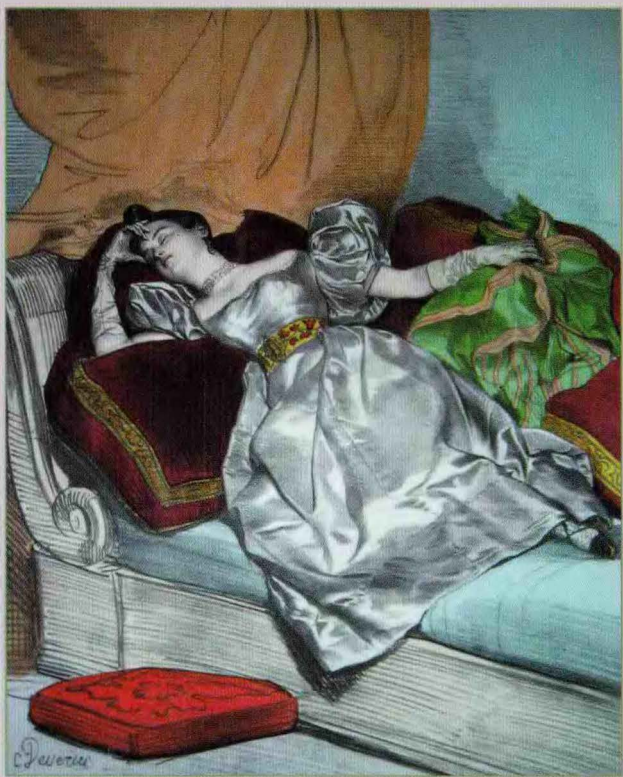


MADAME BOVARY

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT



EDITED BY MARGARET COHEN

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
SECOND EDITION



MADAME BOVARY

This Norton Critical Edition of Gustave Flaubert's seminal novel represents a significant revision of its predecessor. The text, Eleanor Marx Aveling's translation as revised by Paul de Man, is accompanied by substantially revised and expanded explanatory annotations. Readers glimpse middle-class life in provincial France through twenty-one accompanying visuals, carefully selected from popular publications of the time.

In January 1857 the French government prosecuted Flaubert on immorality charges over the publication of *Madame Bovary*. This Norton Critical Edition is the only English edition in print to include the complete trial transcripts, which have been translated by Bregtje Hartendorf-Wallach and annotated for undergraduate readers. A substantial selection of earlier versions of scenarios and scenes from the novel is included to allow students to follow Flaubert's struggle toward stylistic perfection. Additional context is provided by Flaubert's letters concerning *Madame Bovary*.

Sixteen critical essays, twelve of them new to the Second Edition, address the novel's central themes. Among the authors are Charles Baudelaire, Mario Vargas Llosa, Erich Auerbach, Franco Moretti, Dominick LaCapra, Naomi Schor, and Jann Matlock.

A Chronology and Selected Bibliography are also included.

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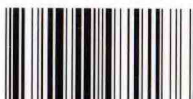
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A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Gustave Flaubert
MADAME BOVARY



CONTEXTS
CRITICAL RECEPTION

SECOND EDITION

Edited by

MARGARET COHEN

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

*With a translation by Eleanor Marx Aveling
and Paul de Man*

First Edition edited by Paul de Man



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Introduction to the Second Edition

Madame Bovary is a novel about a woman who has read too many novels and seeks the dramas of fiction amid the banality of everyday life. In the course of a young lady's education above her social status as a farmer's daughter, Emma Bovary follows an undisciplined course of reading allowing Flaubert to evoke the wealth of fictional forms being practiced as the novel rose to a major cultural genre: novels of adultery about sentimental women at once guilty and virtuous; romantic idylls and tragedies in exotic, colonial settings; archaeologically accurate depictions of the pomp of bygone eras that frame young noblemen surprisingly modern in their mediocrity; realist panoramas of unscrupulous social climbing; politicized sentimental novels calling for an end to the oppression of workers, women, and other dominated social groups; and lurid images of the capital as a city of pleasure, mystery, and crime. While the sensible reader would be content to savor literature's "tantalizing phantasmagoria" from her armchair, Emma yearns to embellish her life with its thrills.¹ She seeks to realize the plots of the novels she has read, first in marriage, where she is disappointed in the dull though well-meaning country doctor she has taken as her partner, then with lovers who help her discover "in adultery all the platitudes of marriage."²

But what true fan of the novel is sensible to her core? Although Emma's longings are extravagant, readers have long admired the way she amplifies the fascination exerted by fictional worlds, and her reckless and dogged dedication to her dream in the face of repeated experiences of its impossibility. As the poet Charles Baudelaire declared at the time *Madame Bovary* appeared, she "still pursues the ideal in the country bars and taverns. But does it matter? Even then, we must admit, she is . . . in pursuit of the ideal!"³ Emma is a Quixote of the nineteenth century, but while Don

1. Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary*, trans. Eleanor Marx Aveling and Paul de Man, ed. Margaret Cohen (New York: Norton, 2005), p. 33. Abbreviated hereafter as *MB*.

2. *MB*, p. 231.

3. This review is reprinted in "Critical Reception," p. 403.

Quixote is ridiculous, Emma's halo is tragic-comic. Intermittently lucid in the throes of her longing, she suffers from her recognition of the insurmountable gap between reality and imagination.

When Flaubert made his Quixote a woman, he fleshed out the misogynistic commonplace across the rise of the novel that women were overly sensitive readers stimulated by fiction to neglect their duties for romantic delusions. As Jann Matlock has discussed, Madame Bovary offers the type of the silly lady reader who ruins herself and her family, who was revisited with humor and anxiety by both artists and writers.⁴ But Flaubert also represented himself as identifying with Emma's predicament, famously declaring "I am Madame Bovary." The touchstone of this identification is Emma's acute self-consciousness, resonant with Flaubert's Romantic yearning for an imaginative ideal that can never be realized and that requires irony if it is even to be uttered once Romantic paradigms have faded from prestige.⁵ Bovarism is "the distance that exists in each individual between the imaginary and the real, between what he is and what he thinks [croit] himself to be," proposed Jules de Gaultier when he took Emma's case as the pattern for one form of mental illness at the time of the invention of psychiatry, a science powerfully shaped by the Romantic vision of the psyche.⁶

Is Madame Bovary a silly lady reader or the epitome of Romantic self-consciousness in a post-Romantic age? Flaubert has drafted her so that we can read her either way. In this double gesture, denigrating women even as he took over experiences associated with them as a badge of the writer's grandeur, Flaubert repeated a strategic use of gender familiar from the development of modern French realism. A generation before Flaubert, around 1830, Stendhal and Balzac had invented their signature poetics by appropriating and dismissing the poetics of celebrated sentimental novels by women writers from the first two decades of the nineteenth century; novels that were the most admired works of their time but that have now become the province of literary specialists. In Sophie Cottin's *Claire d'Albe*, Stéphanie de Genlis's *Mademoiselle de la Vallière*, and Madame de Staël's *Corinne*, idealized heroines suffered the agonies of the morally upright woman drawn into extra-marital love, which was one favorite way sentimental novels depicted the impossibility of reconciling the private freedom to pursue self-expression with the public freedom to contribute to the social collective. Stendhal and Balzac would appropriate the struggles of sentimental hero-

4. See Matlock's "Censoring the Realist Gaze" in "Critical Reception," p. 512.

5. Readers interested in Flaubert's ambivalent portrayal of Emma may compare her to the heroine of *The Female Quixote* by Charlotte Lennox (1752), whose extravagant and comical behavior provoked by a diet of heroic romances simultaneously offers a feminist antidote for the strictures placed on genteel women by domestic ideology.

6. Jules de Gaultier, *Le Bovarisme* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1902), 17, my translation.

ines but debunk their tragic tone, showing their conflicts to be motivated by passions rather than ideals, and offering a morality of compromise and adaptation. When Flaubert depicts Madame Bovary seeking self-realization through love affairs, choosing sordid partners in the bargain, he continues Stendhal and Balzac's hostile takeover of a female-dominated sentimental tradition.

The realist aspect of Flaubert's practice impressed his contemporaries. In the words of the important critic Saint-Beuve, "the ideal is gone, the lyrical has died out; it can no longer hold us. Stern and implacable truth has entered art as the last word of experience."⁷ Flaubert's novel offered the "serious imitation of the everyday," proposed Erich Auerbach in an essay from 1937 almost entirely devoted to *Madame Bovary*, which proved the kernel of his classic *Mimesis* establishing the importance of realism as a long-standing pattern in the Western literary tradition.⁸ And yet, even as Flaubert took up the realist poetics of detailed description, wielding "the pen like others the scalpel" in Sainte-Beuve's words, Franco Moretti has pointed out that Flaubert's novels dismantle the realist celebration of compromise and the struggle to succeed.⁹ In *Madame Bovary*, Flaubert shows realist compromise as cowardly as sentimental suffering is deluded. Emma's absolute pursuit of the ideal may be realist in its style but when Flaubert handles the quintessential realist plot of lost illusions, he makes the ability to know and manipulate society the reward of creatures who are embodiments of cliché and convention, like the pharmacist Homais, rather than the elite privilege of amoral supermen epitomized by Balzac's Vautrin.

Flaubert takes his authorial distance from the narrative strategies of Balzac and Stendhal on the level of his novel's form as well as its content. He perfects a heightened use of a tactic Roland Barthes has called *the effect of the real*.¹ With this phrase, Barthes designates the realist procedure of drafting descriptions to include details that play no role in the forward movement of the action and that thus appear to be motivated simply by their existence in the world outside the novel. In Flaubert's use of the gesture, exemplified by the description of Charles Bovary's cap at the novel's opening, the details can verge on absurdity, pointing to the generative power of language and puncturing the illusion that description "simply" reproduces the real. Flaubert is also famous for intensify-

7. Charles Augustin Saint-Beuve, "Madame Bovary, by Gustave Flaubert," cited in *MB*, p. 392.

8. Auerbach's seminal essay originally was published in a Turkish philological journal and appears in this Norton Critical Edition in English translation for the first time. See page 423.

9. Sainte-Beuve, *MB*, p. 403. Moretti makes this point, applicable to *Madame Bovary*, through discussing *The Sentimental Education*. See "Critical Reception," p. 455.

1. Barthes offers this definition in "The Effect of the Real"; see "Critical Reception," p. 449.

ing *free indirect style*, a technique in which the omniscient narrator effaces his or her narrative presence in order to be better able to enter into characters' consciousness and represent their thoughts. When Flaubert uses this technique in dramatic scenes of *Madame Bovary* like the agricultural fair, the reader sometimes loses the ability to pinpoint whether the sentiments and judgments expressed belong to the character or the narrator. Jonathan Culler underscores how Flaubert's free indirect style verges on a corrosive irony, where it becomes difficult to establish the perspective from which a phrase means something other than it says.²

With poetic strategies calling attention to language as a medium that must itself be reckoned with, Flaubert helped to shape the modernist notion that artistic and literary expression could serve as what Richard Terdiman calls "counterdiscourse," exposing and resisting dominant ideology.³ Flaubert pursued his attack in how he drafted the novel's minor characters, who offer pointed delineation of social types well known to his readers. Charles Bovary's father, the tattered, aging, Napoleonic soldier, whose principal occupations are lounging and womanizing, or the lustful and avaricious notary Guillaumin recall the figures peopling contemporary satires of French manners, found in satirical newspapers and anthologies like *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* and *Le Diable à Paris*, illustrated by such famous caricaturists as Honoré Daumier, Jean-Jacques Grandville, Henri Monnier, and Paul Gavarni. Flaubert also shared the project of counterdiscourse with Baudelaire, who recognized Flaubert's rebellious energy in his review of the novel at the time it first appeared. Baudelaire's own great work of counterdiscourse, *Les Fleurs du mal*, which delineates the sufferings of a Romantic consciousness in a post-Romantic age, was published in 1857, the same year as *Madame Bovary*.

