

The effect of this mischievous and meddling legislation was disastrous to English physiology, and compelled those who practiced vivisection to flee to France and Germany and to draw upon the United States for their medical knowledge. Mr. Lister found the working of the Act so "vexatious as to be practically prohibitory," and went to Toulouse to carry on his investigations. This scientist, whose observations and experiments in connection with infection have been the means of saving thousands of human lives, was obliged to discontinue his investigations and conduct them in other countries. He said: "Even with reference to small animals, the wording of the Act is so vexatious as to be practically prohibitory of experiments of a private practitioner unless he chooses to incur the risk of transgressing the law."

Dr. Greenfield, Pathologist in Edinburgh University, who was at work on investigations for the prevention of splenic fever, was forced to write: "I have not been engaged in other investigations for the simple reason that with the present restrictions and the difficulty of obtaining a license, I regard it as almost hopeless to attempt any useful work in this country. As the result of my experience it is my opinion that these hindrances and obstacles constitute a most serious bar to the investigation of disease and of remedial measures. When to this is added all the annoyance and opprobrium which are the lot of investigators, it is to be wondered at that anyone should submit to be licensed." He also mentions the case of a surgeon who came to him with what appeared to be a remedy for lock-jaw, to have it tested before using it upon a patient; the law forbade the experiments and the patient died.

Professor Fraser writes: "In several instances in which the objects were of the highest interest, and in which the importance of the results could not be predicted, the Government has constituted itself the supreme arbiter of science, and has ventured to decide that certain experiments were not required and should not be performed. I have only just now experienced the mortification of being refused a license, where permission was requested to perform a few experiments on rabbits and frogs with a reputed poison used by the natives of Borneo to anoint their arrows."

Professor Foster thus sums up his views: "This legislative action has gone far to cripple physiological research in this country. Our science has been made the subject of a penal Act. We are liable at any moment in our enquiries to be arrested by legal prohibitions. We are hampered by licenses and certificates. We are asked to make bricks when they have taken the straw away from us." Speaking of the Congress of 1881, in which Virchow declared the charge of cruelty was a subterfuge, Dr. Foster says.