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Ina Ferris examines the way in which the problem of 'incomplete union' generated by the formation of the United Kingdom in 1800 destabilised British public discourse in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Ferris offers the first full-length study of the chief genre to emerge out of the political problem of Union: the national tale, an intercultural and mostly female-authored fictional mode that articulated Irish grievances to English readers. Ferris draws on current theory and archival research to show how the national tale crucially intersected with other public genres such as travel narratives, critical reviews and political discourse. In this fascinating study, Ferris shows how the national tales of Morgan, Edgeworth, Maturin, and the Banim brothers dislodged key British assumptions and foundational narratives of history, family and gender in the period.
