



W. S. Gilbert: A Classic Victorian and His Theatre

Jane W. Stedman

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W. S. Gilbert was one of the giants of nineteenth-century Victorian theatre. He was already the leading young dramatist of his day when he began his celebrated collaboration with Arthur Sullivan, a partnership that produced the great Savoy Operas--still the most popular light operas in the world--and established him at the pinnacle of his craft. Now, in *W. S. Gilbert: A Classic Victorian and His Theatre*, Jane W. Stedman provides an insightful biography of this major theatrical figure.

To write this biography, Stedman has returned to the original sources, has talked or corresponded with survivors of Gilbert's generation who knew him, researched deeply into Victorian publications such as *Punch*, *Athenaeum*, and *Theatre*, and has had access to hitherto unpublished materials. The result is not only the most accurate biography of Gilbert ever written, but also the most finely textured, revealing a Gilbert of more complexity and interest than has emerged before. Stedman covers his entire career, including his early journalism, his writing of the *Bab Ballads* (which are still in print today), theatrical works such as *The Palace of Truth*, *The Wicked World*, and *Pygmalion and Galatea*, and of course his collaboration with Arthur Sullivan. The author also illuminates Gilbert's private life, including a hitherto undiscovered early romantic attachment, and his life-long work for the social acceptance of the theatre and of theatre people, both on and off the stage.

A perfect companion volume to Arthur Jacobs's *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian Musician*, this deeply researched, vividly written biography will enthrall all fans of Gilbert and Sullivan and anyone interested in the Victorian theatre.

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