THE VOMITING PRODUCED BY THE ERGOT OF RYE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—In perusing the cases of protracted labour, by Mr. Raleigh, in *THE LANCET* of the 13th of May, I am induced to question the alleged action of the ergot of rye in the case which is reported to strengthen the opinion as to its effects as the cause of the uterus being stimulated to contract, and to refer contraction to the violent action of the diaphragm, during vomiting, which, it is not improbable, by coming in contact with the fundus of the uterus, or by causing other viscera so to do, was the principal cause of uterine contractions being more vigorously excited. I have particularly remarked not less than thirty similar cases, where vomiting succeeded immediately after the exhibition of the first dose of ergot (usually half a drachm), that the fluid ejected evidently containing the whole, or, at least, the greater part of the dose, the uterus being stimulated to as active contractions as if the whole dose had been retained. This leads me to conclude, that in the majority of cases where the ergot is exhibited, either in combination with laudanum, or alone, and vomiting succeeds, the vomiting is the source of the renewed contractions, and not the specific action of the ergot. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

THOMAS FOSTER SAGAR, Surgeon.
Leeds, May 23, 1837.

Union, may I take the liberty of inquiring whether, in the event of my election, the appointment be a permanent or an annual one, and whether any future Board of Guardians would have the power of removing me? I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

“JOHN WETHERFIELD.

“To the Poor Law Commissioners
for England and Wales.”

“Poor Law Commission Office,

Somerset House, April 11, 1836.

“SIR:—The Poor Law Commissioners for England and Wales have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th inst., and in reply to your inquiry they desire to state, that the appointments of the paid officers of a Union are not annual, but during good behaviour, or until the Commissioners shall have cause to determine them. Signed by order of the Board,

“E. CHADWICK,

Secretary.

“To John Wetherfield, Esq., 1, Henrietta-street, Covent-garden.”

This will show pretty plainly to the profession and the public, that the Commissioners themselves are unacquainted with the law. I have in my possession the original letter of the Commissioners for the inspection of any professional gentleman, if a doubt should exist as to the correctness of my statement. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

May 29, 1837.

JOHN WETHERFIELD.

TENURE OF MEDICAL OFFICES IN THE UNIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have read the correspondence in a late number of your Journal, between Mr. Webster, the president of the *British Medical Association*, and the Poor Law Commissioners, and was greatly surprised to find that, in the answer to the 3d query of Mr. Webster (*viz.*), “Are such appointments considered to be held during good behaviour? Are they annual appointments as under the old law?” the Commissioners say, that “The appointments of medical officers are annual.”

At the time of the formation of the Strand Union, I was a candidate for the office of surgeon to one of the districts, and, previous to my entering on my canvass, I had the following correspondence with the Poor Law Commissioners, as to the permanency of the appointment:—

“1, Henrietta-street, Covent-garden,

April 6, 1836.

“GENTLEMEN:—As it is my intention to offer myself as a candidate for the office of surgeon to one of the districts of the Strand

A CALEDONIAN SURGICAL REPORT.

“EXTRAORDINARY SURGICAL OPERATION.—

In passing along the South Bridge yesterday forenoon, our attention was arrested by a great crowd of gentlemen, at the gate of the *Royal Infirmary*, pressing inward. Joining in the crowd, we were carried along with it to the surgical hospital, where we found the operating theatre crammed to excess, chiefly by medical gentlemen and students; amongst these we recognized Sir George Ballingall, Dr. MacLagan, Mr. Newbigging, Dr. Campbell, the surgeons of the 14th Light Dragoons and 42nd Regiment, besides many country surgeons. The excitement we have described was occasioned by the knowledge that an operation never performed in Great Britain was to be done upon a young man by Professor Lizars. The case was what is technically called aneurysm of the subclavian artery, so near the heart that the first large trunk required to be tied, namely, the *arteria innominata*. The young man, a carter from Dalkeith, was placed upon the table, and the Professor commenced by making an incision in the neck, and progressively cut down to the