

"embroidered anecdote" (1) and, apparently, established a tradition persisting throughout the modern Irish short story. However, neither of these possibilities persist. In fact, Professor Thompson quotes (and apparently agrees with) Brian Cleeve's statement that O'Connor's story, "Guests of the Nation," was, "in a sense the seminal story of modern Irish literature" (19), but does not consider the story as an example of the *shenarchie's* art.

Nevertheless, praise to professor Thompson for his insights and for his refusal to do what some modern criticism undertakes, make the writers subservient to critical virtuosity. Instead, he conveys a sense of delight in being just a reader though, of course, a quite learned one.

Simon Gattrell

HARDY THE CREATOR: A TEXTUAL BIOGRAPHY

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989. Pp. 260. \$35.00

Reviewed by Terence Dawson

Simon Gattrell's study of the evolution of Hardy's texts has been eagerly awaited by all the novelist's admirers. Some ten years in the making, it reveals a daunting familiarity not only with every edition of each of the novels published during the author's life, but also with the circumstances surrounding them. Hardy invariably took the opportunity to make amendments to his published texts: each time a new edition of a work appeared, he not only corrected inelegancies of style and unnecessary obscurities of meaning, but would even rethink significant details. Hence the extraordinary difficulty of deciding which text best represents his vision, a challenge faced by Gattrell some years ago when he worked on the Clarendon *Tess*.

This work explores Hardy's amendments in the light of his dealings with editors, publishers, and printers both in England and in America. Beginning with a brief account of the publishing business at the time, the study proceeds more or less chronologically. Perhaps the most interesting chapters are those on the manuscript of *The Return of the Native*, Hardy's dealings with the *Graphic*, the paperback editions, and his fascinating demonstration of how an analysis of each stage of revision of *Two on a Tower* provides invaluable material for its interpretation. The penultimate chapter offers suggestions on how to edit Hardy: not surprisingly, it is a defence of his own principles of giving great importance to the author's manuscript, even regarding punctuation. The issues tackled are surprisingly diverse, and always revealing: from the nature and extent of Emma Hardy's assistance as copyist to the "gentrification" of his works for serialization; from the relative critical neglect of the first one-volume editions of each novel, in which Hardy always made considerable changes, to the dramatic revisions made for the Wessex Edition of 1912.

Sadly, whilst this study undeniably increases our understanding of the significance of Hardy's various revisions, the analysis of their broader implications is either left suspended only as a possibility (e.g., his contention that Thomasin is a precursor of *Tess*), or insufficiently explored. The wealth of textual evidence amassed by Gattrell surely corroborates the view that Hardy was a mythomaniac, in the sense that although ostensibly endeavoring to situate

his work in history, Hardy was no less deeply engaged in mythmaking. The more general problems arising from the "Wessexification" of the early works deserved much closer analysis.

This study draws attention to a great many extremely interesting issues, and for this reason must become an indispensable source for all Hardy criticism for a great many years to come. However, so disparate are its findings that they also, paradoxically, expose the mildly disconcerting absence of any over-riding theory about Hardy the Creator, or even a specification of categories of textual issues which require further critical consideration.

Robertson Davies

THE LYRE OF ORPHEUS

New York: Viking, 1989. Pp. 472. \$19.95

Reviewed by Melvin J. Friedman

The Lyre of Orpheus completes a trilogy that was launched with *The Rebel Angels* (1981) and *What's Bred in the Bone* (1985). A line from one of Keats's letters, "A Man's life of any worth is a continual allegory" (quoted toward the end of the novel), explains on one level what *The Lyre of Orpheus* is all about. Most of what goes on in Davies's latest novel offers a running parallel with motifs and occurrences in the Arthurian legends. The authorial representative in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Simon Darcourt, often points to the resemblances, as on this occasion: "Can it be true, thought Darcourt, that I am sitting in this grand penthouse on a Sunday evening eating cold roast chicken and salad with three figures from Arthurian legend? Three people working out, in such terms as modernity dictates, the great myth of the betrayed king, the enchantress queen, and the brilliant adventurer?" (307). Davies's three contemporary Arthurians are Arthur Cornish, his wife Maria, and Geraint Powell.

Arthur Cornish presides over the Cornish Foundation, which releases funds to enable a doctoral student, Hulda Schnakenburg, to complete work on an unfinished opera, *Arthur of Britain, or The Magnanimous Cuckold*, by the German writer and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann. Much of *The Lyre of Orpheus* (which gets its title from Hoffmann's comment "The Lyre of Orpheus opens the door of the underworld") involves the fleshing out of these circumstances. Amorous, academic, and belletristic complications intervene before the novel is finished.

Arthur Cornish is cuckolded by his wife and Geraint Powell, and he responds "magnanimously" within the terms of Hoffmann's opera as he welcomes the child resulting from their extramarital encounter. Lesbian activities (not an explicit part of the Arthurian legends) are carried on between Hulda Schnakenburg and her mentor Dr. Gunilla Dahl-Soot although Hulda's erotic instincts take on a more heterosexual turn before the novel ends. A number of the male characters have been at one time or another sexually interested in or involved with Maria Cornish. Eros clearly plays a crucial role.