

INTRODUCTION

It is no exaggeration to say that what Longfellow did for Acadia, Miss Montgomery has done for Prince Edward Island. More than a million readers, young people as well as their parents and uncles and aunts, possess in the picture-galleries of their memories the exquisite landscapes of Avonlea, limned with as poetic a pencil as Longfellow wielded when he told the ever-moving story of Grand Pré.

Only genius of the first water has the ability to conjure up such a character as Anne Shirley, the heroine of Miss Montgomery's first novel, "Anne of Green Gables," and to surround her with people so distinctive, so real, so true to psychology. Anne is as lovable a child as lives in all fiction. Natasha in Count Tolstoi's great novel, "War and Peace," dances into our ken, with something of the same buoyancy and naturalness; but into what a commonplace young woman she develops! Anne, whether as the gay little orphan in her conquest of the master and mistress of Green Gables, or as the maturing and self-forgotten maiden of Avonlea,