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MOSCOW HAS A PLAN

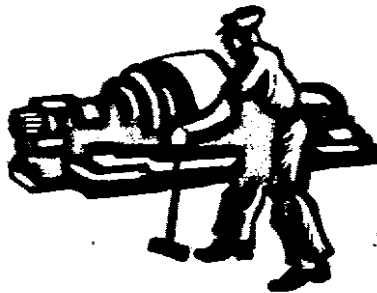
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MOSCOW

HAS A PLAN

A SOVIET PRIMER

TRANSLATED FROM THE
RUSSIAN OF M. ILIN By
G. S. COUNTS & N. P. LODGE
WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS DRAWN
By WILLIAM KERMODE



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NOTE

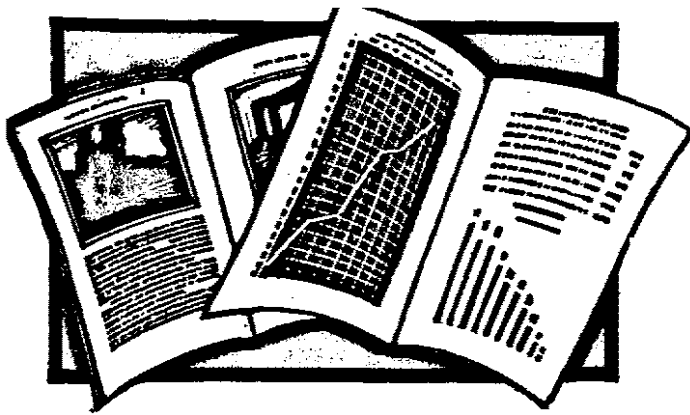
THIS book, designed in Russia for the masses and for young people, is not epoch-making – it is epoch-indicating. It pants with excitement; it laughs with delight as it skips forward through the story of Russia's conscious organization to get the very utmost out of the artificial use of natural forces. When we read it, and find ourselves swept past its naivety, impetuously carried ahead (though all the material is so obvious and familiar), we discover that it is inspired. Then, if we reflect, we may shake our heads sadly and feel chilly at the spine – for we are excited only by mystic contemplation of absolutes; we are bored by applied science – while these folk are inspired by it. We show a symptom of age. They are flamboyant with youth.

How common a thing it is for genius to be childish! There is generally naivety in the expression of something quite new; as if the step forward demands a step backward for stability. *Mieux reculer pour mieux sauter*. The absorption in his discovery blinds the creator to all else.

The style of an original writer seems clumsy; it very likely is clumsy. A school of painting ends in masterly

attention to technique; a school of painting begins by attention to something more essential, and the vehicle of expression is crude. This is just as true of what nations create as of the creations of individual works of art. We, who look on Russia's awakening from the outside, may find it very childish. The modern world's mastery of nature through machinery and applied physics and chemistry has developed in our midst. Is it not a little ridiculous when that great sprawled-out backward country, whose illiterate peasant population increases by some four millions every year, gets excited and even a trifle hysterical about electrification of railways, making buttons from curds, oxy-acetylene welding, and the use of seed-drills in farming? Did they then discover these? Are they not teaching their grandmother to suck eggs?.

They are not. Their grandmother grew up to suck naturally, nonchalantly, at the obedience of her whim, or when the particular egg happened to be in season. They have awakened to consciousness of egg-sucking; they would do it efficiently, utilizing it when appropriate as a simple but effective method of obtaining easily assimilable nourishment.



IN THIS BOOK ARE MANY PICTURES

PREFACE

WHAT THE STORY IS ABOUT

1. FIGURES ARE PICTURES

THERE are books with stories, with pictures, with poems; books interesting to read and to look at.

There are also books with figures and tables. From these books we learn much, but we do not read them for pleasure.

But here is a book which consists entirely of figures and tables, and yet it is more interesting than any story of adventure.

In this book every figure is a picture.

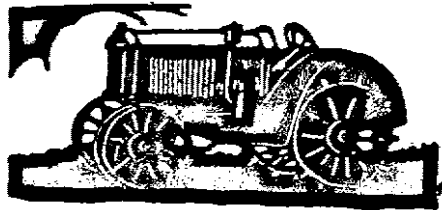
Let us take at random a few figures from its pages:

51 378,000 3385 42



51 means this -
BLAST FURNACES

378,000 means this -
TRACTORS



3385 means this -
LOCOMOTIVES

42 means this -
ELECTRIC POWER STATIONS



What do these mean?

At first sight this book contains nothing of interest, just figures such as may be found in any text-book or book of science. But when you begin to read you cannot tear yourself away.

2. WHAT ONE CAN SEE IN FIGURES

On the bank of a large river great cliffs are being broken into bits. Fierce machines resembling prehistoric animals clamber clumsily up the steps of a gigantic ladder hewed out of the mountain.

A river appears where none existed before, a river over sixty miles long.

A swamp is suddenly transformed into a broad lake.

On the steppe where formerly only feather-grass and thistles grew, thousands of acres of wheat wave in the breeze.

Aeroplanes fly above the Siberian swamps, where in little cabins live people with squinting eyes clad in strange dress made of animal skins.

In the Kalmyk region in the middle of the naked steppe grow buildings of steel and concrete alongside the felt tents of the nomads.

Steel masts rise over the whole country: each mast has

four legs and many arms, and each arm grasps metal wires.

