Until recently, scholars knew little more about Renaissance schooling than what the great humanists told us in their magnificent if somewhat idealized pedagogical treatises. Most scholars are acquainted with the picture of humanistic education described by Pier Paolo Vergerio, Leonardo Bruni, Erasmus, and others. These treatises are very valuable. But now scholars are going beyond humanistic prescriptions to uncover the reality of Renaissance schooling. They are beginning to find answers to such questions as, how available were schools? Who attended school? What percentage of the population attended school or became literate in some other way? Above all, what did Renaissance boys and girls, men and women, learn in schools and universities?

These papers presented at the plenary session of the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America at Victoria University in the University of Toronto in April 1990 provide an overview of recent research on Renaissance education, especially scholarship of the past twenty years. The papers will raise issues and questions as well as list bibliography. The panelists hope that this brief survey of current research on education in the Renaissance and Reformation will prove useful to scholars in several disciplines.*

*Citations in the articles that follow are abbreviated in the text. Full publication information for items mentioned in the text can be found in the consolidated bibliography at the end of the section.