One practice Flaubert borrows intact from realism is the privilege accorded sensual and above all visual appearance. With their scrutiny of materiality, realist novelists capture an allure that Karl Marx identifies as distinct to modern society, in which human relations congeal and become hidden in objects that people make and exchange, leading these objects to exert a fascination beyond the ability to fill a need. Marx called this fascination commodity fetishism, linking it to a moment in the expansion of capitalism when the direct interface of buyers and producers has become abstract and distanced, entirely expressed and experienced through the circulation of commodities. One legacy of the heightened im-

2. See the selection from Culler in "Critical Reception," p. 479.

3. Terdiman explores the material conditions shaping this stance in his selection in "Critical Reception," p. 492. Terdiman chooses the term "counterdiscourse" to make the point that these cultural acts of rebellion are deeply bound up in the structures they attack.

portance of visuality in *Madame Bovary*, as Robert Stamm details, has been the book's fascination for directors across the twentieth century. Cinema is a medium even more ideally adapted than the novel for the Bovaryian type of fantasy life, where imagination and reality merge for the viewer into one experiential *durée*.⁴

Flaubert takes commodity fetishism as the subject matter of his novel when he depicts Emma's spiraling orgies of consumption on credit to console herself for her lost illusions. One manifestation of the premium capitalism places on the production of surplus value is the value accorded novelty, when consumers journey, in Baudelaire's words, "to the depths of the abyss, Heaven or Hell, what matter . . . to find the new."⁵ In *Madame Bovary*, Homais embodies the reductively optimistic doctrine of Progress that is one characteristic expression of the value placed on the new in the nineteenth century. But as Baudelaire's sublime rhetoric indicates, the pursuit of novelty can have a demonic character when taken to its limit, edging the frightening experience of obsession when time becomes at once repetitive, overly full and yet constantly threatening to spin out of control. Avital Ronell diagnoses Emma's unbridled consumption as part of more generalized patterns of addiction that lead from the capitalist ethos to its subversion.⁶ These addictions are nonproductive and eventually result in loss instead of surplus; they are a kind of radical "expenditure," to cite the term coined by Georges Bataille.⁷

Emma's blowouts are at once social and psychological in cause, since they compensate for the limited possibility offered to ambitious and energetic middle-class women in the nineteenth century. That Emma's love affairs result in exchanges of letters is in keeping with Emma's own fascination with novels and with the fact that literature was one long-standing avenue for middle-class women seeking self-realization. Naomi Schor has connected Emma's choice of correspondence as a genre with a tradition of the epistolary novel reaching back to the eighteenth century, where female characters figure centrally and where women writers were active contributors.⁸

Madame Bovary's poetics are, however, quite different from the epistolary form, with the premium it places on spontaneity and immediacy, or what Samuel Richardson, over one hundred years be-

4. See the selection from Stamm's "Madame Bovary Goes to the Movies" in "Critical Reception," p. 535.

5. Charles Baudelaire, "Le Voyage," in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, my translation. Both French and an English translation are available in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, trans. Richard Howard (Boston: Godine, 1982), 157 [English], 335 [French].

6. See Ronell's selection in "Critical Reception," p. 524.

7. See Bataille's essay on "La Dépense," in *Visions of Excess*, trans. and ed. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P), 116–29.

8. See Schor's analysis in "Critical Reception," p. 499.

fore Flaubert, had called "writing to the moment." Throughout Flaubert's own letters from the five long years of *Madame Bovary's* composition sampled in this edition, we find him cultivating the legend that he struggled relentlessly to perfect his novel's style. "Last week I spent *five days writing one page*," he declared to his lover, the writer Louise Colet.⁹ For Flaubert, the desk-bound writer became a hero in what Flaubert depicted as the martyrdom of the writing process, nailed to his desk, endlessly honing passages to achieve a limpid, harmonious prose purged of cliché.¹ In its allegiance to the middle-class value accorded to work, the image of Flaubert throwing himself on his sofa exhausted from the struggle to craft a sentence is a version of artistic heroism markedly different from the visionary Romantic rebel.² Flaubert understood writing as hell because the writer's tool, language, was imperfect. "The human tongue is like a cracked cauldron on which we beat out tunes to set a bear dancing when we would make the stars weep with our melodies," *Madame Bovary's* narrator declares in a pathetic vein that departs markedly from the novel's pervasive irony (*MB*, 138).³

In emphasizing at once social representation and style, Flaubert conjoins realism and aestheticism. These two distinct stances of artists and writers each took on heightened appeal during the 1850s, in the wake of the revolutions that swept across Europe in 1848. Intellectuals were active participants in these revolutions, seeking to implement the program of a socially conscious Romanticism dedicated to the pursuit of freedom and democratic political enfranchisement. Instead, they discovered the gap between aesthetics and politics, and the class interests pitting upper against lower classes, even though the upper classes, at this point in large measure bourgeois, were imbued with liberalism's inclusive ideology of universalism. In France, the death knell of the Revolution of 1848 was the election of a new Emperor, Napoleon III, the nephew of Napoleon.

The failure of 1848 enhanced the prestige of an aesthetic depicting life as it was rather than life as it should be. The notion of "realism" was coined in the 1850s in the context of debates around painting, and the art critic Champfleury's polemical *Le Réalisme*, like *Madame Bovary*, was published in 1857. This was also the year that Marx began work on the *Grundrisse*, whose introduction emphasized the importance of attending to the "real" economic and social relations that structured a society, setting up Marx's object of study as the question of "material production." Attending to materi-

9. Letter, p. 304 in *MB*.

1. See, for example, *MB*, p. 303: "I love my work . . . as an ascetic loves the hair shirt that scratches his belly."

2. See Roland Barthes's comments on Flaubert's sentences in *Writing Degree Zero*.

3. "The human tongue" is a translation of *la langue* that means at once the human organ and language.

ality points in the direction of aestheticism as well as realism, since form is also material. To show it as the creative substratum of art, however, requires different procedures than the effacement of technical means facilitating art's ability to open a window onto reality. Part of Flaubert's fascination as a writer is that he explores both these aspects of the material, putting into productive tension attention to the density of language and attention to its ability to serve as a vehicle of mimetic representation.

With its plot of lost illusions set across the decade culminating in 1848, *Madame Bovary*, written in the years immediately following Napoleon III's accession to power, is a historical novel with a subterranean connection to the destruction of revolutionary ideals. Flaubert was to draw closer to an explicit portrayal of the bitterness of revolutionary failure in his subsequent novels. In *Salammbô* (1862), he chose the ancient trading hub of Carthage as the backdrop for a failed worker's revolt, presenting a vision of history as implacable class struggle where the strong crush the weak, even as the novel's oriental setting showcased his pursuit of the materiality of the detail into the dust of archaeological exoticism. The hopes and failures of the generation of 1848 became the explicit subject of *L'Education sentimentale* (1869). Using the historical novel's tactic initiated by Walter Scott of following a middle of the road figure swept up in social upheaval, Flaubert made his Waverley Frédéric Moreau, a passive young man beguiled equally by Romantic ideals and dreams of Balzacian social climbing. Through Moreau's trivialized tale of lost illusions amid the turmoil of 1848, Flaubert offered a panorama of the *Realpolitik* of revolution in the nineteenth century, where ideals deteriorate into entropy mixed with self-aggrandizement, and where art, financial affairs, theater, and revolution all prove occasions for profiteering.

Madame Bovary was Flaubert's first full-length published work, though he had shown interest in writing from the time he drafted some thoughts on the seventeenth-century playwright Corneille at the age of eleven in 1832. In 1849, he finished the first project of his maturity, *La Tentation de Saint-Antoine*, a stylized drama on biblical subject matter. The play now seems prescient of symbolist and decadent literature, but it was not to appear until 1874, six years before his death. It was panned by his literary friends when he first shared it with them on its completion in a reading that lasted thirty-two hours. Instead of such rarified subjects, they counseled, why didn't Flaubert take an ordinary and down to earth subject, a friend's tragic love affair, for example, writing about it in a natural, almost colloquial way?⁴

4. Introduction by René Dumesnil to *La Tentation de Saint-Antoine* in Flaubert, *Oeuvres* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1988–89), 13.

While then on a tour of the Middle East, as befit a worldly man of the time, Flaubert was preoccupied with how to leave his own imprint on unhappy extramarital passion that was, after all, the stock in trade of novels of private life across the centuries. "I am obsessed," Flaubert told his traveling companion, the writer, Maxime Du Camp, and Du Camp describes Flaubert's "Eureka" in the process of contemplating the Second Cataract of the Nile, when he hit upon his heroine's name.⁵ One thing that came into focus against exotic landscapes was the social interest of his own provincial Normandy, which, as Stephen Heath observes, takes on importance precisely in its lack of opening to the outside world and its repetitive, monotonous time.⁶ The role played by the Orient in defining the narrow compass of *Madame Bovary* finds its way into the novel's images of adventuring and far-flung travel that Flaubert offers to convey his heroine's confinement and her yearning to escape. Flaubert emphasized the novel's focus on the provinces from its opening subtitle, *Moeurs de province*, defining his subject with the untranslatable *moeurs*, which knots together morals, manners, customs, habits, and ways of life.

When Flaubert completed *Madame Bovary* after a five-year composition process, he sent it off to a literary journal, *La Revue de Paris*, co-directed by Du Camp. No sooner had the novel been accepted for serial publication than its directors suggested rewrites and sought authority to cut its "useless" details.⁷ A first installment of the novel appeared after Flaubert disdained to answer criticism. One cut, however, was effected over Flaubert's objections that Flaubert considered important enough to register in print. The journal editors suppressed as scandalous the details of the first clandestine rendez-vous between Emma and her second lover, the clerk, Leon. This rendez-vous occurs in a black carriage that Flaubert depicts driving mournfully through the empty streets of Rouen and the surrounding countryside with its shade drawn, "more tightly sealed than a tomb and tossed around like a ship on the waves" (*MB*, 177). When Flaubert replied, he used a racialized figure to express the elemental savagery of his novel's attack on contemporary society: "You are objecting to details, whereas actually you should object to the whole. The brutal element is basic, not incidental. Blacks cannot be made white, and you cannot change a book's blood. All you can do is to weaken it."⁸

5. Introduction by Dumesnil to *Madame Bovary*, in Flaubert, *Oeuvres*, 273.

6. See Heath's selection in "Critical Reception," p. 461.

7. Introduction by Dumesnil to *Madame Bovary*, in Flaubert, *Oeuvres*, 278. The emendations implemented by the *Revue de Paris* can be found in the Garnier *Madame Bovary*, edited by Claudine Gothot-Mersch. More recently, see the useful 1994 edition put out by the Imprimerie Nationale Editions, edited by Pierre-Marc de Biasi.

8. To Léon Laurent-Pichat, Croisset, between December 1 and 15, 1856, *MB*, pp. 310–11.

Despite the journal's precautions, the government decided to prosecute *Madame Bovary* for immorality in January 1857. In a practice common at the time, when the government used literary criteria as a tool of political repression, censors halted the publication of the novel along with *La Revue de Paris*, a periodical known for politics critical of the imperial regime. A trial ensued, in which the novel was charged by the public prosecutor, Ernest Pinard, with "outrage à la morale publique et religieuse et outrage aux bonnes moeurs" [offense to public morality and religion and offense to morality]. In offering intensive contemporary readings of the novel, the trial is of interest to literary critics as well as to cultural historians. This Norton Critical Edition contains the complete trial transcripts in a new translation by Bregtje Hartendorf-Wallach. Accompanied by notes elucidating the works cited as points of comparison by both prosecution and defense, Hartendorf-Wallach's translation reveals how Flaubert's novel is embedded in the literary contexts of its time, and how the question of Flaubert's realism is at the heart of contemporary perceptions about the novel's obscenity.

