

## Buffoonery and Easy Sentiment: Popular Irish Plays in the Decade Prior to the Opening of The Abbey Theatre

Christopher Fitz-Simon



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In this fascinating reappraisal of the non-literary drama of the late 19th- early 20th century,

Christopher Fitz-Simon discloses a unique world of plays, players and producers in metropolitan theatres in Ireland

and other countries where Ireland was viewed as a source of extraordinary topics:

At once contemporary and comfortably remote: revolution, eviction, famine, agrarian agitation, political assassination.

The form was the fashionable one of melodrama, yet Irish melodrama was of a particular kind replete with hidden messages,

and the language was far more allusive, colourful and entertaining than that of its English equivalent.

There was much diversity, as shown in plays as different as Murray & Shine's An Irish Gentleman,

Hubert O'Grady's The Priest Hunter, J.W. Whitbread's The Victoria Cross and Edward Selden's McKenna's Flirtation.

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