to be printed May 13th, 1907. This Report may be bought, for a few pence, from Wyman & Sons, Fetter Lane, E.C. In Ireland, during 1906, so few experiments on animals were made, that we may limit ourselves to the work done in Great Britain.

The number of registered places in Great Britain, in 1906, was 66, if we reckon as one "registered place" the several departments or laboratories of one University. At some places, no experiments were made. Three new places were registered during the year ; and three ceased to be registered at the end of the year.

The number of licensees was 402. This number includes 30 whose licenses expired at the end of February, and who returned no experiments in 1906. Altogether, 123 of the licensees performed no experiments during the year.

The total number of experiments was 46,073. But 43,287 of them, 94 *per cent.*, were inoculations, hypodermic injections, and so forth. It is these experiments, *and these alone*, which are performed without anæsthetics, under Certificate A. In no case has Certificate A been allowed for an experiment involving a serious operation. Even inoculations, if they involve, as a very few of them do, a small preliminary incision, must be made under anæsthetics. In no case has a cutting operation more severe than a superficial venesection been allowed to be performed without anæsthetics.

These 43,287 experiments were mostly inoculations, but a few of them were feeding experiments, or the administration of various substances by the mouth, or the abstraction of a minute quantity of blood for examination. A few of them, about 1 *per cent.*, were made on dogs or cats ; and a very few, about 0.1 *per cent.*, were made on a horse, ass, or mule. The vast majority of them were made on mice or guinea pigs. The increase in the number of them in 1906, as compared with 1905, is more than accounted for by the increase in the work of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund ; which, in 1906, made 20,795 inoculations on mice.

Concerning the bulk of the inoculations, the Report says "that a large number of experiments, almost wholly simple inoculations and similar proceedings (under certificate A), were performed either on behalf of official bodies, with a view to the preservation of the public health, or directly for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Several County Councils and Municipal Corporations have their own laboratories in which bacteriological investigations are carried on, including the necessary tests on living animals ; and many others have arrangements by which similar observations are made on their behalf in the laboratories of Universities, Colleges and other institutions. In other places experiments have been made on behalf of the Home Office, the War Office, the Local Government Board, the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Fifty-two licensees return nearly 6,000 experiments which were performed for Government Departments, County Councils, Municipal Corporations or other Public Health Authorities : 2.114

experiments were performed by five licensees for the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis; eleven licensees performed 4,732 experiments for the preparation and testing of antitoxic sera and vaccines; and six licensees performed 1,079 experiments for the testing and standardising of drugs."

We come now to the remaining 6 *per cent.* of the experiments made during 1906. Of these 2,786 experiments, the majority, 1,588, were performed under license alone, or under license and Certificate C. In experiments performed under license alone, the animal must during the whole of the experiment be under the influence of some anæsthetic of sufficient power to prevent the animal from feeling pain; and the animal must, if the pain is likely to continue after the effect of the anæsthetic has ceased, or if any serious injury has been inflicted on the animal, be killed before it recovers from the influence of the anæsthetic which has been administered. Certificate C allows experiments to be performed, under the foregoing provisions as to the use of anæsthetics, in illustration of lectures. The number of experiments thus made before a class, in 1906, in England and Scotland together, was 159. The rest of the 1,588 experiments, 1,429, were made under license alone.

There remain 1,198 experiments which were made under Certificate B, or, for dog or cats, Certificates B and EE. Of these experiments, 281 were made on a dog or cat: none were made on a horse, ass, or mule. An operation was performed under anæsthetics, from the influence of which the animal was allowed to recover. The operations are required to be performed antiseptically. If the antiseptic precautions fail, and suppuration occurs, the animal is required to be killed. In the event of a subsequent operation being necessary, a condition is attached to the license requiring all operative procedures to be carried out under anæsthetics of sufficient power to prevent the animal feeling pain; and no observations or stimulations of a character to cause pain are allowed to be made without the animals being anæsthetised.

Thus the percentages are as follows:—

Inoculations or similar methods not involving any operation...	93·96
Animal killed under anæsthetic...	3·10
Animal killed under anæsthetic, after a demonstration...	0·34
Animal allowed to recover from anæsthetic. (No observation or stimulation of a character to cause pain, and no further operative procedure allowed without anæsthetics) ...	2·60
	100·00

This fact must always be borne in mind, with regard to experiments on animals, *that 94 per cent. of these experiments involve no sort or kind of operation: and that Certificate A is not allowed for any experiment which involves an operation.*