

thought that since Lawrence regarded this "phallic hunting out," that is the physical acts themselves, as crucial, he would have included some reference to them. Indeed, since they were, by his own account, more exciting, more truly masculine (finally convincing the woman of her utterly passive feminine make-up) than the bits of straightforward sex described in some detail earlier, the reader is tempted for a moment to suspect the existence of some second clandestine censor who managed somehow to expurgate a piece out of this unexpurgated edition. This censor, in fact, was Lawrence himself. He cannot bring himself to use words that will baldly describe these intimacies. He has to hint about things seen "on Greek vases." Was it, as he says so contemptuously about the other people who are afraid to use simple four-letter words about more ordinary sexual experiences, that he was in the end uncontrollably ashamed of the whole thing?

Certainly it leads him into a piece of strident, ejaculatory writing (with an exclamation mark to every other sentence in several paragraphs—see Penguin edition, pp. 258-9) which is of outstanding badness even among the long passages of pert, girl's gush writing that the book contains. Here is a specimen. He is giving Lady Chatterley's reactions to Mellors' unabashed wilfulness in sex, her thoughts about his superiority to other men. "What a pity most men are so doggy, a bit shameful, like Clifford! Like Michaelis even! Both sexually a bit doggy and humiliating. The supreme pleasure of mind!" Then after a further reference to the need for "sheer fiery sensuality, not messiness," there is the peroration: "Ah, God, how rare a thing a man is! They are all dogs that trot and sniff and copulate."

Somehow even copulation is now held against the Cliffords. That is tenable because Mellors has now shown her something better. But what? The clue only comes much later, coyly in characteristic fashion from Clifford himself. Lawrence never stops taking his revenge on the poor man. Clifford in his letter to Lady Chatterley (p. 280, Penguin edition), describing the fuss made by Mellors' wife about his sexual behaviour towards her, says: "Humanity has always had a strange avidity for strange sexual postures, and if a man likes to use his wife, as Benvenuto Cellini says, 'in the Italian way,' well that is a matter of taste. But I had hardly expected our gamekeeper to be up to so many tricks." It seems a reasonable guess that this same anal perversion was what had startled Lady Chatterley during the night with Mellors when she had been purified by "the refinements of passion, the extravagances of sensuality."

Now if this is what Lawrence really meant,

that the practice of these sexual perversities is an essential part of his process of resurrection from the depressed condition in which men and women to-day find themselves, it was peculiarly cowardly of him not to say so. This cowardice wants to be looked squarely in the face; it is useful in detecting the shoddy quality of much of the writing and most of the thinking in this book. Readers are made that much poorer when something which is meretricious, rhetorical, and weak is presented to them as a thing of genuine artistic quality. The worst weakness of the D. H. Lawrence of "Lady Chatterley" is a kind of high bible-punching pose that he adopts throughout the book; it keeps coming up in the throw-away pulpit preacher's words, sounds and phrases that are used to make the sex descriptions sound holy, and in the awful self-righteousness with which he asserts his (and Mellors') rights over a benighted world of lesser men.

In this way he manages to mask and muff, if not to conceal entirely, his essential message which is that the male in order to reach fulfilment must assert himself utterly, wilfully, perversely, *using* the female "like a slave" in sex. He gets some way towards saying it outright in the description of the night with Mellors. But in the end he funks it, because he does not have words that he is capable of using to express what he has to say. He retreats into gush. This breakdown in the writing, which seems to be directly correlated with a failure of nerve, is constantly in evidence through the novel.

Andrew Shonfield

Heroic Leadership?

TO AT LEAST one reader Professor Arthur Schlesinger's recent article in ENCOUNTER ["On Heroic Leadership," December 1960] has brought disappointment. The article puts one really important question: In countries where democracy is impossible, what kind of régime is the best from the point of view of the democrat? Now that great empires are breaking up into a host of independent states most of whose citizens are desperately poor and illiterate, this question has only to be put for its importance to be obvious.

That Professor Schlesinger does not answer it is not to be counted against him. To be able to answer it, we should need to study several countries which are not democratic, or are so only to a slight extent, and to enquire whether they are moving towards democracy or away from it, and for what reasons. It may be that the information needed to answer this question

already exists. But, if it does, nobody appears to have collected it and used it for this purpose. Certainly, we ought not to object to Professor Schlesinger's article merely on the ground that it is speculative and inconclusive.

But, unfortunately, only a small part of the article is devoted to putting this question and to suggesting lines of enquiry which might help in finding an answer. The bulk of it is given over to other matters, which are treated superficially and whose connection with this question or with one another is often not clear. The article reads as if it had been hastily put together by a busy man who had not had time to sort out his ideas.

I must confess that the phrase *Lockian democracy* took me by surprise; for I have lectured on John Locke for many years now without discovering that he was a democrat. I know that democrats have rested their arguments for democracy on assumptions taken from Locke, but so too have socialists rested their arguments against private property in the means of production on statements made by Locke in his account of how titles to property first arose from labour. Locke was no more a democrat than he was a socialist; he was satisfied with the peculiar balance of monarchy and aristocracy which he found in the England of his day and which he thought James II wanted to upset.

PERHAPS PROFESSOR SCHLESINGER, when he speaks of *Lockian democracy*, has in mind some such theory as Tom Paine's. He would certainly not be the first professor to speak of John Locke as if he had written Paine's *Rights of Man*. Paine was a democrat who had nothing whatever to say about what Professor Schlesinger accuses "classical democratic theory" of neglecting, namely, the function of political leaders in a democracy. But why should he not have neglected it? He was out to explain what makes government legitimate and not how democracy works; and this was also the purpose of Rousseau and Bentham, to mention only two other writers who, unlike Locke, really were democrats.

