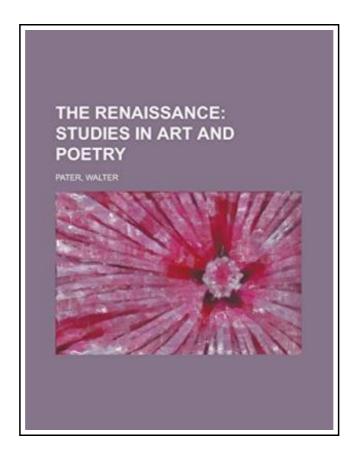
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RareBooksClub. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 58 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.1in.Excerpt: . . . a hand, rough enough by 118 contrast, working upon some fine hint or sketch of his. Sometimes, as in the subjects of the Daughter of Herodias and the Head of John the Baptist, the lost originals have been re-echoed and varied upon again and again by Luini and others. At other times the original remains, but has been a mere theme or motive, a type of which the accessories might be modified or changed; and these variations have but brought out the more the purpose, or expression of the original. It is so with the so-called Saint John the Baptist of the Louvre-one of the few naked figures Leonardo painted-whose delicate brown flesh and womans hair no one would go out into the wilderness to seek, and whose treacherous smile would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance. But the long, reedlike cross in the hand, which suggests Saint John the Baptist, becomes faint in a copy at the Ambrosian Library, and disappears altogether in another version, in the Palazzo Rosso at Genoa. Returning from the latter to the original, we are no longer surprised by Saint Johns strange likeness to the Bacchus which hangs near it, and which set Thophile Gautier thinking of Heines notion of decayed gods, who, to maintain themselves, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion. We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a 119 train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music. No one ever ruled over the mere subject in hand...



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