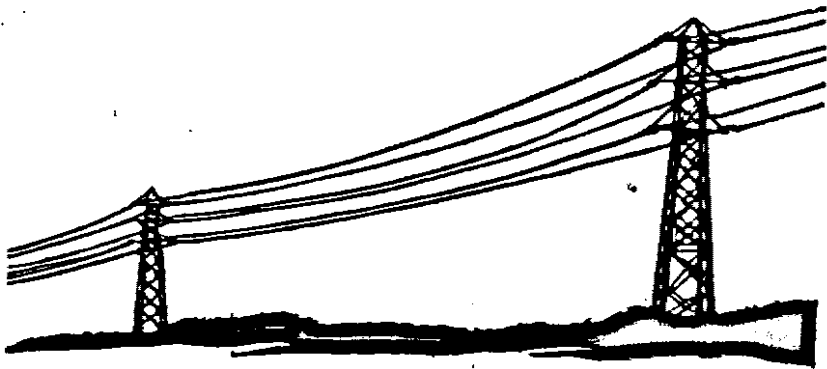
Through these wires runs a current, runs the power and the might of rivers and waterfalls, of peat swamps and coal beds.

All this is in the figures, all this is in the book of figures. And this book is called *The Five Year Plan*.

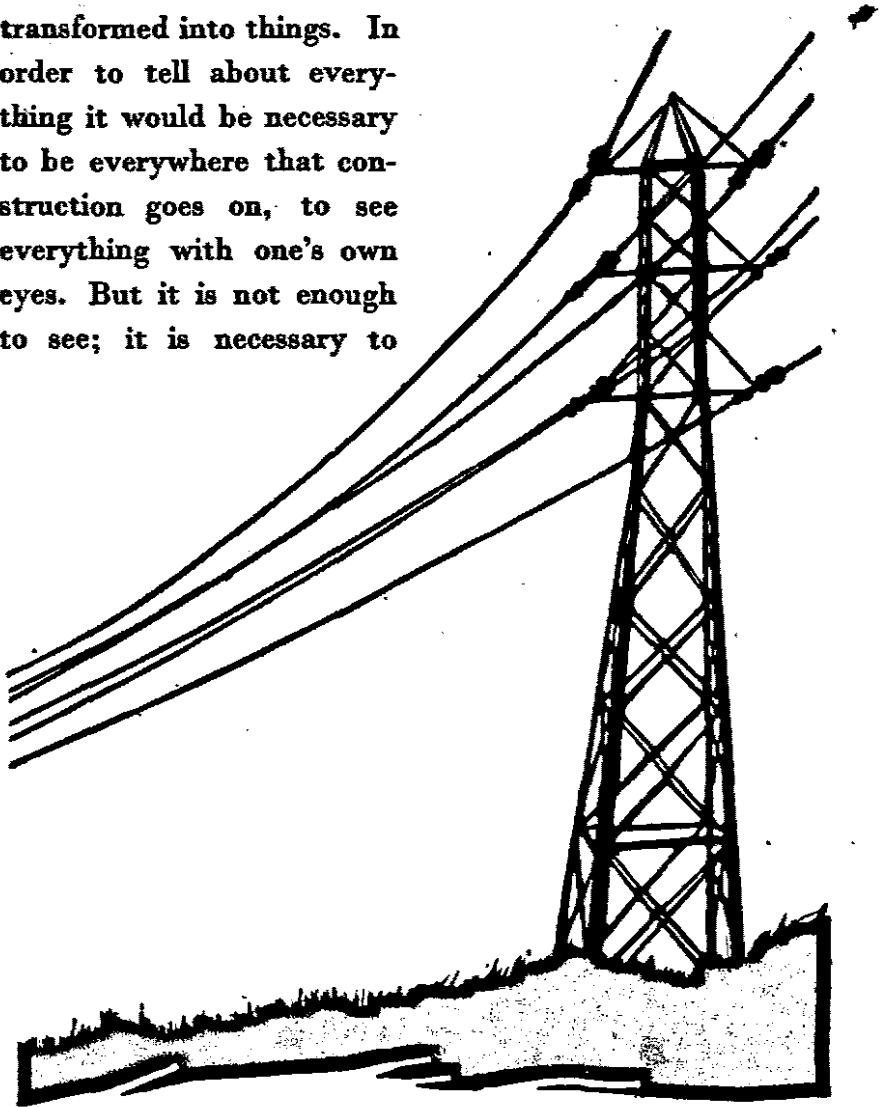
3. A DIFFICULT TASK

To tell in one's own words about this great plan is a difficult task. To relate in a small booklet all that is told in 1680 pages of figures, tables, and brief explanations – is this possible? Thousands of people worked over the Five Year Plan and I, alone, wish to tell about everything.

This plan has already ceased to be a plan; figures are already



transformed into things. In order to tell about everything it would be necessary to be everywhere that construction goes on, to see everything with one's own eyes. But it is not enough to see; it is necessary to



understand also. I am an engineer: I know best that lit
corner of technology in which I work. But I have to wr
about the entire programme of construction. In order
accomplish this task well I should be a metallurgist,
agronomist, a mechanic, a builder, a chemist, an ecc
omist, a civil engineer, and a hydro-technologist.

To be everywhere and to know everything is impossib

Of course there is much about which I shall not spea
there is much that I shall omit. Others will tell more: othe
will tell you of things I do not mention and will furth
illuminate those things concerning which I say little.