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Duncan-Page, Anne (ed.).

The Cambridge Companion to Bunyan.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xix, 187. ISBN 978-0-521-73308-3 (paperback) \$29.99.

This is an important and long-awaited title; the first collection of essays to introduce the author of one of the most popular prose works in the English language, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. But it is also shorter than most of the already concise companions in the present series. The reason is clear throughout. Bunyan was no John Milton; he “never quite reached the status of Puritan bard” (7). Bunyan’s companion has been preceded by more than a hundred Cambridge companions to individual authors already in print. Milton’s companion was, in contrast, among the first to be published and, now in its second edition, is understandably nearly twice as long. Milton’s reputation still enjoys “a far more celebrated and enduring place in the canon than Bunyan’s” (29).

But there is more to Bunyan than *The Pilgrim's Progress*: he was also the author of one of the finest spiritual autobiographies in the language, one of the earliest novels, a political allegory of historical interest, and a primer for children, in addition to some 53 other works recognized in the Bunyan canon. The editor makes a strong case for Bunyan’s status as a major author. Instead of favouring Bunyan’s most famous allegory, Duncan-Page allocates only a single chapter to it: *The Pilgrim's Progress* is placed on equal footing with *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, *The Holy War*, and *A Book for Boys and Girls*, which are all, for better or worse, presented as major works deserving of their own chapters. This could not have been an easy decision. The benefit is that the contents reflect the full range of Bunyan’s achievement, drawing serious attention to lesser known works, and his best known is prevented from eclipsing the others. The problem is that none of these works, with the possible exception of *Grace Abounding*, is equal to *The Pilgrim's Progress* in most readers’ minds.

Stuart Kim makes a compelling argument for the relative importance of *Mr. Badman*, and Michael Davies provides a useful context for appreciating *Grace Abounding*, but all David Walker can do with *The Holy War* is survey the politics contemporary with the allegory and glance at superior analogues; he begins helpfully with a summary of the story, since presumably few readers

can be trusted to know it. Shannon Murray's chapter on *A Book for Boys and Girls* makes a special contribution to the study of children's literature, though again the text itself is likely to be read only by Bunyan scholars; it can be found only in major research libraries.

These chapters, which make up the bulk of the volume, each in their own way offer an important contribution to modern scholarship on Bunyan, although a separate section dedicated to *The Pilgrim's Progress* is sorely missed. Roger Pooley is left with only twelve pages in which to treat the allegory, politics, structure, sequel, and poetry of the one work that will draw most readers to the companion.

The remainder of the companion is concerned with Bunyan's reception and seventeenth-century context. In the opening chapter, "Bunyan's literary life," which replaces the standard biographical chapter, N. H. Keeble explores Bunyan's identification with the printed word, although the effect is that Bunyan emerges as a kind of allegorical figure — not unlike his own Christian or Mr. Badman — rather than a historical one. His is a literary life, possibly even a mystical one, but not a real one. The publisher's description further suggests the ways in which the companion is designed for those interested more in how Bunyan relates to other subjects, such as the history of the book, than in Bunyan himself.

In subsequent chapters, Nigel Smith introduces an array of Restoration contexts, W. R. Owens outlines Bunyan's relationship to the Bible, and Vera J. Camden proposes a new psychoanalytical approach to the canon, although the latter reads more like the basis for a journal article best appreciated by her peers. There is at times a tendency among the contributors of this book to contradict one another openly — which, rather than offering a useful debate, threatens to undermine their own shared goal of making Bunyan more accessible to a broader audience. The final chapters include Duncan-Page's brief survey of Bunyan's early printers and biographers, Emma Watson's account of Bunyan's explosive popularity among the Victorians, and Isabel Hofmeyer's presentation of colonial and post-colonial readings of Bunyan, which also serves as a useful overview of modern criticism and an introduction to further reading. These chapters each serve a variety of needs, but are also in many ways overburdened as a result.

The end result is a clear indication of what Bunyan scholars have to offer. One can only hope now for a second edition in which their subject will

be proven equal to the other authors in the Cambridge series, a full-length edition like Milton's that includes chapters on prominent critical approaches, like the tradition of attributing Bunyan's visions to medical conditions (often referred to but never elaborated upon), or broader subjects of interest, like Bunyan and gender (separate from divinity) or Bunyan and theology (separate from gender), not to mention multiple chapters focusing on his best known work. Bunyan is worth it.

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Dunn-Lardeau, Brenda (éd.).

Humanistes italiens et imprimés de l'Italie de la Renaissance dans les collections de l'UQAM.

Collection Figura 29. Montréal : Centre de recherche sur le texte et l'imaginaire / Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012, 330 pages, ISBN 978-2-923907-25-3 (broché) 20 \$

Le petit livre publié sous la direction de Mme Dunn-Lardeau est le résultat d'une double initiative : une séance de travail dans le cadre de la conférence de la Renaissance Society of America (2010) consacrée aux humanistes italiens par le groupe de recherche multidisciplinaire de Montréal, et une exposition de livres de la Renaissance provenant des collections de l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Cette exposition a permis d'établir un intéressant catalogue sommaire de l'ensemble des livres de cette époque et de cette origine conservés dans les bibliothèques montréalaises (UQAM, Université McGill, Université de Montréal, Université Concordia, Bibliothèque nationale du Québec, Fonds des archives des Jésuites, Centre canadien d'Architecture, Musée Stewart), qui complète le catalogue des éditions aldines de l'Université McGill, publié en 2000. Le volume des actes réunit huit contributions dont l'objet est de proposer chacune une étude détaillée sur un livre choisi parmi la sélection exposée. Ces contributions sont d'une grande diversité, liée aux ouvrages choisis et aux spécialités de chacun des auteurs. Selon les initiateurs du projet, elles ont toutes l'ambition de mettre en valeur le rôle fondateur de l'Italie dans le mouvement des idées de la Renaissance, ainsi que l'art et la technique de l'imprimerie