

as Marx and Lenin themselves to abandon comfort and respectability and to choose poverty and obscurity in exile?' (p. 193). Dr. Parkes has not said the last word on Marxism, but Marx himself long ago made many relevant remarks about 'Kathedersozialisten.'

CHRISTOPHER HILL.

A SCIENTIST ON PROPAGANDA

POLITICAL PROPAGANDA, by F. C. Bartlett (Cambridge University Press, 3/6).

Professor Ernest Barker's new series of books on Current Problems opens with the excellent choice of a scrupulously scientific thinker to write on a topic that too often falls to the verbal magicians among sociologists—those whose impressive orotundities are no less a technique of mass hypnotism merely for being aimed at highly intellectualised élites. In contrast to such writers Professor Bartlett brings true scientific scepticism to his problems. He is especially sceptical of sweeping intellectual generalisations and all-inclusive themes. In their place he offers his characteristic combination of painstaking attention to familiar facts together with unexpected subtlety in the analysis of some of them. On the difference between education and propaganda, for instance, he takes up a commonsense standpoint which leads to no radical formulation, but which is at least unpretentious and will not impede other writers. Immediately after this, however, he offers, still in the simplest possible words, a basic fact which is of the utmost practical and scientific importance:

'It is one of the curious things about human society that, where potentialities of division are very numerous, the possibility of serious splitting may be at a minimum, but where possible lines of division are few, the group may be in serious danger of radical deterioration. For when potentialities of division are numerous, if a split occurs it is likely to affect individuals or small groups of individuals only, leaving the general society not much upset. But where there are one or two simple lines of possible cleavage, any actual division works disaster to the whole group.'

A statement like this seems to give a gentle jog to one's mental kaleidoscope; imposing no insistent pattern itself, it yet sets going new and stimulating rearrangements among one's own ideas.

It is occasional points like this—and they occur chiefly in the highly interesting first chapter—which distinguish Professor Bartlett's book from what many other writers might have produced. A little of the factual material is new and much more is sufficiently unfamiliar to be well worth including in a low-priced book of topical interest. But in the main the book represents the matter-of-fact thinking of a man who is concerned with the immediate problem confronting his nation in war-time. While looking at the problem from a specialist standpoint he recognises that common sense must often bridge the gap between basic scientific principles and present exigencies. The book will almost certainly do something—by the ideas, information, and the intellectual cautions it suggests—to improve people's appraisal of the strategy of British propaganda conceived of as a weapon of war and a tool of government.

But what lifts it out of the class of thinking which the intelligent weeklies might provide is its attentiveness to the small-seeming basic facts upon which the familiar features of contemporary social life can be seen to rest. An exceptional capacity for discovering significant broad implications in facts and materials that most people take for granted has distinguished Professor Bartlett's more technical work. His present topical book is an easy opportunity for the general reader to sample his distinctive intellectual flavour.

D. W. HARDING.

MILTON AND HIS MODERN CRITICS, by Logan Pearsall Smith
(O.U.P. 3/6).

The most interesting thing about this little book is that it won the editorial endorsement of the *Times Literary Supplement* (Nov. 9), which notes that some of those people who won't let other people read Milton are 'Cambridge dons who apparently draw their status and their livelihood by preparing the young for the English Tripos.' —'It is noticeable that the appreciators of Milton whom Mr. Pearsall Smith cites were all sound classics.'