

arriving. I thought it would be pleasanter to wait a bit out in front. Expected he would drive up soon in a taxi. Then I saw him coming round the corner, walking, rolling slowly from side to side like a great ship, Mrs. Chesterton with him—a little lady whose stature suggested the idea of a yacht gracefully coursing alongside the huge craft. I wonder if, nowadays, when most writers seem to try to look like something else, Mr. Chesterton knows how overwhelmingly like a great literary figure he looks.

When we were seated, I asked if he had any dope on his "New Jerusalem" book. He began to tell me how surprised he had been to find Jerusalem as it is. But the substance of this you may find in the book. He expressed sympathy with the idea of Zionism. Remarked that he "might become a Zionist if it could be accomplished in Zion". All that he could find to tell me about his "New Jerusalem" was

that it had been "written on the spot". Seemed very disinclined to talk about his own books. Said his feeling in general about each one of them was that he "hoped something would happen to it before anybody saw it".

His surprise at Jerusalem suggested to me the question, had he been surprised at the United States—what he had seen of it? But he dodged giving any "view" of us. His only comment was on the "multitudinous wooden houses".

Had he met many American authors? The one most recently met, a day or so ago in Northampton (though he had met him before in England), was a gentleman he liked very much. He was so thin Mr. Chesterton thought the two of them "should go around together". His name? Gerald Stanley Lee.

But there is not a particle more of time that I can spend on this article.

MURRAY HILL

APOTHEOSIS

By Keith Preston

I OFTEN sigh and wonder whether
 Some day they'll bind me in limp leather;
 When I am limp enough no doubt
 In leather they will lay me out.

DREISER—AFTER TWENTY YEARS

By Edward H Smith

ON the dollar book counter of a drug store, the first night of this year, I encountered "Jennie Gerhardt". No doubt, this most palatable of the Dreiser novels had been for some time in happy enthronement beside the *opera* of Robert Chambers, Rex Beach, Zane Grey and the female gasp-starters of our common letters. Yet the sight arrested me, and the shopkeeper's assurance that he had sold "quite a lot of copies" had the ring of the incredible. Dreiser with even a small popular audience—with any sort of soda-fountain following—seems somehow beyond the border of expectation.

Within the week Dreiser himself magnified this portent with the news that "The Financier" is soon to be issued in German by Kurt Wolff of Berlin and "Twelve Men" in French by Rieder et Cie. "Sister Carrie", "The Titan", and "Jennie Gerhardt" are also to have French publication from the press of "Editions de la Sirène", and the last named book is to appear serially in "L'Humanité".

So this abused *Uebermensch* among our novel-makers is discovered in the act of invading home popularity and reaching, at the same moment, the elevation of international audience.

It was entirely by accident that these bits of news about the fortunes of Theodore Dreiser came synchronously with an interview he gave me from the hermitage in California where he has been in tropical hiding for a year. The opening notes of this fugue of dreiserian opinion deserve to

be sounded here in juxtaposition to the report of his personal progress.

"Do I think there is any tendency toward liberal letters in America?" he demands, echoing my question. "I do not."

Evidently he is not beguiled by the wan light of his own slow illumination. He finds the night that broods upon the creation of fine letters in this country as black as ever. The vast surges of Philistinism and Puritanism seem to him still far too strong and noisy for the little voices lifted among them. He expects America to treat its artists no better than of old. He considers the moving picture finer than most of the books it dramatizes. We shall listen to him at length presently.

Curiously and sadly enough it is now all of twenty years since the young Dreiser saw his first novel issued and the edition all but suppressed, and it is nearly twenty since "Sister Carrie" was published by Heinemann in London, where the book received its critical baptism. It has taken the greater part of a generation for this significant literary figure to reach such "success" as comes to the common spew of sensational novelists in a lustrum.

Looking back over most of this period I remember with pardonable mirth that "Sister Carrie" came into my hands seventeen or eighteen years ago and that when I passed it about for the enlightenment of my colleagues on a certain western newspaper, hugely impressed by the vision and truth