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demonstrating the Tonsons' importance to book history (pp. viii, 38). One of its major contributions is the repeated emphasis on financial matters, and the rather unsurprising yet necessary observation that financial stability (such as that granted by Jacob Tonson the Elder's speculation in the Parisian *bourse* and his nephew's subsequent inheritance) allows publishers to be more daring in their support of new authors and ventures. Likewise, readers interested in the practicalities of book production will find letters detailing the Elder's efforts to acquire paper, type, and other materials through trips to the Continent. Although these letters largely come from the period after the retirement of the most famous Tonson, this is a valuable collection for scholars studying networks of patronage, financial interest, literary coteries, and readers in the long eighteenth century.

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MEAGHAN J. BROWN

*The Cambridge Companion to Women's Writing in the Romantic Period.* Ed. by DEVONEY LOOSER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2015. xviii+238 pp. £18.99. ISBN 978-1-107-602-557.

Romantic women's writing has, after a long time in the doldrums, been making a slow return to critical prominence since the 1970s. As many of the chapters in this admirable volume make clear, the Romantic era was a period when the productions of women equalled, and sometimes overtook, those of men. This collection does valuable work not just in reminding us of this too often forgotten fact and bringing to greater prominence many less familiar female authors of the period, but also in exploring and explicating some of the reasons for their subsequent disappearance from the canon.

The book contains fifteen chapters, the first seven organized as discussions of genre or subgenre, and the remainder structured thematically. There is inevitably some overlap between chapters, but each one makes a distinct contribution to our knowledge not only of the women writers under consideration, but also of the Romantic period as a whole.

Stephen C. Behrendt's opening chapter on 'Poetry' sets up the frame of reference for much of the rest of the book, helpfully outlining the ways in which canon formation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries sidelined women poets by relegating them to 'dismissive sub-categories such as minor poets or lyric poets that resolutely kept women poets *outside* of the canonical company, even while claiming to include them' (p. 1). The question of the gendering of genres recurs in a number of the following chapters (Anthony Mandal's on fiction, Angela Wright's on Gothic, and Crystal B. Lake's on history writing, for example), as does the theme of community, also introduced by Behrendt. The vexed status of women's literary communities is foregrounded in Julie A. Carlson's chapter on social, familial, and literary networks, in which Carlson warns of the potential dangers of generalizing about 'strong networks and successful authorship in the case of women' (p. 145). Indeed, one of the major conclusions to emerge from this volume is that it is

dangerous indeed to generalize about or to attempt to impose existing models from Romantic scholarship on women writers of the period, not only because of the diversity and heterogeneity of their writing, but also because of the differences in their political, class, religious, and familial identities. While many of the chapters offer suggestive new models for approaching the period, Devoney Looser's chapter on age and ageing explicitly suggests that the 'insights of age studies' might offer up some 'shared patterns of reception' and 'shared features of writing that hinged on distinctions of sex and age' which have previously gone unnoticed (p. 176).

Jacqueline M. Labbe does an excellent job of representing women writers as a disadvantaged group within the complex economic realities of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century publishing market, while Catherine Ingrassia's chapter on writing in wartime and Deidre Coleman's on the global context work well together to highlight women writers' various attempts to engage with the spheres of politics and war. A number of chapters (such as Anne K. Mellor's on essays and political writing, and Caroline Franklin's on the bluestocking legacy) explore the ways in which women were positioned as 'mothers of the nation', with responsibility for the education of the next generation and hence a part to play in the public weal, and yet criticized for their incursions into public life as writers, activists, or critics. These essays all contribute well to ongoing debates about the contested nature of the public sphere.

Overall, the book will be admirably useful to an undergraduate readership, who will benefit not only from the depth of scholarship represented in the essays, but also from its excellent Chronology and Guide to Further Reading. But it also has important things to say to scholars of the period, who will find in its separate chapters and the book as a whole important new models for approaching the Romantic period.

UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING

KATIE HALSEY

*Staging the Peninsular War: English Theatres 1807–1815.* By SUSAN VALLADARES. London: Routledge. 2016. xi+459 pp. £80. ISBN 978-1-4724-1863-0.

An important new theatre of the Peninsular War (1808–14) is opened up with this study: not a military locus, but the London and English provincial stage. Susan Valladares is concerned with cultural, and especially dramatic, responses to this pivotal period in Britain's 'total war' with Napoleon, when Britain allied with its old and recent enemy, Spain, and with Portugal, in the campaigns of the Iberian Peninsula. Her purview is wide: dozens of productions, staged in minor as well as major theatres, are considered; an array of actors, writers, theatre managers, and impresarios jostle for our attention; and a medley of long-defunct contemporary newspapers and periodical reviews, such as the *Monthly Mirror*, the *Monthly Review*, and the *Examiner*, are judiciously cited. Civilian engagement in the conflict, not least in terms of (often raucous, sometimes violent) audience participation, was widespread, in a country heavily militarized since war with France was declared in