

CHAPTER VIII.

Wages and Prohibition.

I heard a Prohibition speaker rattle off a speech in favor of Prohibition the other night. I like to attend some of their representative meetings in order to have a line on what they say. In the middle of his address he paused, and then shouted: "Workingmen, you don't know what you are opposing; by opposing Prohibition you are opposing the biggest friend of big wages and more wages than exists today."

"Wages in Prohibition states have increased 103 per cent., while wages in licensed states have only increased 75 per cent." (Thundering cheers). I thought there was something wrong somewhere, and as I knew those Prohibition speakers got most of their data from the Anti-Saloon Handbook for 1915, I sat home and looked it up, and lo, to my surprise, there was the item. Under the heading, "The Economic Aspects of Prohibition," it first deals with wages. Now let me preface my remarks with a few assertions. Figures, like the Bible, if you will allow their use in any capacity and in any connection, can be made to prove almost anything.

Further, if you grant the truth of any kind of assumption, you can prove that Jesus Christ is a thief, a murderer, and a vagabond.

In the first place the basis of comparison in this handbook is wrong. It compares nine small Prohibition States, with a total population of only 554,280, with ten large licensed States, with a total population of 2,564,280, or over four times as many.

Now, an increase of fifty members in a small church of 100 members would sound big, and look large. Fifty per cent. increase! Wonderful! While an increase of 100 members in a church four times as large would look small—only 25 per cent.

Yet, the fact of the matter would be that the 400 church had doubled the increase of the small