Joe Turner's Come and Gone shines

JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE
Written by August Wilson.
Directed by Lloyd Richards.
At the Huntington Theatre.

By BARBARA MASI

T hey tell me Joe Turn- er's come and gone. Oh Lordie. He's got my man and is gone. Forty links of chain — got my man and gone.* This song was heard in Memphis around 1901 — a song about the experience of freed slaves in America 40 years after the Civil War. It is a song about their wander-ings to the industrial cities searching for work, searching for lost family members, searching for a place to belong. It grew out of stories told by black women when their men left them — just disappearing one day. The women would say "Joe Turner got them."
The song formed part of August Wilson's inspiration for Joe Turn- er's Come and Gone which opened Oct. 1 at the Huntington Theatre.

T he play is set in a Pittsburgh boarding house — Seth and Bertha Holly's place. Seth and Bertha were one of the places black people wandered through in 1911. Nobody stayed long, but Bertha's guests were family. You could sit in her kitchen, sing, eat some of the best biscuits in Pitts-burgh, and share your story. Bertha made you feel like Bertha was the place you were looking for.

Nobody stayed long, that is, except for Bynum Walker. Bynum spent his mornings college recruiting visit, October 15th at ASHDOWN HOUSE;. Sign up with Career

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JOE TURNER'S COME AND GONE received its world premiere last April at the Yale Repertory Theatre. In a cooperative ven- ture by the Huntington Theatre Company and the Yale Repertory Theatre, the cur- rent production is the original presented at Yale, including the same director and cast.

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