

**THE  
CONTEMPORARY  
DRAMA OF IRELAND**

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The contemporary drama of Ireland by Ernest A. Boyd

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**ERNEST A. BOYD**

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CONTEMPORARY  
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THE CONTEMPORARY DRAMA SERIES

*Edited by Richard Burton*

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OF IRELAND

BY

ERNEST A. BOYD



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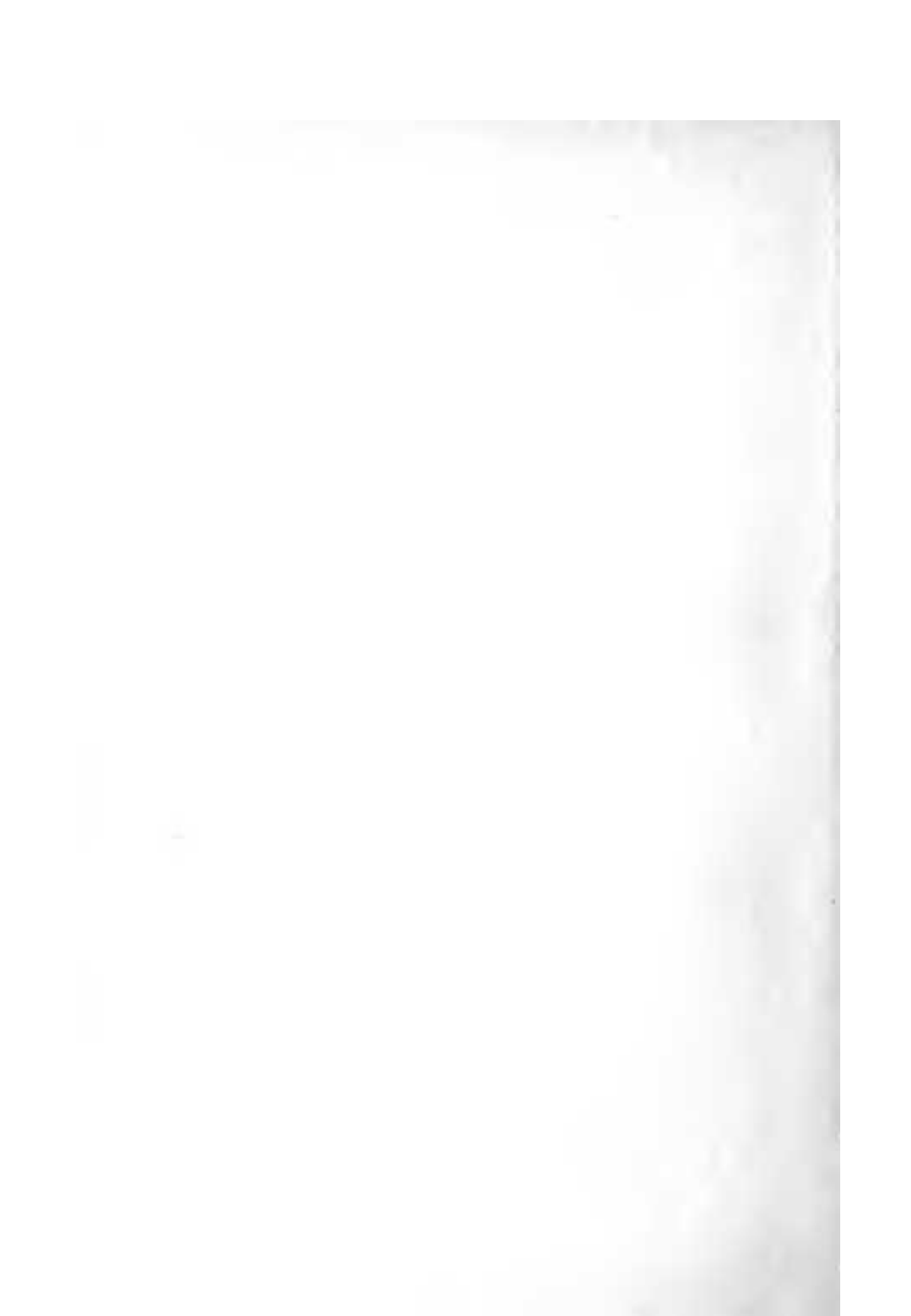
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# THE CONTEMPORARY DRAMA OF IRELAND

## CHAPTER I

### THE IRISH LITERARY THEATRE

THE last decade of the nineteenth century was marked, in Germany, France, and England, by a strong reaction against the decadence into which the art of the theatre had fallen. When the *Freie Bühne*, *Théâtre Libre* and Independent Theatre were established their task was the by no means inconsiderable one of driving from the stage the incredible sentimentalities and the machine-made effects of the popular drama. Most of the names which had for years occupied the attention of playgoers are now lost in the obscurity from which they should never have emerged. Occasionally touring companies are found, in the more unsophisticated regions, to galvanize the corpses of those plays which excited the indignant ambition of the progressive dramatists a quarter of a century ago. Yet, in spite of undeniable progress, perhaps best appreciated when the mid-Victorian play confers an