No doubt, democracy does sometimes need strong leaders and does not produce them, as, for example, in France under the third and fourth republics. Though this failure in France has been accounted for in a variety of ways, there has been no serious attempt to compare different types of democracy with a view to explaining why some produce strong leaders more readily than others. This is an omission much to be regretted, but even if this attempt were to be made it could hardly throw much light on what Professor Schlesinger calls "heroic

leadership;" for these "heroic leaders," whose function he wants explained, mostly do not operate in democracies. Admittedly, in the modern world, all governments, democratic or not, have a good deal in common, and a study of how Nasser acquired and maintains power in Egypt might conceivably deepen our understanding of how, say, Chicago was once governed. But that is another matter, and has nothing to do with Professor Schlesinger's complaint about the defects of democratic theory.

THE STRONGER our faith in democracy, the greater, presumably, our hope that countries which have recently gained independence will become democratic; and so the greater our desire to know whether they are likely to do so. Clearly, we ought to study their social and political systems much more extensively than we have done. This would involve, among other things, studying how leaders arise in them and what their functions are; but I see no reason for selecting this aspect of a complicated situation for special study. Has it been more neglected than others? I doubt it.

Professor Schlesinger discerns what he calls "a line of argument," which he attributes to both Locke and Tolstoy, and of which he says that it "deprives history of its moral dimension by depriving the individual of accountability for his acts." This juxtaposition of Locke and Tolstoy is merely odd, but the conclusion which comes hard upon it is astonishing:

the heroic leader has the Promethean responsibility to affirm human freedom against the supposed inevitabilities of history.

If man is free, then he is so whether or not there have been great men who have changed the course of history. We do not prove that a decision is free by pointing to the importance of its consequences, any more than we prove that it is not free by pointing to their unimportance. Professor Schlesinger's argument purporting to show that Max Weber's charisma is a useless concept when it comes to explaining the authority of leaders other than "medicine men, warrior chieftains, and religious prophets" is also misconceived; which is a pity, for a hard knock at Weber, whose reputation is inflated, is long overdue. No doubt, a Hitler must, if he is to get power, resort to transactions unknown to the medicine man or the chieftain, and cannot use power effectively unless he has a bureaucracy under him, and yet his authority does also largely depend on his having what Weber calls charisma.

Why, I wonder, the reference to one, Amaury de Riencourt, who argues that democracy leads to imperialism which ends inevitably in the destruction of democracy? Why does the writer

suddenly bring this man and this argument to the notice of his readers? The argument is unrelated to the rest of the article, and is not impressive. The British set about acquiring the largest of all empires before they became a democracy, and have now lost it without ceasing to be one. As much could be said of the Dutch; and even the French are nearer to losing what remains of their empire than to abandoning democracy.

The study of history is indispensable to the political theorist, who is therefore inclined to treat the historian respectfully: that is to say, the historian producing history, especially when it is history of the quality that Professor Schlesinger produces. But when the historian ventures into another field, it is a different matter. Not that he should not venture; but, if he does, he takes risks.

John Plamenatz

The Law and Literary Merit

By Raymond Williams

THE EXTENSIVE PUBLIC discussion which followed the trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* for obscenity has been centred on two important aspects of the case: the general conflict of values which the prosecution brought into the open, and the literary merit of the novel itself.* I want to look at a third aspect, which is important in literary and social criticism, and which certainly occupied my mind as a witness for the defence: the question of how far literary merit can be established within the legal process (as is now permissible under the new Act), and the related question of the reference a literary judgment has or ought to have to moral and social judgments. The book of the trial,† edited by C. H. Rolph, is a useful basis for this discussion. In some ways, certainly, it is disappointing: I had hoped for something nearer a verbatim record (some reviewers have assumed that it is virtually so, but in the only case I can check from personal knowledge important questions and their answers are in fact omitted). I would also have preferred a more objective tone: I sympathise with most of Mr. Rolph's comments, but they are so mixed up with the evidence that they often get in the way. Nevertheless, we have no comparable document, of a case in which literary critics had to come out and try to show and justify their procedures in public, within terms not of their own choice. As such, the record is unusually interesting.

The first and most obvious point is, of course, that evidence of the novel's merit had to be

given in answer to questions framed by lawyers. There were, naturally, the usual preliminary discussions with solicitors, but still, as it turned out, one could only answer in terms of what one was asked, and I know in my own case that things I wanted to say had to go unsaid, within the discipline of relevant answer to the questions actually posed. This is a genuine difficulty, on both sides. Obviously lawyers will ask questions along the general line of their case, and this line will to some extent have been determined by the nature of the pre-existing evidence: in this case, general critical opinion about Lawrence and the terms in which he is normally praised or defended. But in a case of this kind, the defence, with the best will in the world, cannot determine the general line of the trial as a whole. It is certainly noticeable, looking through the record, how much time was spent chasing the opening speech of prosecuting counsel, and I do not suppose many critics would choose to begin a discussion of the literary merits of the novel from that particular performance. Perhaps this could not have been avoided, though in terms of establishing the merits of the novel it certainly wasted a great deal of time, and in effect conceded the proposition that literary merit depends on a healthy moral sense (a criterion which has not exactly been noticeable elsewhere in modern criticism). Yet I feel also, looking through the record, that the line of the defence had in part also been based on similar grounds. The most obvious example is the preliminary assertion that "the author . . . is clearly a very strong supporter of marriage," and it is significant that this point led to one of the worst tangles of evidence (the cross-examination of Mrs. Bennett) and to several incidental critical lapses. It is

* Cf. in recent ENCOUNTERS, "Black Magic, White Lies" [February] and "Lady Chatterley, the Witnesses, and the Law" [March].

† *The Trial of Lady Chatterley*. Penguin, 3s. 6d.