When Dominick LaCapra studies *Madame Bovary* from the vantage point of the trial, he makes evident that contemporaries found Flaubert's evasive free indirect style particularly disturbing, for it resulted in a morally irresponsible narrator who did not offer a firm condemnation of the novel's events.⁹ The prosecutor, Pinard, interpreted this irresponsibility as Flaubert's scathing portrayal of social values. In a world where husbands are stupid, "public opinion is personified in a grotesque being," and "religious sentiment is represented by a ridiculous priest," "a single person is right, rules and dominates," the scandalous Emma Bovary.¹ The distinguished politician and attorney, Marie-Antoine Sénard, defended Flaubert's book as "honnête" a word implying at once honest and honorable. He lauded the novel for displaying the bitter truths of existence, which carry a moral lesson. Flaubert was eventually acquitted in a mixed judgment acknowledging the book's transgressions but valuing its refined style, along with the good character of the writer.²

In April 1857 *Madame Bovary* was issued in book form by the prestigious publishing house headed by Michel Lévy. It met with success, although some critics objected variously to its immorality, its romanticism, its excessive detail, and the writer's excessive distance from his material.³ Since then, the novel has gone on to

9. See LaCapra's contribution in "Critical Reception," p. 470.

1. Trial proceeding in French, appendix to the *Pléiade Madame Bovary*, 633.

2. Even before Baudelaire was arraigned for *Les Fleurs du mal* later that year, the poet was conscious that he ran risks similar to Flaubert. Readers will find a dossier around Baudelaire's trial in the appendix to volume I of Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1975), 1176–1224.

3. On the work's reception, see the selection from Paul de Man's introduction to the 1965 Norton Critical Edition, in "Critical Reception," p. 391.

enduring international literary fame. In this edition's "Criticism," responses by Henry James and Mario Vargas Llosa indicate the work's impact on the most important novelists of the twentieth century in Europe and the Americas. The novel has remained a favorite with readers and writers into the present, when its portrayal of the difficulty of distinguishing between fiction and reality is framed as anticipating postmodern interest in the essentially constructed nature of experience. In Europe, a recent series of narratives have replayed the events of *Madame Bovary* from the perspectives of other characters besides the heroine and invented alternative scenarios.⁴ Woody Allen puts his finger on the pulse of the postmodern renewal of Flaubert's work when he creates one Kugelmass, a dissatisfied professor of humanities at New York's City College, who manages briefly to realize his Bovaryesque fantasy of seducing Madame Bovary to the point of actually himself entering the pages of the novel: "What he didn't realize was that at this very moment students in various class rooms across the country were saying to their teachers, 'Who is this character on page 100? A bald Jew is kissing Madame Bovary?'"⁵

When literary critics assessed the interest of the novel in the middle decades of the twentieth century, they emphasized its stylistic brilliance, praising it as a realization of Flaubert's ambition to write a book that would be "dependent on nothing external, which would be held together by the strength of its style."⁶ Yet to understand Flaubert's achievement, it is imperative also to understand how his novel absorbs the variegated contexts of its present. When Flaubert described his work of composition, he reported that besides anguishing over diction and phrasing, he observed the minutiae of provincial life down to the "cigar butts and scraps of paté" littering a picnic site, and sifted through material documenting the society represented in his novel, from contemporary treatises on surgery and medicine to the fantasy world of sentimental historical romances for girls and swashbuckling seafaring romances for boys.⁷ In *Madame Bovary* and its critical reception, readers will see the novel's power as what might be called an *edge*, at once a seam making visible the social practices and the discursive contexts in which it takes shape, and a tendentious blade turned against pretension and ideological mystification. *Madame Bovary* was Flaubert's first

4. These works include *Mademoiselle Bovary* (Raymond Jean, 1991), *Mademoiselle Bovary* (Maxime Benoît-Jeannin, 1991), *Monsieur Bovary* (Laura Grimaldi, 1991), *Madame Homais* (Sylvère Monod, 1987), and *La Fille d'Emma* (Claude-Henri Buffard, 2001).

5. Woody Allen, "The Kugelmass Episode" in *Side Effects*, cited in Jonathan Culler, "The Uses of *Madame Bovary*," in *Flaubert and Postmodernism*, eds. Naomi Schor and Henry F. Majewski (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 10.

6. Flaubert, Croisset, January 16, 1852, *MB*, p. 300.

7. Flaubert, Trouville, August 14, 1853, *MB*, pp. 306–07.

try at a project he would pursue until the end of his life with his unfinished *Bouvard et Pécuchet*: to inventory and quarantine, if not defuse, the stereotypes of his modernity.

Margaret Cohen
June 2004

The Text of
MADAME BOVARY



Translator's Note

There are several English translations of *Madame Bovary* in existence. Although none can be called really perfect, more than one achieves a reasonable degree of accuracy and stylistic felicity. The text here reproduced is an extensively revised version of one of the older translations of *Madame Bovary*, done by Eleanor Marx Aveling, the daughter of Karl Marx.

Like most translations, the Marx Aveling text has advantages and drawbacks. One of its main virtues is the relatively high degree of fidelity in rendering the cadence of Flaubert's sentence. Other translators have produced versions that are a great deal more fluent and idiomatic. But Flaubert himself is neither fluent nor really idiomatic (except in conversations), and by adhering more closely to his rhythm, Mrs. Aveling sometimes succeeds in conveying Flaubert's carefully controlled syntax. A certain number of revisions, however, were unavoidable. The Victorian diction has, in part, been modernized. Flaubert's original paragraphs, a fundamental and subtly measured unit of composition, have been restored throughout. Several misleading inaccuracies and mistranslations have been corrected. Especially in Part II and III of the novel entire pages had, at times, to be rewritten; Mrs. Aveling often loses track of the meaning in the meditative, inward passages and renders the already obscure original altogether opaque. One feels about this patching and mending job the way a surgeon must feel about a difficult operation: the patient is by no means as good as new, but he should at least feel some relief. Students of this text should be a little closer to Flaubert's original intention than when the Marx Aveling translation was sprung upon them without warning.

Some of Flaubert's stylistic devices cannot be rendered in translation. He italicizes certain words, especially when he is reporting someone's speech, in order to catch a nuance which is particularly important to him: the use of stilted, inert speech that reveals the degradation of the character's relation towards language. Sometimes entire expressions are italicized (the "received ideas" of which Flaubert compiled a dictionary as a monument to human stupidity), but at other times it is a single word, quite inconspicuous at first sight, whose cliché-like nature is revealed only by the use of this typographical device. It often takes an ear finely attuned to colloquial French to catch the derisive intent introduced in this way, one of the means by which Flaubert establishes ironic distance between himself and his characters. Except in some more obvious instances, the effect is irrevocably lost in translation.

* * * In revising the Marx Aveling translation, the text has been checked against authoritative editions of *Madame Bovary*: the Dumesnil critical edition, the Conard edition, and the Garnier edition established by Edouard Maynial.

Paul de Man, 1965

Madame Bovary

Provincial Life

TO
MARIE-ANTOINE-JULES SENARD.¹
MEMBER OF THE PARIS BAR,
EX-PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AND
FORMER MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR.

DEAR AND ILLUSTRIOUS FRIEND,—

PERMIT me to inscribe your name at the head of this book, and above its dedication; for it is to you, before all, that I owe its publication. By becoming part of your magnificent defence, my work has acquired for myself, as it were, an unexpected authority. Accept, then, here, the homage of my gratitude, which, however great, will never attain to the level of your eloquence and your devotion.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

Paris, April 12th 1857

Part One

I

We were in class when the headmaster came in, followed by a new boy, not wearing the school uniform, and a school servant carrying a large desk. Those who had been asleep woke up, and every one rose as if just surprised at his work.

The headmaster made a sign to us to sit down. Then, turning to the teacher, he said to him in a low voice:

“Monsieur Roger, here is a pupil whom I recommend to your care; he'll be in the second. If his work and conduct are satisfactory, he will go into one of the upper classes, as becomes his age.”

1. Senard was the lawyer who defended Flaubert when *Madame Bovary* was put on trial along with *La Revue de Paris* in January 1857. The full transcript of the trial is in “Contexts,” p. 313. The original dedication, when the novel appeared in serial form in the *Revue de Paris* was to Louis Bouilhet, Flaubert's lifelong friend and close collaborator who, as the *Correspondence* shows, played an important part in the composition of the novel.



Image illustrating different schoolboy hats of the time. From the satirical paper *Le Charivari*, June 21, 1833. Courtesy of Harvard Library.

The new boy, standing in the corner behind the door so that he could hardly be seen, was a country lad of about fifteen, and taller than any of us. His hair was cut square on his forehead like a village choir boy; he looked reliable, but very ill at ease. Although he was not broad-shouldered, his short jacket of green cloth with black buttons must have been tight about the armholes, and showed at the opening of the cuffs red wrists accustomed to being bare. His legs, in blue stockings, looked out from beneath yellowish trousers, drawn tight by suspenders. He wore stout, ill-cleaned, hob-nailed boots.

We began reciting the lesson. He listened with all his ears, as attentive as if at a sermon, not daring even to cross his legs or lean on his elbow; and when at two o'clock the bell rang, the master was obliged to tell him to fall into line with the rest of us.

When we came back to work, we were in the habit of throwing our caps on the ground so as to have our hands more free; we used from the door to toss them under the desk, so that they hit against the wall and made a lot of dust: it was the fad of the moment.

But, whether he had not noticed the trick, or did not dare to attempt it, the new boy was still holding his cap on his knees even after prayers were over. It was one of those head-gears of composite order, in which we can find traces of the bear and the coonskin, the shako, the bowler, and the cotton nightcap; one of those poor things, in fine, whose dumb ugliness has depths of expression, like an imbecile's face. Ovoid and stiffened with whalebone, it began with three circular strips; then came in succession lozenges of velvet and rabbit fur separated by a red band; after that a sort of bag that ended in a cardboard polygon covered with complicated braiding, from which hung, at the end of a long thin cord, small twisted gold threads in the manner of a tassel. The cap was new; its peak shone.

"Rise," said the master.

He stood up; his cap fell. The whole class began to laugh. He stooped to pick it up. A neighbour knocked it down again with his elbow; he picked it up once more.

"Get rid of your helmet," said the master, who liked to joke.

There was a burst of laughter from the boys, which so thoroughly put the poor lad out of countenance that he did not know whether to keep his cap in his hand, leave it on the ground, or put it on his head. He sat down again and placed it on his knee.

"Rise," repeated the master, "and tell me your name."

The new boy articulated in a stammering voice an unintelligible name.

"Again!"

The same sputtering of syllables was heard, drowned by the titling of the class.

"Louder!" cried the master; "louder!"

The new boy then took a supreme resolution, opened an inordinately large mouth, and shouted at the top of his voice as if calling some one, the word "Charbovari."

A hubbub broke out, rose in *crescendo* with bursts of shrill voices (they yelled, barked, stamped, repeated "Charbovari! Charbovari!"), then died away into single notes, growing quieter only with great difficulty, and now and again suddenly recommencing along the line of a seat from where rose here and there, like a damp cracker going off, a stifled laugh.

However, amid a rain of penalties, order was gradually reestablished in the class; and the master having succeeded in catching the name of "Charles Bovary," having had it dictated to him, spelt out, and re-read, at once ordered the poor devil to go and sit down on the punishment form at the foot of the master's desk. He got up, but before going hesitated.

"What are you looking for?" asked the master.

"My c-c-c-cap," said the new boy shyly, casting troubled looks round him.

"Five hundred verses for all the class!" shouted in a furious voice, stopped, like the *Quos ego*,² a fresh outburst. "Silence!" continued the master indignantly, wiping his brow with his handkerchief, which he had just taken from his cap. As to you, Bovary, you will conjugate '*ridiculus sum*' twenty times." Then, in a gentler tone, "Come, you'll find your cap again; it hasn't been stolen."

