

ESSAY  
ON  
THE RATE OF WAGES:  
WITH  
AN EXAMINATION  
OF THE  
CAUSES OF THE DIFFERENCES  
IN THE  
CONDITION OF THE LABOURING POPULATION  
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

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"We cannot refrain from expressing an opinion that another and a greater matter than that between the advocates and opponents of poor-laws remains behind—namely, an examination of the *necessity* which is supposed to entail pauperism on society."—*Athenaeum*, July 18, 1834.

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BY H. C. CAREY.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
CAREY, LEA & BLANCHARD,  
1835,

# ERRATA.

- Page 141, line 18, *for estate, read state.*  
" 143, line 6, *for estate, read state.*  
" 161, line 22, *for lands they possess are,*  
*read land they possess in.*  
" 171, last line, *for labourer, read labour.*  
" 185, line 28, *for annum, read mensum.*  
" 244, line 9, *for A'cote, read A cott.*

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# ESSAY

## ON

### THE RATE OF WAGES.

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IN the discussion now and for a long time past carried on between the political economists and the practical men, or advocates of the mercantile theory, the former have generally confined themselves to indicating what *would be* the result of the adoption of their views, while the latter have pointed triumphantly to experience, calling upon us to admire the prosperity that *has been* produced by their system, and to hesitate before abandoning one that has been the cause of such admirable results, and which has the additional recommendation of having been sanctioned by our forefathers. They call for facts, regarding them as universally confirmatory of the truth of their doctrines, and look upon their opponents as theorists, reasoning in opposition to all experience, and willing to hazard the happiness and prosperity of nations in the endeavour to prove the correctness of visionary notions, that will not bear examination. Thus, in the inquiry now prosecuting by the French Minister of the Interior, M. Barbet, one of the wit-

nesses summoned, says, "We are exceedingly sorry that the persons who, in their writings, have attacked the existing system, have not come before the council to defend their opinions here. *If instead of a system founded on probabilities and surmises, they had opposed to us facts, we could have answered them.*"

The object of the following essay is to furnish the facts, as called for by M. Barbet: not a few isolated facts, as has generally been done by the advocates of "things as they are," but "the truth and the whole truth," as far as it can be ascertained, in regard to the policy of some of the principal nations of the earth, and to its results, as seen in *the rate of wages, or reward of labour*. As introductory thereto, it is proposed to examine what are the circumstances which tend to determine the rate of wages. Both of these subjects have been treated by Professor Senior in his lectures delivered before the University of Oxford,\* and as he is among the latest and highest authorities, I propose, in order that the reader may compare our views, and judge between us, to give mine in the form of a review of the doctrines enunciated in those lectures.

\* Three Lectures on the Rate of Wages; delivered before the University of Oxford—Easter Term, 1830. By Nassau William Senior. Second edition: London: 1831.

Lecture on the Cost of obtaining Money; delivered before the University of Oxford, in Easter Term, 1829, by Nassau W. Senior. Lond. 1830.