

Atkinson's 'Henry Thoreau the Cosmic Yankee.'—The ever increasing numbers of readers of Thoreau will be much interested in this discussion¹ of his "thought, poetry and character." Thoreau wrote of himself "You may rely upon it that you have the best of me in my books and that I am not worth seeing personally." Mr. Atkinson emphasizing the fact of his dual personality, tells us that "with the exception of Emerson's all too brief memorial we have not a single reliable full length portrait of Thoreau from his contemporaries," and then, taking the man at his word, he proceeds to study his life and character through his writings, especially his journals.

The little book is well written and holds one's interest as the author discusses his subject's character and personality, his absorbing interests and his views upon life, touching now and again upon incidents in his life—his intense love for Concord, his life by Walden Pond, etc.

From the very nature of the case opinions of Thoreau are bound to differ but Mr. Atkinson is doubtless correct when he says: "No matter how highly we may esteem Thoreau as the herald of the millennium or how closely we may come to the radiance of his thought, I am sure most of us would have found him a refractory person."

While he was far more than a chronicler of nature, that side of his work has been so emphasized, that ornithologists are wont to regard him largely as a student of birds and nature, and most readers of 'The Auk' will want to add this volume to their Thoreau library shelf.—W. S.

Shepard's 'The Heart of Thoreau's Journals.'—The Thoreau journals comprising thirty-nine manuscript volumes and already the source of several compilations such as 'Early Spring in Massachusetts,' 'Summer,' 'Winter,' and 'Autumn' were published in their entirety, in 1906, by Houghton, Mifflin Co., under the able editorship of Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen.

The present volume² is an attempt to gratify the wish of many a reader of Thoreau to have the best things in the 7000 pages of the Journals more readily available, where they could be found at a moment's notice. The compiler also argues that what is now necessary in order that Thoreau may come at last into his full fame and influence, is the publication of the best of his writings in convenient compass.

The result of Mr. Shepard's efforts in this line is eminently satisfactory and here in one small volume we find the paragraphs and sentences "in which Thoreau is most fully and triumphantly himself." Furthermore an unusually good index has been prepared in which one can scarcely fail to find any desired paragraph by looking under a probable subject heading.

¹ Henry Thoreau the Cosmic Yankee. By J. Brooks Atkinson. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, 1927. pp. 1-158. Price \$2.50.

² The Heart of Thoreau's Journals. Edited by Odell Shepard. Boston and New York Houghton Mifflin Company. The Riverside Press, Cambridge. 1927, pp. i-xiii + 1-348. Price \$3.00.