Quiet was restored. Heads bent over desks, and the new boy remained for two hours in an exemplary attitude, although from time to time some paper pellet flipped from the tip of a pen came bang in his face. But he wiped his face with one hand and continued motionless, his eyes lowered.

In the evening, at study hall, he pulled out his sleeveguards from his desk, arranged his small belongings, and carefully ruled his paper. We saw him working conscientiously, looking up every word in the dictionary, and taking the greatest pains. Thanks, no doubt, to the willingness he showed, he had not to go down to the class below. But though he knew his rules passably, he lacked all elegance in composition. It was the curé of his village who had taught him his first Latin; his parents, from motives of economy, having sent him to school as late as possible.

His father, Monsieur Charles Denis Bartolomé Bovary, retired assistant-surgeon-major, compromised about 1812 in certain conscription scandals, and forced at this time to leave the service, had taken advantage of his fine figure to get hold of a dowry of sixty

2. Neptune becalming the winds in the *Aeneid* (1.135).

thousand francs in the person of a hosier's daughter who had fallen in love with his good looks.³ He was a fine man, a great talker, making his spurs ring as he walked, wearing whiskers that ran into his moustache, his fingers always garnished with rings; he dressed in loud colours, had the dash of a military man with the easy go of a commercial traveller. Once married, he lived for three or four years on his wife's fortune, dining well, rising late, smoking long porcelain pipes, not coming in at night till after the theatre, and haunting cafés. The father-in-law died, leaving little; he was indignant at this, tried his hand at the textile business, lost some money in it, then retired to the country, where he thought he would make the land pay off. But, as he knew no more about farming than calico, as he rode his horses instead of sending them to plough, drank his cider in bottle instead of selling it in cask, ate the finest poultry in his farmyard, and greased his hunting-boots with the fat of his pigs, he was not long in finding out that he would do better to give up all speculation.

For two hundred francs a year he managed to rent on the border of the provinces of Caux and Picardy, a kind of place half farm, half private house; and here, soured, eaten up with regrets, cursing his luck, jealous of every one, he shut himself up at the age of forty-five, sick of men, he said, and determined to live in peace.

His wife had adored him once on a time; she had loved him with a thousand servilities that had only estranged him the more. Lively once, expansive and affectionate, in growing older she had become (after the fashion of wine that, exposed to air, turns to vinegar) ill-tempered, grumbling, irritable. She had suffered so much without complaint at first, when she had seen him going after all the village harlots, and when a score of bad houses sent him back to her at night, weary, stinking drunk. Then her pride revolted. After that she was silent, burying her anger in a dumb stoicism that she maintained till her death. She was constantly going about looking after business matters. She called on the lawyers, the judges, remembered when notes fell due, got them renewed, and at home ironed, sewed, washed, looked after the workmen, paid the accounts, while he, troubling himself about nothing, eternally besotted in a sleepy sulkiness from which he only roused himself to say nasty things to her, sat smoking by the fire and spitting into the cinders.

When she had a child, it had to be sent out to nurse. When he came home, the lad was spoilt as if he were a prince. His mother

3. The value of 1 franc in 1830 would be a little over 2.4 euros or 16 francs in 2003. To understand fully the monetary significance of the sums that play an important role in the novel requires not only calculating the historical value of the franc but also comparing the cost of living and the relative cost of specific items (such as bread, cloth, real estate, etc.).

stuffed him with jam; his father let him run about barefoot, and, playing the philosopher, even said he might as well go about quite naked like the young of animals. As opposed to the maternal ideas, he had a certain virile idea of childhood on which he sought to mould his son, wishing him to be brought up hardily, like a Spartan, to give him a strong constitution. He sent him to bed without any fire, taught him to drink off large draughts of rum and to jeer at religious processions. But, peaceable by nature, the boy responded poorly to his attempts. His mother always kept him near her; she cut out cardboard pictures for him, told him tales, entertained him with monologues full of melancholy gaiety, chatting and fondling in endless baby-talk. In her life's isolation she transferred on the child's head all her scattered, broken little vanities. She dreamed of high station; she already saw him, tall, handsome, clever, settled as an engineer or in the law. She taught him to read, and even on an old piano she had taught him two or three sentimental ballads. But to all this Monsieur Bovary, caring little for arts and letters, said "It was not worth while. Would they ever have the means to send him to a public school, to buy him a practice, or start him in business? Besides, with brashness a man can always make his way in the world." Madame Bovary bit her lips, and the child knocked about the village.

He followed the farm laborers, drove away with clods of earth the ravens that were flying about. He ate blackberries along the hedges, minded the geese with a long switch, went hay-making during harvest, ran about in the woods, played hopscotch under the church porch on rainy days, and at great fêtes begged the beadle to let him toll the bells, that he might hang all his weight on the long rope and feel himself borne upward by it in its swing.

So he grew like an oak; he was strong of hand, ruddy of complexion.

When he was twelve years old his mother had her own way; he began his lessons. The curé took him in hand; but the lessons were so short and irregular that they could not be of much use. They were given at spare moments in the sacristy, standing up, hurriedly, between a baptism and a burial; or else the curé, if he had not to go out, sent for his pupil after the *Angelus*. They went up to his room and settled down; the flies and moths fluttered round the candle. It was close, the child fell asleep, and the good man, beginning to doze with his hands on his stomach, was soon snoring with his mouth wide open. On other occasions, when Monsieur le Curé, on his way back after administering the holy oil to some sick person in the neighborhood, caught sight of Charles playing about the fields, he called him, lectured him for a quarter of an hour, and took ad-

vantage of the occasion to make him conjugate his verb at the foot of a tree. The rain interrupted them or an acquaintance passed. All the same he was always pleased with him, and even said the "young man" had a very good memory.

Charles could not go on like this. Madame Bovary took strong steps. Ashamed, or rather tired out, Monsieur Bovary gave in without a struggle, and they waited one year longer, so that the child could take his first communion.

Six months more passed, and the year after Charles was finally sent to school at Rouen. His father took him there towards the end of October, at the time of the St. Romain fair.

It would now be impossible for any of us to remember any thing about him. He was a youth of even temperament, who played in playtime, worked in school-hours, was attentive in class, slept well in the dormitory, and ate well in the refectory. He had for guardian a hardware merchant in the Rue Ganterie, who took him out once a month on Sundays after his shop was shut, sent him for a walk on the quay to look at the boats, and then brought him back to college at seven o'clock before supper. Every Thursday evening he wrote a long letter to his mother with red ink and three wax seals; then he went over his history note-books, or read an old volume of "Anarch-asis"⁴ that was lying about the study. When he went for walks he talked to the servant, who, like himself, came from the country.

By dint of hard work he kept always about the middle of the class; once even he got an honor mark in natural history. But at the end of his third year his parents withdrew him from the school to make him study medicine, convinced that he could make it to the bachelor's degree by himself.

His mother chose a room for him on the fourth floor of a dyer's she knew, overlooking the Eau-de-Robec.⁵ She made arrangements for his board, got him furniture, table and two chairs, sent home for an old cherry-tree bedstead, and bought besides a small cast-iron stove with the supply of wood that was to warm her poor child. Then at the end of a week she departed, after a thousand injunctions to be good now that he was going to be left to himself.

The course list that he read on the notice-board stunned him: lectures on anatomy, lectures on pathology, lectures on physiology, lectures on pharmacy, lectures on botany and clinical medicine, and therapeutics, without counting hygiene and materia medica—all

4. Dialogue by Lucian (125-85 C.E.) in which the usefulness of gymnastic exercises for young people is discussed.

5. Small river, now covered up, that flows through the poorest neighborhood of Rouen, used as a sewer by the factories that border it, thus suggesting Flaubert's description of the area as "a wretched little Venice."

names of whose etymologies he was ignorant, and that were to him as so many doors to sanctuaries filled with magnificent darkness.

He understood nothing of it all; it was all very well to listen—he did not follow. Still he worked; he had bound note-books, he attended all the courses, never missed a single lecture. He did his little daily task like a mill-horse, who goes round and round with his eyes bandaged, not knowing what work it is grinding out.

To spare him expense his mother sent him every week by the carrier a piece of veal baked in the oven with which he lunched when he came back from the hospital, while he sat kicking his feet against the wall. After this he had to run off to lectures, to the operation-room, to the hospital, and return to his home at the other end of the town. In the evening, after the poor dinner of his landlord, he went back to his room and set to work again in his wet clothes, that smoked as he sat in front of the hot stove.

On the fine summer evenings, at the time when the close streets are empty, when the servants are playing shuttle-cock at the doors, he opened his window and leaned out. The river, that makes of this quarter of Rouen a wretched little Venice, flowed beneath him, between the bridges and the railings, yellow, violet, or blue. Working men, kneeling on the banks, washed their bare arms in the water. On poles projecting from the attics, skeins of cotton were drying in the air. Opposite, beyond the roofs, spread the pure sky with the red sun setting. How pleasant it must be at home! How fresh under the beech-tree! And he expanded his nostrils to breathe in the sweet odors of the country which did not reach him.

He grew thin, his figure became taller, his face took a saddened look that made it almost interesting.

Passively, through indifference, he abandoned all the resolutions he had made. Once he missed a lecture; the next day all the lectures; and, enjoying his idleness, little by little he gave up work altogether.

He got into the habit of going to the cafés, and had a passion for dominoes. To shut himself up every evening in the dirty public room, to push about on marble tables the small sheep-bones with black dots, seemed to him a fine proof of his freedom, which raised him in his own esteem. It was beginning to see life, the sweetness of stolen pleasures; and when he entered, he put his hand on the door-handle with a joy almost sensual. Then many things compressed within him expanded; he learned by heart student songs and sang them at gatherings, became enthusiastic about Béranger, learned how to make punch, and, finally how to make love.⁶

Thanks to these preparatory labors, he failed completely in his

6. Pierre Jean de Béranger (1780–1857) was a poet whose works, often set to music, were known for their popular sympathies and liberal/republican content.

examination for his degree of *officier de santé*.⁷ He was expected home the same night to celebrate his success.

He started on foot, stopped at the beginning of the village, sent for his mother, and told her all. She excused him, threw the blame of his failure on the injustice of the examiners, encouraged him a little, and took upon herself to set matters straight. It was only five years later that Monsieur Bovary knew the truth; it was old then, and he accepted it. Moreover, he could not believe that a man born of him could be a fool.

So Charles set to work again and crammed for his examination, ceaselessly learning all the old questions by heart. He passed pretty well. What a happy day for his mother! They gave a grand dinner.

Where should he go to practise? To Tostes, where there was only one old doctor. For a long time Madame Bovary had been on the look-out for his death, and the old fellow had barely been packed off when Charles was installed, opposite his place, as his successor.

But it was not everything to have brought up a son, to have had him taught medicine, and discovered Tostes, where he could practise it; he must have a wife. She found him one—the widow of a bailiff at Dieppe, who was forty-five and had an income of twelve hundred francs.

Though she was ugly, as dry as a bone, her face with as many pimples as the spring has buds, Madame Dubuc had no lack of suitors. To attain her ends Madame Bovary had to oust them all, and she even succeeded in very cleverly baffling the intrigues of a pork-butcher backed up by the priests.

Charles had seen in marriage the advent of an easier life, thinking he would be more free to do as he liked with himself and his money. But his wife was master; he had to say this and not say that in company, to fast every Friday, dress as she liked, harass at her bidding those patients who did not pay. She opened his letters, watched his comings and goings, and listened at the partition-wall when women came to consult him in his surgery.

