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Eight brilliant and original American thinkers (Edwards, Franklin, John Adams, Emerson, Peirce, William James, Dewey, and Santayana) are the subject of this widely admired book by one of America's foremost writers of intellectual history. In this study, the author finds a degree of continuity and some elements of underlying unity in the varied and idiosyncratic thoughts of these men. Instead of superficial similarities, he emphasizes a common moral tenor, an instrumental conception of knowledge, and a broad, ethical conception of art.