The Individual and the Community. By R. E. Roper. Pp. 224. (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1922.) 8*s.* 6*d.* net.

MR. ROPER has produced a thoughtful and, in many respects, a stimulating book. He is a whole-hearted evolutionist, who regards the failure of post-war reconstruction as arising from the fact that our statesmen have resorted to outworn precedents while neglecting the teachings of evolution. There is, he maintains, a wilful confusion of State and community. A community he defines as "an association of two or more human beings for common (though not of necessity identical or similar) purpose or advantage in their evolution." Immediately the common purpose ceases, the community also ceases. Taking each of the principal States of Europe in turn, Mr. Roper shows that, owing to the division which has been made and is perpetuated by the financial-governing class between themselves and the working-governed class, none of them constitutes a community in his sense. The imposition of the will of one section of society upon another which is involved in our modern system of government by the majority is therefore fundamentally wrong. The difficulty is old, and if in practice we have made no very essential advance beyond the compromise expressed in Rousseau's distinction between *le volonté de tous* and *le volonté général*, it is an advantage that it should be kept before our minds by the clear vision of writers such as Mr. Roper.

Metric System for Engineers. By C. B. Clapham. (Directly-Useful Technical Series.) Pp. xii+181+3 charts. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1921.) 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

THE author's justification for his book is that "even among those who use the millimetre in drawing-office or workshop there are probably few who feel confident in calculating with metric units," and his object is to explain the metric system and to state in full how to convert from the English units to metric units, and *vice versa*. Incidentally there is given an excellent account of the vernier and other devices used by engineers for accurate measurement. The book should be of great use in industrial life: the conversion tables are very exhaustive.

A brief survey is offered of the controversy which has been raging for so long round the question whether the metric system should or should not be introduced compulsorily in this country. It is claimed that this survey is not a piece of propaganda work in favour of the change, but the arguments given *pro* and *con* do much to support the view, that a good deal of the opposition to the enforced use of the metric system in England is attributable to mere conservative objection to change. Mr. Clapham's book is itself one of the best arguments in favour of the change—why should the Englishman be condemned to waste so much time and energy in making conversions and in looking up tables of equivalents? S. B.

Wild Bush Tribes of Tropical Africa. By G. C. Claridge. Pp. 314. (London: Seeley, Service and Co., Ltd., 1922.) 21*s.* net.

MR. CLARIDGE'S "Bush Tribes" are the Ba-Congo of Northern Angola, and the country the inhabitants of which he describes stretches from the Congo on the north to St. Paul de Loanda in the south, and from the Kwilu and Kwangu rivers in the east to the Atlantic. He writes of the native with sympathy, but, for the most part, despises his customs: he rarely fails to stigmatise them as "degrading," "disgusting," or worse when he has an opportunity. Notwithstanding this drawback, as it must seem to those who wish to study native custom impartially, the author has given a full and careful account of Ba-Congo culture, and his collection of folk-lore is both interesting and useful. The most important part of his book deals with fetishism, and, in particular, with the N'Kamba fetish of the women, which controls their most important function, that of child-bearing. The men are rigorously excluded from the rites of this fetish. A "Death and Resurrection" secret society, which effects "cures" by death and rebirth, is described from information supplied by a native, but here unfortunately the author's prejudice colours the narrative to such an extent that considerable knowledge of similar societies is required to disentangle the facts.

Readable School Physics. By J. A. Cochrane. Pp. xi+131. (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1922.) 2*s.* 4*d.*

A TEACHER who loves his subject will find matter of interest for his pupils even in its most prosaic parts. "This book," writes Mr. Cochrane in an interesting Preface, "is an attempt to humanise Elementary Physics without popularising it." We are of opinion that in this task the author has achieved very considerable success. Theory has been given the main prominence. Experiments have not been described unless to elucidate principles. References to the makers of scientific history are frequent, and are reinforced by a number of interesting plates which include portraits of Newton, Pascal, Boyle, Galileo, and Joseph Black. The pupil's own experience is brought into connexion with physical principles as often as possible. Part 1, which might have been called Mechanics instead of Hydrostatics since it includes chapters on volume, weight, and density (not to mention surveying), occupies about two-thirds of the book, the remainder being devoted to what is certainly a "readable" account of the elementary principles of heat.

Ions, Electrons, and Ionising Radiations. By Dr. J. A. Crowther. Third Edition. Pp. xii+292+ii pls. (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1922.) 12*s.* 6*d.* net.

THE first edition of Dr. Crowther's useful manual has already received notice in these columns (August 12 1920, p. 740.). The fact that a third edition has been called for so soon is sufficient evidence that the book has been appreciated. The material has been thoroughly revised and the various tables of constants brought into accord with the best data obtainable. Siegbahn's work on X-ray spectra and Aston's work on positive rays receive notice, and an account is given of Sir Ernest Rutherford's recent work on the problems of atomic structure and of Bohr's theory. We have no hesitation in recommending this volume to readers desiring a systematic account of the latest developments in physics.