



# The Journal, With Other Writings of John Woolman (Classic Reprint)

*John Woolman*

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## **The Journal, With Other Writings of John Woolman (Classic Reprint) John Woolman**

From the days of Charles Lamb to those of Dr. Eliot of Harvard, the unique charm and worth of the Journal of John Woolman have been signalled by a thinker of distinction here and there, and the book, if not widely known, has quietly found its way to many hearts and been reprinted in sundry editions. The more formal works, however, in which this gentle and audacious eighteenth-century Quaker-preacher spoke out his whole careful mind have been for the most part neglected. These works are sometimes prosy, always indifferent to style in their unflinching quest for pure wisdom, often concerned with the dead issue of negro slavery. Yet even in this last case they have much value as historic documents; no full knowledge of Woolman's spirit is possible without them; and not to know that spirit in its entirety is a distinct loss. The present edition, while making no claim to critical completeness, presents the main accessible body of Woolman's writings. Here is a well of purest water, dug deep, to use the Quaker phrase. The mere limpidity of the water will be joy enough for some: others gazing into it may feel that they see down to the proverbial Truth the very origin of things, the foundations of the moral universe. A studious moderation of utterance is the first quality to make itself felt in Woolman's works. To casual or jaded readers who crave the word-embroidery, the heightened note, of the romanticist in style, the result may seem colourless. Here is a lack of adjectives, an entire absence of emphasis, a systematic habit of under-statement that, in the climax of a paragraph or the crisis of an emotion, seems at times almost ludicrous. Yet to the reader of severer taste, this very absence of emphasis, so quaintly sober, so sensitive in its unflinching reticence, becomes the choicest grace of Woolman's style. As is the style, so is the man.

(Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)

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