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Sommario/riassunto	Professor Barbara Hardy is a noted critic of nineteenth-century fiction but her essays on Dickens have hitherto been scattered widely among critical journals and anthologies. The seven studies she has here collected, introduced, and in part revised, together make up a sustained exploration of the moral concern which informs the novelist's work and gives to his portrayal of society and the individual its unique quality. A general discussion of the moral nature of Dickens' art leads to a study of patterns of change and conversion and this in turn to a close examination of four representative novels