

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DRAMA

Committee: Kenneth Macgowan, Chairman; Owen Davis, Jesse Lynch Williams, Alexander Woolcott.

Seventh Group

WINCHELL SMITH

The Boomerang. FRENCH.

Lightnin'. FRENCH.

This enormously clever craftsman has a finish in the drama that is based on an understanding of popular American foibles and traits. His is a more sentimental gift than George Cohan's.

Winchell Smith was born at Hartford, Connecticut. His career in the theatre, after a high school education, began as an actor. Then he turned producer, and has since combined that profession with the writing of his plays. He has seldom had a failure, and the list of his plays—"The Fortune Hunter", "The Boomerang" (with Victor Mapes), "Turn to the Right" (with John E. Hazzard), and "Lightnin'" (with Frank Bacon)—speaks for their monetary success.

"But it isn't alone the excellent acting and smooth, life-like production of 'The Boomerang' which makes it popular. The fact that it tells a nice little story about nice people, that it is old-fashioned enough to recognize the claims of such people to a place in fiction, counts heavily in its favor. It is bright and gay in spirit, like the comedies which used to be seen at the old Empire, and it restores to the stage the

wholesome side of our more or less leisured American life."—Walter Prichard Eaton, AMERICAN MAGAZINE, January, 1916.

"This agreeable story ['The Fortune Hunter'] is simply and easily narrated; the characters are humorous and human; and the dialogue is brightly and naturally written. But the remarkable merit of the work lies rather in its wholesomeness of tone. Everything that happens to the hero happens also in the minds of the auditors. They feel as he feels, and follow his fortunes as if they were their own. And it is no mean achievement for an author thus to make the audience a party to his play. It is the secret of charm."—Clayton Hamilton, FORUM, November, 1909.