

There were some peculiar things about GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, who lately died at his country seat, near Rouen; for, though an author, he could afford the luxury of a country seat, thanks to his paternal inheritance, not to his pen. He died of apoplexy, and as he was fond of bathing, the French, who seldom bathe, think that the extraordinary habit killed him. He was the founder, though not designedly, of the school now known as the naturalistic, specially represented by ZOLA and his followers. While his "Madame Bovary" has been censured for licentiousness, he is said by his friends to have written it with severe artistic conscientiousness, and from earnest and lofty attachment to realism. He spent five years in museums, libraries, and amid the ruins of Carthage, in order to make studies of "Salamambo," before he had written the first line of the novel. Historically and archæologically, it has been praised to the echo by the most discriminating critics. Notwithstanding his ample means, FLAUBERT toiled over his manuscript as if his bread depended on perfection of style, on the smallest detail. Neither ROUSSEAU nor EMERSON ever labored harder at his self-appointed task. He is known to have spent hours on single lines; he built a book as masons build a cathedral, using words as they use stones; and he would not be satisfied when he could torture from his brain a happier expression. He had faith in his immortality—how many authors have!—and yet the literature of France has long been crowded with entirely forgotten immortals.

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