She had to have her chocolate every morning, attentions without end. She constantly complained of her nerves, her chest, her liver. The noise of footsteps made her ill; when people went away, solitude became odious to her; if they came back, it was doubtless to see her die. When Charles returned in the evening, she stretched forth two long thin arms from beneath the sheets, put them round his neck, and having made him sit down on the edge of the bed, be-

7. The degree of *Officier de Santé*, instituted during the Revolution, was a second-class medical degree, well below the doctorate. The student was allowed to attend a medical school without having passed the equivalence of the *baccalauréat*. He could only practice in the department in which the diploma had been conferred (Bovary is thus tied down to the vicinity of Rouen) and was not allowed to perform major operations except in the presence of a full-fledged doctor. The diploma was suppressed in 1892.

gan to talk to him of her troubles: he was neglecting her, he loved another. She had been warned she would be unhappy; and she ended by asking him for a dose of medicine and a little more love.

II

One night towards eleven o'clock they were awakened by the noise of a horse pulling up outside their door. The maid opened the garret-window and parleyed for some time with a man in the street below. He came for the doctor, had a letter for him. Nastasie came downstairs shivering and undid the locks and bolts one after the other. The man left his horse, and, following the servant, suddenly came in behind her. He pulled out from his wool cap with grey top-knots a letter wrapped up in a rag and presented it gingerly to Charles, who rested on his elbow on the pillow to read it. Nastasie, standing near the bed, held the light. Madame in modesty had turned to the wall and showed only her back.

This letter, sealed with a small seal in blue wax, begged Monsieur Bovary to come immediately to the farm of the Bertaux to set a broken leg. Now from Tostes to the Bertaux was a good fifteen miles across country by way of Longueville and Saint-Victor. It was a dark night; Madame Bovary junior was afraid of accidents for her husband. So it was decided the stable-boy should go on first; Charles would start three hours later when the moon rose. A boy was to be sent to meet him, in order to show him the way to the farm and open the gates for him.

Towards four o'clock in the morning, Charles, well wrapped up in his cloak, set out for the Bertaux. Still sleepy from the warmth of his bed, he let himself be lulled by the quiet trot of his horse. When it stopped of its own accord in front of those holes surrounded with thorns that are dug on the margin of furrows, Charles awoke with a start, suddenly remembered the broken leg, and tried to call to mind all the fractures he knew. The rain had stopped, day was breaking, and on the branches of the leafless trees birds roosted motionless, their little feathers bristling in the cold morning wind. The flat country stretched as far as eye could see, and the tufts of trees around the farms seemed, at long intervals, like dark violet stains on the vast grey surface, fading on the horizon into the gloom of the sky. Charles from time to time opened his eyes but his mind grew weary, and sleep coming upon him, he soon fell into a doze wherein his recent sensations blending with memories, he became conscious of a double self, at once student and married man, lying in his bed as but now, and crossing the operation theatre as of old. The warm smell of poultices mingled in his brain with the fresh odor of dew; he heard the iron rings rattling along the

curtain-rods of the bed and saw his wife sleeping . . . As he passed Vassonville he came upon a boy sitting on the grass at the edge of a ditch.

“Are you the doctor?” asked the child.

And on Charles’s answer he took his wooden shoes in his hands and ran on in front of him.

The *officier de santé*, riding along, gathered from his guide’s talk that Monsieur Rouault must be one of the well-to-do farmers. He had broken his leg the evening before on his way home from a Twelfth-night feast at a neighbor’s. His wife had been dead for two years. There was only his daughter, who helped him to keep house, with him.

The ruts were becoming deeper; they were approaching the Bertaux. The little farmboy, slipping through a hole in the hedge, disappeared; then he came back to the end of a courtyard to open the gate. The horse slipped on the wet grass; Charles had to stoop to pass under the branches. The watchdogs in their kennels barked, dragging at their chains. As he entered the Bertaux the horse took fright and stumbled.

It was a substantial-looking farm. In the stables, over the top of the open doors, one could see great cart-horses quietly feeding from new racks. Right along the outbuildings extended a large dunghill, smoking at the top, while amidst fowls and turkeys five or six peacocks, the luxury of Caux countryside farmyards, were foraging around. The sheepfold was long, the barn high, with walls smooth as a hand. Under the cart-shed were two large carts and four ploughs, with their whips, shafts and harnesses complete, whose fleeces of blue wool were getting soiled by the fine dust that fell from the graneries. The courtyard sloped upwards, planted with trees set out symmetrically, and the chattering noise of a flock of geese was heard near the pond.

A young woman in a blue merino dress with three flounces came to the threshold of the door to receive Monsieur Bovary; she led him to the kitchen, where a large fire was blazing. The servants’ breakfast was boiling beside it in small pots of all sizes. Some damp clothes were drying inside the chimney-corner. The shovel, tongs, and the nozzle of the bellows, all of colossal size, shone like polished steel, while along the walls hung many pots and pans in which the clear flame of the hearth, mingling with the first rays of the sun coming in through the window, was mirrored fitfully.

Charles went up to the first floor to see the patient. He found him in his bed, sweating under his bed-clothes, having thrown his cotton nightcap right away from him. He was a fat little man of fifty, with white skin and blue eyes, the fore part of his head bald, and he wore ear-rings. By his side on a chair stood a large decanter

of brandy, from which he poured himself out a little from time to time to keep up his spirits; but as soon as he caught sight of the doctor his elation subsided, and instead of swearing, as he had been doing for the last twelve hours, he began to groan feebly.

The fracture was a simple one, without any kind of complication. Charles could not have hoped for an easier case. Then calling to mind the devices of his masters at the bedside of patients, he comforted the sufferer with all sorts of kindly remarks, those caresses of the surgeon that are like the oil they put on scalpels. In order to make some splints a bundle of laths was brought up from the cart-house. Charles selected one, cut it into two pieces and planed it with a fragment of windowpane, while the servant tore up sheets to make bandages, and Mademoiselle Emma tried to sew some pads. As she was a long time before she found her workcase, her father grew impatient; she did not answer, but as she sewed she pricked her fingers, which she then put to her mouth to suck them.

Charles was surprised at the whiteness of her nails. They were shiny, delicate at the tips, more polished than the ivory of Dieppe, and almond-shaped. Yet her hand was not beautiful, perhaps not white enough, and a little hard at the knuckles; besides, it was too long, with no soft inflections in the outlines. Her real beauty was in her eyes. Although brown, they seemed black because of the lashes, and her look came at you frankly, with a candid boldness.

The bandaging over, the doctor was invited by Monsieur Rouault himself to have a bite before he left.

Charles went down into the room on the ground-floor. Knives and forks and silver goblets were laid for two on a little table at the foot of a huge bed that had a canopy of printed cotton with figures representing Turks. There was an odor of iris-root and damp sheets that escaped from a large oak chest opposite the window. On the floor in corners were sacks of flour stuck upright in rows. These were the overflow from the neighboring granary, to which three stone steps led. By way of decoration for the apartment, hanging to a nail in the middle of the wall, whose green paint scaled off from the effects of the saltpeter, was a crayon head of Minerva in a gold frame, underneath which was written in Gothic letters "To my dear Papa."

First they spoke of the patient, then of the weather, of the great cold, of the wolves that infested the fields at night. Mademoiselle Rouault did not at all like the country, especially now that she had to look after the farm almost alone. As the room was chilly, she shivered as she ate. This showed something of her full lips, that she had a habit of biting when silent.

Her neck stood out from a white turned-down collar. Her hair, whose two black folds seemed each of a single piece, so smooth

were they, was parted in the middle by a delicate line that curved slightly with the curve of the head; and, just showing the tip of the ear, it was joined behind in a thick chignon, with a wavy movement at the temples that the country doctor saw now for the first time in his life. The upper part of her cheek was rose-coloured. Like a man, she wore a tortoise-shell eyeglass thrust between two buttons of her blouse.

When Charles, after bidding farewell to old Rouault, returned to the room before leaving, he found her standing, her forehead against the window, looking into the garden, where the beanpoles had been knocked down by the wind. She turned around. "Are you looking for something?" she asked.

"My riding crop, if you please," he answered.

He began rummaging on the bed, behind the doors, under the chairs. It had fallen to the ground, between the sacks and the wall. Mademoiselle Emma saw it, and bent over the flour sacks. Charles out of politeness made a dash also, and as he stretched out his arm, at the same moment felt his breast brush against the back of the young girl bending beneath him. She drew herself up, scarlet, and looked at him over her shoulder as she handed him his riding crop.

Instead of returning to the Bertaux in three days as he had promised, he went back the very next day, then regularly twice a week, without counting the visits he paid now and then as if by accident.

Everything, moreover, went well; the patient progressed favorably; and when, at the end of forty-six days, old Rouault was seen trying to walk alone in his "den," Monsieur Bovary began to be looked upon as a man of great capacity. Old Rouault said that he could not have been cured better by the first doctor of Yvetot, or even of Rouen.

As to Charles, he did not stay to ask himself why it was a pleasure to him to go to the Bertaux. Had he done so, he would, no doubt have attributed his zeal to the importance of the case, or perhaps to the money he hoped to make by it. Was it for this, however, that his visits to the farm formed a delightful exception to the barren occupations of his life? On these days he rose early, set off at a gallop, urging on his horse, then got down to wipe his boots in the grass and put on black gloves before entering. He liked seeing himself enter the courtyard, and noticing the gate turn against his shoulder, the cock crow on the wall, the farmboys run to meet him. He liked the granary and the stables; he liked old Rouault, who pressed his hand and called him his saviour; he liked the small wooden shoes of Mademoiselle Emma on the scoured flags of the kitchen—her high heels made her a little taller; and when she walked in front of him, the wooden soles springing up quickly struck with a sharp sound against the leather of her boots.

She always reconducted him to the first step of the porch. When his horse had not yet been brought round she stayed there. They had said "Good-bye"; there was no more talking. The open air wrapped her round, playing with the soft down on the back of her neck, or blew to and fro on her hips her apron-strings, that fluttered like streamers. Once, during a thaw, the bark of the trees in the yard was oozing, the snow melted on the roofs of the buildings; she stood on the threshold, went to fetch her sunshade and opened it. The parasol, made of an iridescent silk that let the sunlight sift through, colored the white skin of her face with shifting reflections. Beneath it, she smiled at the gentle warmth; drops of water fell one by one on the taut silk.

During the first period of Charles's visits to the Bertaux, the younger Madame Bovary never failed to inquire after the invalid, and she had even chosen in the book that she kept on a system of double entry a clean blank page for Monsieur Rouault. But when she heard he had a daughter, she began to make inquiries, and she learnt that Mademoiselle Rouault, brought up at the Ursuline Convent, had received what is called "a good education"; and so knew dancing, geography, drawing, how to embroider and play the piano. That was the last straw.

"So that's why he looks so beaming when he goes to see her," she thought. "That's why he puts on his new waistcoat regardless of the rain. Ah! that woman! that woman!" . . .

And she detested her instinctively. At first she solaced herself by allusions that Charles did not understand, then by casual observations that he let pass for fear of a storm, finally by open apostrophes to which he knew no reply.—Why did he go back to the Bertaux now that Monsieur Rouault was cured and that the bill was still unpaid? Ah! it was because a certain person was there, some one who knew how to talk, to embroider, to be witty. So that was what he liked; he wanted city girls! And she went on:

"Imagine old Rouault's daughter being taken for a city girl! The grandfather was a shepherd and a cousin of theirs barely escaped being sentenced for nearly killing someone in a brawl. Hardly a reason to put on airs, or showing herself in church dressed in silk, like a countess. If it hadn't been for the rapeseed crop last year, the old fellow would have been hard put paying his arrears."

For very weariness Charles left off going to the Bertaux. Héloïse made him swear, his hand on the prayer-book, that he would go there no more, after much sobbing and many kisses, in a great outburst of love. He obeyed then, but the strength of his desire protested against the servility of his conduct; and he thought, with a kind of naïve hypocrisy, that this interdict to see her gave him a sort of right to love her. And then the widow was thin; she had long

teeth; wore in all weathers a little black shawl, the edge of which hung down between her shoulder-blades; her bony figure was sheathed in her clothes as if they were a scabbard; they were too short, and displayed her ankles with the laces of her large boots crossed over grey stockings.

