logical vissitudes of the period between the 1390s and the 1640s, the continuously prominent role of the city's own three (four after 1566) waiters or minstrels is especially notable. Whether or not, as the records seem to indicate, the professional standards of their musicianship improved considerably in the Tudor period, these two volumes prove to be a major source for the history of English music as well as of drama. Revealing in quite a different way are the detailed accounts of visits to the northern city by kings and members of the royal family. Throughout the period it was no doubt always true, as James I was alleged to have said when visiting York in 1603, that "the people are desirous to see a King"; and the citizens of York certainly never let slip these opportunities of cultivating the good will of a ruling sovereign from Richard II to Charles I. In particular the elaborate "shew" organised for Henry VII's entry into York in 1486 deserves to stand as a locus classicus of late medieval English urban pageantry quite apart from its incidental interest in incorporating the first known use of the Tudor Rose motif. After a long interval following Henry VIII's only progress to the north in 1541, visits by reigning English monarchs to York resumed in 1603 and reached a crescendo when Charles I increasingly used the city as his political headquarters in the early 1640s. As in the late fifteen century, a royal visit provided the mayor and council with a good chance to engage in an exercise of national public relations. Their decision to send their own "copye of the king's entertainment" of 1633 to "Mr Howes the Chronicler of London to be putt in print" also helps to explain why Edmund Howes's printed account of James I's visit to York twenty years earlier contains more interesting detail than the extracts from The True Narration printed in York 1, 514-15. The speeches of welcome addressed to visiting kings of the early seventeenth century also testify to an increasing self-consciousness about the history of York itself. Tributes to York's past as an imperial city and to an antiquity "not inferior to any other of this Realme" led to the climax of the Recorder's speech of 1639 with its learned references to York as the birthplace of Constantine and the site of Egbert's (sic) library. It is no surprise perhaps that the eloquent Recorder on that occasion was none other than Sir Thomas Widdrington, later to be the very first historian of York. By 1639 of course the once famous medieval plays of the city had joined those many other episodes in the history of York whose "very ashes . . . are not to be found." For discovering quite how much documentary evidence of York drama and minstrelsly does still survive and for presenting it so thoroughly and carefully future generations will long be beholden to the two editors of these admirable volumes.

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In celebration of Eugenio Garin's seventieth birthday, nine eminent scholars have been requested to contribute papers dealing with specific problems relating to humanism and the Renaissance. The result is a magnificent collection of essays which convey some of those scholars' most significant insights into the
period and also point towards promising new trends. Their indebtedness to Garin’s brilliant interpretation of humanism and the Renaissance is evident throughout.

