

**ARTHUR WING  
PINERO, PLAYWRIGHT;  
A STUDY**

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Arthur Wing Pinero, playwright; a study by H. Hamilton Fyfe

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**H. HAMILTON FYFE**

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A STUDY**



ARTHUR WING PINERO

L/E  
P/G/S/G  
Y/L/A

ARTHUR WING PINERO

PLAYWRIGHT

A Study

BY

H. HAMILTON FYFE

London

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1902

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# ARTHUR WING PINERO

## I

### INTRODUCTORY

IF any apology is required in behalf of this little book, it must be an apology not so much to its readers as to him who is the subject of it. Criticism is seldom apologetic, and yet, as it seems to me, it always ought to include at least a veiled petition that the critic may be absolved from the faults of hasty judgment and distorted vision. To make anything is hard, and, in proportion, meritorious. To rail at that which has been made, to note with lofty scorn its imperfections, to lose sight of its finer qualities, is lamentably easy, and, in pro-

portion, contemptible. If, therefore, in these pages I should seem here and there to insist, with emphasis, upon a personal view, to lay bare a cavilling disposition, or to discourse with overmuch assurance, I beg pardon in advance. The opinions expressed, the impressions recorded, are but the fruitage of a single mind. They have one desert which I may claim for them without loss of modesty—they are genuine and frank and honest. Assail my judgment if you will. But so you admit that it is an honest judgment, I shall be content.

If appreciations are permitted of the work of living writers of books, much more should room be found for a study of a playwright's labours. For in the present state of our theatre in England it is exceedingly difficult to form any judgment of a dramatist's work at all. A book you may read at any time, but you can only see a play acted when it pleases a theatrical

manager to stage it. It is true that Mr Pinero has printed and published the dramas on which he desires his reputation to stand or fall, but the reading of plays is a habit which the public has not yet formed. I am not without hope, therefore, that this book may be found useful by many who value highly what they have seen of Mr Pinero's dramaturgy, but who have lacked opportunity to gain a full acquaintance with the whole body of it. It may stimulate their interest, it may perchance create a fresh interest. If it turns attention to the published plays (which are issued in a handy and attractive shape by Mr Heinemann) and persuades people to read and form their own judgment upon them, it will have served its purpose. There is no doubt that, granted a taste for the dramatic form of story-telling, their judgment will be warmly favourable. The talents which equip Mr Pinero for the task of writing plays would set up at least half