Charles's mother came to see them from time to time, but after a few days the daughter-in-law seemed to put her own edge on her, and then, like two knives, they scarified him with their reflections and observations. It was wrong of him to eat so much. Why did he always offer a free drink to everyone who came along? How stubborn of him not to put on flannel underwear!

In the spring it came about that a notary at Ingouville, who managed the widow Dubuc's property, one fine day vanished, taking with him all the money in his office. Héloïse, it is true, still owned, besides a share in a boat valued at six thousand francs, her house in the Rue St. François; and yet, with all this fortune that had been so trumpeted abroad, nothing, excepting perhaps a little furniture and a few clothes, had appeared in the household. The matter had to be gone into. The house at Dieppe was found to be eaten up with mortgages to its foundations; what she had placed with the notary God only knew, and her share in the boat did not exceed three thousand francs. She had lied, the good lady! In his exasperation, Monsieur Bovary the elder, smashing a chair on the stone floor, accused his wife of having caused the misfortune of their son by harnessing him to such a harridan, whose harness wasn't worth her hide. They came to Tostes. Explanations followed. There were scenes. Héloïse in tears, throwing her arms about her husband, conjured him to defend her from his parents. Charles tried to speak up for her. They grew angry and left the house.

But "the blow had struck home." A week after, as she was hanging up some washing in her yard, she was seized with a spitting of blood, and the next day, while Charles had his back turned and was closing the window curtains, she said, "O God!" gave a sigh and fainted. She was dead! What a surprise!

When all was over at the cemetery Charles went home. He found no one downstairs; he went up to the first floor to their room, saw her dress still hanging at the foot of the alcove; then leaning against the writing-table, he stayed until the evening, buried in a sorrowful reverie. She had loved him after all!

III

One morning old Rouault brought Charles the money for setting his leg—seventy-five francs in forty-sou pieces, and a turkey. He had heard of his loss, and consoled him as well as he could.

"I know what it is," said he, clapping him on the shoulder; "I've been through it. When I lost my poor wife, I went into the field to be alone. I fell at the foot of a tree; I cried; I called on God; I talked nonsense to Him. I wanted to be like the moles that I saw on the branches, their insides swarming with maggots, in short, dead, and an end of it. And when I thought that there were others at that very moment, with their wives in their arms, I struck great blows on the earth with my stick. I almost went out of my mind, to the point of not eating; the very idea of going to a café disgusted me—you wouldn't believe it. Well, very slowly, one day following another, a spring on a winter, and an autumn after a summer, this wore away, piece by piece, crumb by crumb; it passed away, it is gone, I should say it has sunk; for something always remains inside, as we would say . . . a weight, here, at one's heart. But since it is the lot of all of us, one must not give way altogether, and, because others have died, want to die too. . . . You must pull yourself together, Monsieur Bovary. It will pass away. Come and see us; my daughter thinks of you time and again, you know, and she says you are forgetting her. Spring will soon be here. We'll have you shoot a rabbit in the field to help you get over your sorrows."

Charles followed his advice. He went back to the Bertaux. He found all as he had left it, that is to say, as it was five months ago. The pear trees were already in blossom, and Farmer Rouault, on his legs again, came and went, making the farm more lively.

Thinking it his duty to heap the greatest attention upon the doctor because of his sad situation, he begged him not to take his hat off, spoke to him in whispers as if he had been ill, and even pretended to be angry because nothing lighter had been prepared for him than for the others, such as a little custard or stewed pears. He told stories. Charles found himself laughing, but the remembrance of his wife suddenly coming back to him depressed him. Coffee was brought in; he thought no more about her.

He thought less of her as he grew accustomed to living alone. The new delight of independence soon made his loneliness bearable. He could now change his meal-times, go in or out without explanation, and when he was very tired stretch himself at full length on his bed. So he nursed and coddled himself and accepted the consolations that were offered him. On the other hand, the death of his wife had not served him ill in his business, since for a month people had been saying, "The poor young man! what a loss!" His name had been talked about, his practice had increased; and, moreover, he could go to the Bertaux just as he liked. He had an aimless hope, and a vague happiness; he thought himself better looking as he brushed his whiskers before the looking-glass.

One day he got there about three o'clock. Everybody was in the fields. He went into the kitchen, but did not at once catch sight of Emma; the outside shutters were closed. Through the chinks of the wood the sun sent across the flooring long fine rays that were broken at the corners of the furniture and trembled along the ceiling. Some flies on the table were crawling up the glasses that had been used, and buzzing as they drowned themselves in the dregs of the cider. The daylight that came in by the chimney made velvet of the soot at the back of the fireplace, and touched with blue the cold cinders. Between the window and the hearth Emma was sewing; she wore no scarf; he could see small drops of perspiration on her bare shoulders.

After the fashion of country folks she asked him to have something to drink. He said no; she insisted, and at last laughingly offered to have a glass of liqueur with him. So she went to fetch a bottle of curacoa from the cupboard, reached down two small glasses, filled one to the brim, poured scarcely anything into the other, and, after having clinked glasses, carried hers to her mouth. As it was almost empty she bent back to drink, her head thrown back, her lips pouting, her neck straining. She laughed at getting none, while with the tip of her tongue passing between her small teeth she licked drop by drop the bottom of her glass.

She sat down again and took up her work, a white cotton stocking she was darning. She worked with her head bent down; she did not speak, nor did Charles. The air coming in under the door blew a little dust over the stone floor; he watched it drift along, and heard nothing but the throbbing in his head and the faint clucking of a hen that had laid an egg in the yard. Emma from time to time cooled her cheeks with the palms of her hands, and cooled these again on the knobs of the huge fire-dogs.

She complained of suffering since the beginning of the spring from giddiness; she asked if sea-baths would do her any good; she began talking of her convent, Charles of his school; words came to them. They went up into her bed-room. She showed him her old music-books, the little prizes she had won, and the oak-leaf crowns, left at the bottom of a cupboard. She spoke to him, too, of her mother, of the country, and even showed him the bed in the garden where, on the first Friday of every month, she gathered flowers to put on her mother's tomb. But their gardener understood nothing about it; servants were so careless. She would have dearly liked, if only for the winter, to live in town, although the length of the fine days made the country perhaps even more wearisome in the summer. And, according to what she was saying, her voice was clear, sharp, or, suddenly all languor, lingering out in modulations that

ended almost in murmurs as she spoke to herself, now joyous, opening big naïve eyes, then with her eyelids half closed, her look full of boredom, her thoughts wandering.

Going home at night, Charles went over her words one by one, trying to recall them, to fill out their sense, that he might piece out the life she had lived before he knew her. But he never saw her in his thoughts other than he had seen her the first time, or as he had just left her. Then he asked himself what would become of her—if she would be married, and to whom? Alas! old Rouault was rich, and she!—so beautiful! But Emma's face always rose before his eyes, and a monotone, like the humming of a top, sounded in his ears, "If you should marry after all! if you should marry!" At night he could not sleep; his throat was parched; he was thirsty. He got up to drink from the water-bottle and opened the window. The night was covered with stars, a warm wind blowing in the distance; the dogs were barking. He turned his head towards the Bertaux.

Thinking that, after all, he had nothing to lose, Charles promised himself to ask her in marriage at the earliest opportunity, but each time the fear of not finding the right words sealed his lips.

Old Rouault would not have been sorry to be rid of his daughter, who was of no use to him in the house. In his heart he excused her, thinking her too clever for farming, a calling under the ban of Heaven, since one never saw a millionaire in it. Far from having made a fortune, the old man was losing every year; for if he was good at bargaining and enjoyed the dodges of the trade, he was the poorest of growers or farm managers. He did not willingly take his hands out of his pockets, and did not spare expense for his own comforts, liking to eat and to sleep well, and never to suffer from the cold. He liked old cider, underdone legs of mutton, brandied coffee well beaten up. He took his meals in the kitchen, alone, opposite the fire on a little table brought to him already laid as on the stage.

When, therefore, he perceived that Charles's cheeks grew flushed if near his daughter, which meant that he would propose one of these days, he mulled over the entire matter beforehand. He certainly thought him somewhat weak, not quite the son-in-law he would have liked, but he was said to be well-behaved, prudent with his money as well as learned, and no doubt would not make too many difficulties about the dowry. Now, as old Rouault would soon be forced to sell twenty-two acres of his land as he owed a good deal to the mason, to the harnessmaker, and as the shaft of the ciderpress wanted renewing, "If he asks for her," he said to himself, "I'll give her to him."

In the early fall Charles went to spend three days at the Bertaux. The last had passed like the others in procrastinating from hour to hour. Old Rouault was seeing him off; they were walking along a

dirt road full of ruts; they were about to part. This was the time. Charles gave himself as far as to the corner of the hedge, and at last, when past it,

“Monsieur Rouault,” he murmured, “I should like to say something to you.”

They stopped. Charles was silent.

“Well, tell me your story. Don’t I know all about it?” said old Rouault, laughing softly.

“Monsieur Rouault . . . Monsieur Rouault,” stammered Charles.

“I ask nothing better,” the farmer went on. “Although, no doubt, the little one agrees with me, still we must ask her opinion. So you get off—I’ll go back home. If it is ‘yes,’ you needn’t return because of all the people around, and besides it would upset her too much. But so that you may not be biting your fingernails with impatience, I’ll open wide the outer shutter of the window against the wall; you can see it from the back by leaning over the hedge.”

And he went off.

Charles fastened his horse to a tree; he ran into the road and waited. Half-an-hour passed, then he counted nineteen minutes by his watch. Suddenly a noise was heard against the wall; the shutter had been thrown back; the hook was still quivering.

The next day by nine o’clock he was at the farm. Emma blushed as he entered, and she gave a little forced laugh to hide her embarrassment. Old Rouault embraced his future son-in-law. The discussion of money matters was put off; moreover, there was plenty of time before them, as the marriage could not decently take place till Charles was out of mourning, that is to say, about the spring of the next year.

The winter passed waiting for this. Mademoiselle Rouault was busy with her trousseau. Part of it was ordered at Rouen, and she made herself slips and nightcaps after fashionplates that she borrowed. When Charles visited the farmer, the preparations for the wedding were talked over; they wondered in what room they should have dinner; they dreamed of the number of dishes that would be wanted, and what should be the entrées.

Emma would, on the contrary, have preferred to have a midnight wedding with torches, but old Rouault could not understand such an idea. So there was a wedding at which forty-three persons were present, at which they remained sixteen hours at table, began again the next day, and even carried a little into the following days.

IV

The guests arrived early in carriages, in one-horse chaises, two-wheeled cars, old open gigs, vans with leather curtains, and the

young people from the nearer villages in carts, in which they stood up in rows, holding on to the sides so as not to fall, going at a trot and well shaken up. Some came from a distance of thirty miles, from Goderville, from Normanville, and from Cauty. All the relatives of both families had been invited, old quarrels had been patched up and near-forgotten acquaintances written to for the occasion.

From time to time one heard the crack of a whip behind the hedge; then the gates opened, a chaise entered. Galloping up to the foot of the steps, it stopped short and emptied its load. They got down from all sides, rubbing knees and stretching arms. The ladies, wearing bonnets, had on dresses in the town fashion, gold watch chains, pelerines with the ends tucked into belts, or little colored scarfs fastened down behind with a pin, and that left the back of the neck bare. The boys, dressed like their papas, seemed uncomfortable in their new clothes (many that day were wearing their first pair of boots), and by their sides, speaking never a word, wearing the white dress of their first communion lengthened for the occasion, were some big girls of fourteen or sixteen, cousins or elder sisters no doubt, scarlet, bewildered, their hair greasy with rose-pomade, and very much afraid of dirtying their gloves. As there were not enough stable-boys to unharness all the carriages, the gentlemen turned up their sleeves and set about it themselves. According to their different social positions they wore tail-coats, overcoats, shooting-jackets, cutaway-coats: fine tail-coats, redolent of family respectability, that only came out of the wardrobe on state occasions; overcoats with long tails flapping in the wind and round capes and pockets like sacks; shooting-jackets of coarse cloth, generally worn with a cap with a brass-bound peak; very short cutaway-coats with two small buttons in the back, close together like a pair of eyes, and the tails of which seemed cut out of one piece by a carpenter's hatchet. Some, too (but these, you may be sure, would sit at the bottom of the table), wore their best smocks—that is to say, with collars turned down to the shoulders, the back gathered into small plaits and the waist fastened very low down with a stitched belt.

