

## EUGENE WALTER

*The Easiest Way.* Included in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Second Series.*

An expert writer of melodrama, Eugene Walter went far toward paving the way for the host of sex thrillers that followed "The Easiest Way". He was born at Cleveland, and was both newspaperman and theatrical promoter and manager. His plays have been many, and of varying success; but "The Easiest Way" is important because of its undoubted influence on the manners of the American stage.

### REFERENCE:

Eugene Walter, an American Dramatic Realist. DRAMA, vol. 21 (1916), pp. 110-121.

## ELMER RICE

*The Adding Machine.* DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.

Having started life as a lawyer, Elmer Rice suddenly decided to become a writer. His first effort was the successful melodrama "On Trial", which netted him a fortune. His experimentally expressionistic "The Adding Machine" was presented by the Theatre Guild last year. It shocked some persons and pleased and impressed others. Mr. Rice has undoubtedly a strongly original mind, and a talent for the theatre. He has worked with the motion pictures, has written other plays not so notable as "On Trial" and "The Adding Machine".

"Here [in 'The Adding Machine'] life is reduced to numerical precision. Here, we have murder, trial, death and immortality in terms of ones, twos and sixes. Here, written

by a young man who has already made a fortune in the commercial theatre, is a piece of elaborate and, in spite of serious defects, striking expressionism. Mr. Zero, operator of an adding machine, hates his drab wife and kills his boss. He goes to Heaven, where, Mr. Rice would have us believe, a man cannot be greater than he was on earth. "The first four scenes of this play are as effective drama as has been written by a young American."—John Farrar.

#### REFERENCE:

*To See or Not to See.* John Farrar.  
BOOKMAN, May, 1923, and September,  
1923.

### JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS

*Why Marry?* Included in *Contemporary American Plays.*

Jesse Lynch Williams is a writer of comedy of rare distinction. His "Why Marry?" received the Pulitzer Prize for the best play of 1917. Mr. Williams was born at Sterling, Illinois, was graduated from Princeton University, and has written stories and essays as well as plays. At present he is living in New York City.