

THE ARROW OF GOLD

the 'Master' with thanks, and then absorbs herself in the adoration of the 'Girl in the Hat.' Then she sighs out: 'It should be called *Diaphanéité*, if there is such a word. Ah! This is the last expression of modernity!' She puts up suddenly her face-à-main and looks towards the end wall. 'And that — Byzantium itself! Who was she, this sullen and beautiful Empress?'

"The one I had in my mind was Theodosia!! Allègre consented to answer. 'Originally a slave girl — from somewhere.'

"My mother can be marvellously indiscreet when the whim takes her. She finds nothing better to do than to ask the 'Master' why he took his inspiration for those two faces from the same model. No doubt she was proud of her discerning eye. It was really clever of her. Allègre, however, looked on it as a colossal impertinence; but he answered in his silkiest tones:

"Perhaps it is because I saw in that woman something of the women of all time.'

"My mother might have guessed that she was on thin ice there. She is extremely intelligent. Moreover, she ought to have known. But women can be miraculously dense sometimes. So she exclaims, 'Then she is a wonder!!' And with some notion of being complimentary goes on to say that only the eyes of the discoverer of so many wonders of art could have discovered something so marvellous in life. I suppose Allègre lost his temper altogether then; or perhaps he only wanted to pay my mother out, for all these 'Masters' she had been throwing at his head for the last two hours. He insinuates with the utmost politeness:

"As you are honouring my poor collection with a visit you may like to judge for yourself as to the inspiration of these two pictures. She is upstairs changing her dress