And the shirts stood out from the chests like armor breastplates! Everyone had just had his hair cut; ears stood out from the heads; they had been close-shaven; a few, even, who had had to get up before daybreak, and not been able to see to shave, had diagonal gashes under their noses or cuts the size of a three-franc piece along the jaws, which the fresh air had enflamed during the trip, so that the great white beaming faces were mottled here and there with red spots.

The town hall was a mile and a half from the farm, and they went there on foot, returning in the same way after the ceremony in the

church. The procession, first united like one long colored scarf that undulated across the fields, along the narrow path winding amid the green wheat, soon lengthened out, and broke up into different groups that loitered to talk. The fiddler walked in front with his violin, gay with ribbons at its pegs. Then came the married pair, the relatives, the friends, all following pell-mell; the children stayed behind amusing themselves plucking the bell-flowers from oat-ears, or playing amongst themselves unseen. Emma's dress, too long, trailed a little on the ground; from time to time she stopped to pull it up, and then delicately, with her gloved hands, she picked off the coarse grass and the thistles, while Charles, empty handed, waited till she had finished. Old Rouault, with a new silk hat and the cuffs of his black coat covering his hands up to the nails, gave his arm to Madame Bovary senior. As to Monsieur Bovary senior, who, heartily despising all these people, had come simply in a frock-coat of military cut with one row of buttons—he was exchanging barroom banter with a blond young farmgirl. She bowed, blushed, and did not know what to say. The other wedding guests talked business or played tricks behind each other's backs, egging each other on in advance for the fun that was to come. Those who listened could always catch the squeaking of the fiddler, who went on playing across the fields. When he saw that the rest were far behind he stopped to take breath, slowly rosined his bow, so that the strings should squeak all the louder, then set off again, by turns lowering and raising the neck of his violin, the better to mark time for himself. The noise of the instrument drove away the little birds from afar.

The table was laid under the cart-shed. On it were four roasts of beef, six chicken fricassées, stewed veal, three legs of mutton, and in the middle a fine roast sucking-pig, flanked by four pork sausages with sorrel. At the corners were decanters of brandy. Sweet bottled-cider frothed round the corks, and all the glasses had been filled to the brim with wine beforehand. Large dishes of yellow cream, that trembled with the least shake of the table, had designed on their smooth surface the initials of the newly wedded pair in nonpareil arabesques. A confectioner of Yvetot had been entrusted with the pies and candies. As he had only just started out in the neighborhood, he had taken a lot of trouble, and at dessert he himself brought in a wedding cake that provoked loud cries of wonderment. At its base there was a square of blue cardboard, representing a temple with porticoes, colonnades, and stucco statuettes all round, and in the niches constellations of gilt paper stars; then on the second level was a dungeon of Savoy cake, surrounded by many fortifications in candied angelica, almonds, raisins, and quarters of oranges; and finally, on the upper platform a green field with rocks set in lakes of jam, nutshell boats, and a small Cupid balanc-

ing himself in a chocolate swing whose two uprights ended in real roses for balls at the top.

Until night they ate. When any of them were too tired of sitting, they went out for a stroll in the yard, or for a game of darts in the granary, and then returned to table. Some towards the end went to sleep and snored. But with the coffee every one woke up. Then they began songs, showed off tricks, raised heavy weights, competed to see who could pass his head under his arm while keeping a thumb on the table, tried lifting carts on their shoulders, made bawdy jokes, kissed the women. At night when they left, the horses, stuffed up to the nostrils with oats, could hardly be got into the shafts; they kicked, reared, the harness broke, their masters laughed or swore; and all night in the light of the moon along country roads there were runaway carts at full gallop plunging into the ditches, jumping over yard after yard of stones, clambering up the hills, with women leaning out from the tilt to catch hold of the reins.

Those who stayed at the Bertaux spent the night drinking in the kitchen. The children had fallen asleep under the seats.

The bride had begged her father to be spared the usual marriage pleasantries. However, a fishmonger, one of their cousins (who had brought a pair of soles for his wedding present), began to squirt water from his mouth through the keyhole, when old Rouault came up just in time to stop him, and explain to him that the distinguished position of his son-in-law would not allow of such liberties. The cousin was not easily convinced. In his heart he accused old Rouault of being proud, and he joined four or five other guests in a corner, who, through mere chance, had been served the poorer cuts of meat several times over and also considered themselves ill-treated. They were whispering about their host, hoping with covered hints that he would ruin himself.

Madame Bovary, senior, had not opened her mouth all day. She had been consulted neither as to the dress of her daughter-in-law nor as to the arrangement of the feast; she went to bed early. Her husband, instead of following her, sent to Saint-Victor for some cigars, and smoked till daybreak, drinking kirsch-punch, a mixture unknown to the company that added even more to the consideration in which he was held.

Charles, who was anything but quick-witted, did not shine at the wedding. He answered feebly to the puns, *doubles entendres*, compliments, and the customary pleasantries that were dutifully aimed at him as soon as the soup appeared.

The next day, on the other hand, he seemed another man. It was he who might rather have been taken for the virgin of the evening before, whilst the bride gave no sign that revealed anything. The

shrewdest did not know what to make of it, and they looked at her when she passed near them with an unbounded concentration of mind. But Charles concealed nothing. He called her "my wife," addressed her by the familiar "tu," asked for her of everyone, looked for her everywhere, and often he dragged her into the yards, where he could be seen from far between the trees, putting his arm round her waist, and walking half-bending over her, ruffling the collar of her blouse with his head.

Two days after the wedding the married pair left. Charles, on account of his patients, could not be away longer. Old Rouault had them driven back in his cart, and himself accompanied them as far as Vassonville. Here he embraced his daughter for the last time, got down, and went his way. When he had gone about a hundred paces he stopped, and as he saw the cart disappearing, its wheels turning in the dust, he gave a deep sigh. Then he remembered his wedding, the old times, the first pregnancy of his wife; he, too, had been very happy the day when he had taken her from her father to his home, and had carried her off riding pillion, trotting through the snow, for it was near Christmas-time, and the country was all white. She held him by one arm, her basket hanging from the other; the wind blew the long lace of her Cauchois headdress so that it sometimes flapped across his mouth, and when he turned his head he saw near him, on his shoulder, her little rosy face, smiling silently under the gold bands of her cap. To warm her hands she put them from time to time in his breast. How long ago it all was! Their son would have been thirty by now. Then he looked back and saw nothing on the road. He felt dreary as an empty house; and tender memories mingling with sad thoughts in his brain, addled by the fumes of the feast, he felt inclined for a moment to take a turn towards the church. As he was afraid, however, that this sight would make him even sadder, he went right away home.

Monsieur and Madame Charles arrived at Tostes about six o'clock. The neighbors came to the windows to see their doctor's new wife.

The old servant presented herself, curtsied to her, apologised for not having dinner ready, and suggested that madame, in the meantime, should look over her house.

V

The brick front was just in a line with the street, or rather the road. Behind the door hung a cloak with a small collar, a bridle, and a black leather cap, and on the floor, in a corner, were a pair of leggings, still covered with dry mud. On the right was the one room that was both dining and sitting room. A canary-yellow paper, re-

lieved at the top by a garland of pale flowers, was puckered everywhere over the badly-stretched canvas; white calico curtains with a red border hung crossways the length of the window; and on the narrow mantelpiece a clock with a head of Hippocrates shone resplendent between two plate candlesticks under oval shades. On the other side of the passage was Charles's consulting-room, a little room about six paces wide, with a table, three chairs, and an office-chair. Volumes of the "Dictionary of Medical Science," uncut, but the binding rather the worse for the successive sales through which they had gone, occupied almost alone the six shelves of a pinewood bookcase. The smell of sauces penetrated through the walls when he saw patients, just as in the kitchen one could hear the people coughing in the consulting-room and recounting their whole histories. Then, opening on the yard, where the stable was, came a large dilapidated room with a stove, now used as a wood-house, cellar, and pantry, full of old rubbish, of empty casks, discarded garden tools, and a mass of dusty things whose use it was impossible to guess.

The garden, longer than wide, ran between two mud walls covered with espaliered apricot trees, to a thorn hedge that separated it from the field. In the middle was a state sundial on a brick pedestal; four flower-beds with eglantines surrounded symmetrically the more useful vegetable garden. Right at the bottom, under the spruce bushes, a plaster priest was reading his breviary.

Emma went upstairs. The first room was not furnished, but in the second, the conjugal bedroom, was a mahogany bedstead in an alcove with red drapery. A shell-box adorned the chest of drawers, on the secretary near the window a bouquet of orange blossoms tied with white satin ribbons stood in a bottle. It was a bride's bouquet: the other one's. She looked at it. Charles noticed; he took the bouquet, carried it to the attic, while Emma seated in an armchair (they were putting her things down around her) thought of her bridal flowers packed up in a bandbox, and wondered, dreaming, what would be done with them if she were to die.

During the first days she kept busy thinking about changes in the house. She took the shades off the candlesticks, had new wall-paper put up, the staircase repainted, and seats made in the garden round the sundial; she even inquired how she could get a basin with a jet fountain and fishes. Finally her husband, knowing that she liked to drive out, picked up a second-hand dogcart, which, with new lamps and a splashboard in striped leather, looked almost like a tilbury.

He was happy then, and without a care in the world. A meal together, a walk in the evening on the highroad, a gesture of her hands over her hair, the sight of her straw hat hanging from the

window-fastener, and many other things of which he had never suspected how pleasant they could be, now made up the endless round of his happiness. In bed, in the morning, by her side, on the pillow, he watched the sunlight sinking into the down on her fair cheek, half hidden by the ribbons of her nightcap. Seen thus closely, her eyes looked to him enlarged, especially when, on waking up, she opened and shut her eyelids rapidly many times. Black in the shade, dark blue in broad daylight, they had, as it were, depths of successive colors that, more opaque in the center, grew more transparent towards the surface of the eye. His own eyes lost themselves in these depths and he could see himself mirrored in miniature, down to his shoulders, with his scarf round his head and the top of his shirt open. He rose. She came to the window to see him off, and stayed leaning on the sill between two pots of geranium, clad in her dressing-gown hanging loosely about her. Charles, in the street, buckled his spurs, his foot on the mounting stone, while she talked to him from above, picking with her mouth some scrap of flower or leaf that she blew out at him and which, eddying, floating, described semicircles in the air like a bird, caught before it reached the ground in the ill-groomed mane of the old white mare standing motionless at the door. Charles from horseback threw her a kiss; she answered with a nod; she shut the window, and he set off. And then, along the endless dusty ribbon of the highroad, along the deep lanes that the trees bent over as in arbours, along paths where the wheat reached to the knees, with the sun on his back and the morning air in his nostrils, his heart full of the joys of the past night, his mind at rest, his flesh at ease, he went on, re-chewing his happiness, like those who after dinner taste again the truffles which they are digesting.

Until now what good had he had of his life? His time at school, when he remained shut up within the high walls, alone, in the midst of companions richer than he or cleverer at their work, who laughed at his accent, who jeered at his clothes, and whose mothers came to the school with cakes in their muffs? Later on, when he studied medicine, and never had his purse full enough to take out dancing some little work-girl who would have become his mistress? Afterwards, he had lived fourteen months with the widow, whose feet in bed were cold as icicles. But now he had for life this beautiful woman whom he adored. For him the universe did not extend beyond the silky circumference of her petticoat. He reproached himself for not loving her enough; he wanted to see her again, turned back quickly, ran up the stairs with a beating heart. Emma, in her room, was dressing; he came up on tiptoe, kissed her back; she cried out in surprise.

