In the most literal sense, Mrs. Keyes is “a woman of the world.” She is a Virginian by birth, a New Englander by ancestry and marriage and a Washingtonian by force of political circumstances. She received her formal education in Boston, Geneva and Berlin and has been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters by George Washington University and Bates College. She has traveled, sojourned and written in almost every part of the globe and her natural gifts as a linguist and observer have been developed by this wide experience. But her sophistication has never become corroded by skepticism nor darkened by disillusionment; tolerant, wise and deeply religious, her work reflects he unshakable faith in both God and man. The award of the Siena Medal, bestowed upon her in 1946, was a signal recognition of these attributes.

Mrs. Keyes began her writing career in the field of fiction and since the publication of her first novel, THE OLD GRAY HOMESTEAD, in 1919, has written fifteen others, each more successful than its predecessor, and all still in active demand. But she has also been acclaimed as a commentator on both the national and international scene and, in the field of non-fiction, besides innumerable articles, has written a book of verse, a South American travel book, two volumes of Washington reminiscences, the biographies of three saints and a moving chronicle of her own spiritual development.

Ever since her first splendid story of Louisiana, CRESCENT CARNIVAL, captivated two hemisphere in 1942, the Deep South has seemed to be her logical writing center, and ALL THIS IS LOUISIANA could not have been attempted, much less achieved, had it not been for her self-made rule of doing both research and writing on the scene she is describing. She maintains a residence in New Orleans, where she is carrying on the work of restoration begun by the Beauregard House Association, and another in Crowley, “the rice capital of the world.” In both cities she upholds the same standards of housekeeping and hospitality which made her outstanding as an official hostess during her husbands lifetime. But New England is still home to her and she is not content unless she can spend at least part of every year there, while her three sons and their families continue to absorb her devoted attention.