In Storici e Rinascimento negli ultimi venticinque anni, Denys Hay traces the development of Renaissance studies in the last quarter of this century, in a necessarily brief but penetrating outline. He points out some imbalances, like the excessive concentration of researchers on Florence to the detriment of research in other geographic areas. He also mentions some imperfectly explored fields, such as the history of the Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the influence of the Renaissance movement on archaeology and historiography and others. Walter Ullmann’s Origini medievali del Rinascimento deals with the fascinating evolution of Western European civilization from a society modelled upon the structure of the universal Church, with emphasis being placed on man’s twofold aim, ethical-political and transcendental, to the rise of a more modern concept of the State, in which the revival and study of Roman law played a major part. In Il pensiero antropologico-religioso nel Rinascimento, Charles Trinkaus examines the relativism with which humanists viewed their own culture. The idea that man was infinitely adaptable resulted in the thought that culture was also variable and relative, as shown in Pontanus’ De sermon. Emphasis was consequently shifted to the social quality of human virtue. In the midst of alternative humanistic views stressing now human misery (Poggio), now human dignity (Manetti), Trinkaus points out the enigmatic dichotomy presented by Leon Battista Alberti, whose ideas reveal an underlying state of tension in spite of his emphasis on the vita activa. When dealing with theologia rhetorica, the humanistic mixture of classical and Christian elements, the author points out the importance which the humanists attached to rhetoric as a tool to achieve power. According to Paul Oskar Kristeller, in Il Rinascimento nella storia del pensiero filosofico, it is dangerous to attempt to deal with Renaissance philosophy as a movement expressing the so-called Renaissance spirit in the philosophic thinkers in the context of a period which is called Renaissance for artistic or literary reasons (p. 155). In spite of the fact that he considers humanism as an unsystematic movement, though he views its underlying aspiration towards classical antiquity as a unifying element (p. 159), Kristeller is able to identify the impact of the humanists’ ideas upon such unlikely fields as physical and biological science, mathematics and others. He points out that Italian Aristotelianism was characterized by its being associated with medicine rather than with theology and that our knowledge of how fifteenth-century Aristotelian philosophy developed in Italy is very imperfect. Platonism is better known because, though it remained unrelated to university teaching during the Renaissance, the three greatest fifteenth-century thinkers, Cusanus, Ficino and Pico, were all influenced by Plato’s theories and that greatly contributed to the diffusion of this trend. In Le dottrine politiche nel Rinascimento, Nicolai Rubinstein points out that the Italian city-states were not important in political thought before Aquinas. The use made by the latter of ideas derived from Aristotle’s Politics marked a turning-point in Western political thought. There was a gradual development (in which antiquity played a major rôle) of self-awareness on the part of the cities, resulting in writers like Mussato, Salutati or Bruni. However, with the emerging of the
there is a noticeable tendency on the part of certain writers to make use of classical elements in order to praise the ideal prince, as opposed to the republican structure. That may be observed in Decembrio’s use of Plato’s Republic in his De republica, which was dedicated to Filippo Maria Visconti (p. 216). In Florence the Medici never really succeeded in killing republicanism, which is clearly present in Machiavelli’s writings. New problems (such as the rôle of force in politics) presented themselves to this thinker and Rubinstein stresses the originality of Machiavelli’s views. Machiavelli’s humanistic approach to culture is emphasized (p. 265) in Cecil Grayson’s Il Rinascimento e la storia letteraria. In this subtle essay, in which Guicciardini’s History of Italy is viewed as the epitaph for a manqué national reality, there is a penetrating attempt to evaluate the influence of the Counter-reformation on the Italian intellectual climate, with some enlightening remarks about the sensuality and dark sensitivity which characterize the Jerusalem Delivered (p. 268). This essay also contains a critique of the trend in literary criticism stemming from Benedetto Croce’s idealism, which is condemned because it discouraged historical and philological research (p. 243).

According to André Chastel in Le arti nel Rinascimento, the primary importance assumed by the visual arts in the Renaissance was to some extent caused by the impact of newly introduced mass-media. The pagan gods were adapted for the purposes of decoration, and Christian art soon became contaminated by pagan influences, awakening the opposition of some thinkers, notably Erasmus. In Part 4 of his essay, Chastel has some interesting remarks on the penetration of classical mythology into folklore and also on perspective. The unifying principle in all these different trends appears to him to lie in the search for beauty, considered in the Renaissance as a force which animated all the universe and could raise man above himself. However, Chastel recognizes the failure of Renaissance artists to blend Beauty, Truth and Goodness into a single synthesis. Marie Boas Hall’s Il Rinascimento scientifico contains an interesting evaluation of some of the latest works about Renaissance science, together with many penetrating remarks about the rôle played by artisans in Renaissance scientific development, mathematics and the hermetic tradition, and other equally interesting subjects. Finally, in Charles B. Schmitt’s Filosofia e scienza nelle università italiane del XVI secolo the author presents valuable evidence that the universities in the Renaissance were by no means left untouched by the complex phenomena which were taking place on the intellectual scene. Therefore, it is wrong to consider the universities as an intellectual backwater in the humanistic and Renaissance periods. Schmitt also points out the often-forgotten fact that Platonism and Aristotelianism were not mutually exclusive, and he deals with the largely unexplored subject of the Aristotelian and other commentaries and translations produced during the Renaissance, a field in which Garin’s contribution has been of fundamental importance.

This thought-provoking collection is of the utmost importance to students and scholars. Perhaps, even in the present dearth of funding for non-commercial publications, it is to be hoped that some publisher on this continent will produce an English edition.