

and in poverty, for his master in magical arts deserts the penitent, to betake himself, along with a devoted bride who was once a medium, to his native land, there to begin the world anew and honestly.

The tone of all these books is wholesome, and on the whole they may be said to make for righteousness, although it would be hard to approve of all that they contain. Mr. Besant has no doubt hurt himself in the estimation of a great many readers by classing all people outside of the Church of England as "narrow Christians." He is not wont to be so foolish in his utterances, and he would do well in future to abstain from such hasty and unjust generalization.

That wonderful writer, Mrs. Augusta Jane Evans Wilson still lives. It was, I think, the heroine of her novel *St. Elmo* who made the astounding discovery of the writings of Socrates and Epictetus, although the world has not yet been favoured with a sight of the manuscripts. The chief objections to Mrs. Wilson are that she knows too much, makes her readers too sensible of the fact, and tells a story in the high flown language of the tragic muse. Students who are tempted to indulge in florid oratory in the pulpit, and who want to know how foolish it sounds, would do well to read her latest novel, *At the Mercy of Tiberius*. Tiberius is not the Roman Emperor of that name, but a Southern lawyer, whose head resembles that of the well-known tyrant. This lawyer succeeds in bringing the heroine in guilty of the murder of her grandfather, whom she has visited in order to get help for her suffering mother in New York. The real criminal, who is her brother, and who dies soon after in the Canadian North-West confessing his sin, she persistently refuses to name. Released at length from prison, in which she has performed many works of mercy and done the amount of fainting that the American authoress deems indispensable to a heroine, she joins a sisterhood, goes to Niagara Falls via Ottawa to hear of her brother's confession and death, and ends by marrying that Tiberius whom she began by cordially hating. There is no particular novel in the book, unless it be that of the *Jane Eyre* Rochester kind, that the way to the heart of a strong minded woman is a curious mingling of brutality and deference.

I do not recommend these novels as sessional reading; they belong to leisure moments in summer vacation under the trees, in the railway, or on the deck of the steamboat. But there are readers of the *JOURNAL* outside of the college walls who need a little relaxation now and again, and a little insight into character beyond that which their immediate surroundings and the newspaper supply. These novels are more interesting and more valuable to the student of human nature than the *Moral Characters* of the Greek Theophrastus, the *Characters* of the French La Bruyere, and those set forth in that disappointing book, the *Theophrastus* Such of George Eliot.