He could not keep from constantly touching her comb, her rings,

her scarf; sometimes he gave her great sounding kisses with all his mouth on her cheeks, or else little kisses in a row all along her bare arm from the tip of her fingers up to her shoulder, and she put him away half-smiling, half-annoyed, as one does with a clinging child.

Before marriage she thought herself in love; but since the happiness that should have followed failed to come, she must, she thought, have been mistaken. And Emma tried to find out what one meant exactly in life by the words *bliss*, *passion*, *ecstasy*, that had seemed to her so beautiful in books.

VI

She had read *Paul et Virginie*, and she had dreamed of the little bamboo-house, the black man Domingo, the dog Fidèle, but above all of the sweet friendship of some dear little brother, who seeks red fruit for you on trees taller than steeples, or who runs barefoot over the sand, bringing you a bird's nest.⁸

When she was thirteen, her father himself took her to town to place her in the convent. They stopped at an inn in the St. Gervais quarter, where, at their supper, they used painted plates that set forth the story of Mademoiselle de la Vallière. The explanatory legends, chipped here and there by the scratching of knives, all glorified religion, the tendernesses of the heart, and the pomps of court.

Far from being bored at first at the convent, she took pleasure in the society of the good sisters, who, to amuse her, took her to the chapel, which one entered from the refectory by a long corridor. She played very little during recreation hours, knew her catechism well, and it was she who always answered the Vicar's difficult questions. Living thus, without ever leaving the warm atmosphere of the class-rooms, and amid these pale-faced women wearing rosaries with brass crosses, she was softly lulled by the mystic languor exhaled in the perfumes of the altar, the freshness of the holy water, and the lights of the tapers. Instead of following mass, she looked at the pious vignettes with their azure borders in her book, and she loved the sick lamb, the sacred heart pierced with sharp arrows, or the poor Jesus sinking beneath the cross he carried. She tried, by way of mortification, to eat nothing a whole day. She puzzled her head to find some vow to fulfil.

8. *Paul et Virginie* (1787) by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre was one of the most popular and often reprinted sentimental novels of the Revolutionary and Romantic years. It narrates the ill-fated love of a boy and girl whose childhood idyll on the Ile de France, now Mauritius, is destroyed by social convention. In tracing Emma's reading across the pages of this section, Flaubert evokes the best-known works and genres of the time, including Romantic poetry, and the wealth of novelistic forms mentioned at the beginning of this edition's introduction. Mademoiselle de la Vallière, the mistress of Louis XIV, for example, was the subject of a favorite sentimental novel by Stéphanie de Genlis entitled *La Duchesse de la Vallière* (1804).



Illustration from Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*, of Virginie bidding farewell to Paul on the eve of her journey to France to receive a lady's education, from a nineteenth-century illustrated edition of the novel. Orrin Smith, after T. Johannot, from *Paul et Virginie* by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (Paris [1838]). Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

When she went to confession, she invented little sins in order that she might stay there longer, kneeling in the shadow, her hands joined, her face against the grating beneath the whispering of the priest. The comparisons of betrothed, husband, celestial lover, and eternal marriage, that recur in sermons, stirred within her soul depths of unexpected sweetness.

In the evening, before prayers, there was some religious reading in the study. On week-nights it was some abstract of sacred history or the Lectures of the Abbé Frayssinous, and on Sundays passages from the "Génie du Christianisme," as a recreation.⁹ How she listened at first to the sonorous lamentations of romantic melancholy re-echoing through the world and eternity! If her childhood had been spent in the shops of a busy city section, she might perhaps have opened her heart to those lyrical invasions of Nature, which usually come to us only through translation in books. But she knew the country too well; she knew the lowing of cattle, the milking, the ploughs. Accustomed to the quieter aspects of life, she turned instead to its tumultuous parts. She loved the sea only for the sake of its storms, and the green only when it was scattered among ruins. She had to gain some personal profit from things and she rejected as useless whatever did not contribute to the immediate satisfaction of her heart's desires—being of a temperament more sentimental than artistic, looking for emotions; not landscapes.

At the convent there was an old maid who came for a week each month to mend the linen. Patronized by the clergy, because she belonged to an ancient family of noblemen ruined by the Revolution, she dined in the refectory at the table of the good sisters, and after the meal chatted with them for a while before going back to her work. The girls often slipped out from the study to go and see her. She knew by heart the love-songs of the last century, and sang them in a low voice as she stitched away. She told stories, gave them news, ran their errands in the town, and on the sly lent the big girls some of the novels, that she always carried in the pockets of her apron, and of which the lady herself swallowed long chapters in the intervals of her work. They were all about love, lovers, sweethearts, persecuted ladies fainting in lonely pavilions, postilions killed at every relay, horses ridden to death on every page, somber forests, heart-aches, vows, sobs, tears and kisses, little boatraces by moonlight, nightingales in shady groves, gentlemen brave as lions, gentle as lambs, virtuous as no one ever was, always well dressed, and weeping like fountains. For six months, then, a fifteen year old Emma dirtied her hands with the greasy dust of old lending libraries. With Walter Scott, later on, she fell in love with historical

9. A lengthy work on religion, society, and morality by François René de Chateaubriand, first published in 1802.

events, dreamed of guardrooms, old oak chests and minstrels. She would have liked to live in some old manor-house, like those long-waisted chatelaines who, in the shade of pointed arches, spent their days leaning on the stone, chin in hand, watching a white-plumed knight galloping on his black horse from the distant fields. At this time she had a cult for Mary Stuart and enthusiastic veneration for illustrious or unhappy women. Joan of Arc, Héloïse, Agnès Sorel, the beautiful Ferronnière, and Clémence Isaure stood out to her like comets in the dark immensity of history, where also were seen, lost in shadow, and all unconnected, St. Louis with his oak, the dying Bayard, some cruelties of Louis XI, a little of St. Bartholomew's, the plume of the Béarnais, and always the remembrance of the painted plates glorifying Louis XIV.

In the music-class, the ballads she sang were all about little angels with golden wings, madonnas, lagunes, gondoliers; harmless-sounding compositions that, in spite of the inanity of the style and the vagueness of the melody, enabled one to catch a glimpse of the tantalizing phantasmagoria of sentimental realities. Some of her companions brought keepsakes given them as new year's gifts to the convent. These had to be hidden; it was quite an undertaking; they were read in the dormitory. Delicately handling the beautiful satin bindings, Emma looked with dazzled eyes at the names of the unknown authors, who had signed their verses for the most part as counts or viscounts.

She trembled as she blew back the thin transparent paper over the engraving and saw it folded in two and fall gently against the page. Here behind the balustrade of a balcony was a young man in a short cloak, holding in his arms a young girl in a white dress who was wearing an alms-bag at her belt; or there were nameless portraits of English ladies with fair curls, who looked at you from under their round straw hats with their large clear eyes. Some could be seen lounging in their carriages, gliding through parks, a greyhound bounding along ahead of the equipage, driven at a trot by two small postilions in white breeches. Others, dreaming on sofas with an open letter, gazed at the moon through a slightly open window half draped by a black curtain. The innocent ones, a tear on their cheeks, were kissing doves through the bars of a Gothic cage, or, smiling, their heads on one side, were plucking the leaves of a marguerite with their taper fingers, that curved at the tips like peaked shoes. And you, too, were there, Sultans with long pipes reclining beneath arbours in the arms of Bayadères; Giaours, curved swords, fezzes; and you especially, pale landscapes of dithyrambic lands, that often show us at once palm-trees and firs, tigers on the right, a lion to the left, Tartar minarets on the horizon, Roman ruins in the foreground with some kneeling camels besides; the whole

framed by a very neat virgin forest, and with a great perpendicular sunbeam trembling in the water, where, sharply edged on a steel-grey background, white swans are swimming here and there.¹

And the shade of the oil lamp fastened to the wall above Emma's head lighted up all these pictures of the world, that passed before her one by one in the silence of the dormitory, and to the distant noise of some belated carriage still rolling down the Boulevards.

When her mother died she cried much the first few days. She had a funeral picture made with the hair of the deceased, and, in a letter sent to the Bertaux full of sad reflections on life, she asked to be buried later on in the same grave. The old man thought she must be ill, and came to see her. Emma was secretly pleased that she had reached at a first attempt the rare ideal of delicate lives, never attained by mediocre hearts. She let herself meander along with Lamartine, listened to harps on lakes, to all the songs of dying swans, to the falling of the leaves, the pure virgins ascending to heaven, and the voice of the Eternal discoursing down the valleys. She soon grew tired but wouldn't admit it, continued from habit first, then out of vanity, and at last was surprised to feel herself consoled, and with no more sadness at heart than wrinkles on her brow.

The good nuns, who had been so sure of her vocation, perceived with great astonishment that Mademoiselle Rouault seemed to be slipping from them. They had indeed been so lavish to her of prayers, retreats, novenas, and sermons, they had so often preached the respect due to saints and martyrs, and given so much good advice as to the modesty of the body and the salvation of her soul, that she did as tightly reined horses: she pulled up short and the bit slipped from her teeth. This nature, positive in the midst of its enthusiasms, that had loved the church for the sake of the flowers, and music for the words of the songs, and literature for the passions it excites, rebelled against the mysteries of faith as it had rebelled against discipline, as something alien to her constitution. When her father took her from school, no one was sorry to see her go. The Lady Superior even thought that she had of late been less than reverent toward the community.

Emma, at home once more, first took pleasure in ruling over servants, then grew disgusted with the country and missed her convent. When Charles came to the Bertaux for the first time, she thought herself quite disillusioned, with nothing more to learn, and nothing more to feel.

But the uneasiness of her new position, or perhaps the disturbance caused by the presence of this man, had sufficed to make her

1. Flaubert here evokes the commonplaces of Romantic exoticism, exemplified by the figures found in the poetry of Lord Byron.

believe that she at last felt that wondrous passion which, till then, like a great bird with rose-coloured wings, hung in the splendor of poetic skies;—and now she could not think that the calm in which she lived was the happiness of her dreams.

VII

She thought, sometimes, that, after all, this was the happiest time of her life: the honeymoon, as people called it. To taste the full sweetness of it, it would no doubt have been necessary to fly to those lands with sonorous names where the days after marriage are full of the most suave laziness! In post-chaises behind blue silken curtains, one rides slowly up steep roads, listening to the song of the postilion re-echoed by the mountains, along with the bells of goats and the muffled sound of a waterfall. At sunset on the shores of gulfs one breathes in the perfume of lemon-trees; then in the evening on the villa-terraces above, one looks hand in hand at the stars, making plans for the future. It seemed to her that certain places on earth must bring happiness, as a plant peculiar to the soil, and that cannot thrive elsewhere. Why could not she lean over balconies in Swiss *châlets*, or enshrine her melancholy in a Scotch cottage, with a husband dressed in a black velvet coat with long tails, and thin shoes, a pointed hat and frills?

Perhaps she would have liked to confide all these things to some one. But how tell an undefinable uneasiness, changing as the clouds, unstable as the winds? Words failed her and, by the same token, the opportunity, the courage.

If Charles had but wished it, if he had guessed, if his look had but once met her thought, it seemed to her that a sudden bounty would have come from her heart, as the fruit falls from a tree when shaken by a hand. But as the intimacy of their life became deeper, the greater became the gulf that kept them apart.

Charles's conversation was commonplace as a street pavement, and every one's ideas trooped through it in their everyday garb, without exciting emotion, laughter, or thought. He had never had the curiosity, he said, while he lived at Rouen, to go to the theatre to see the actors from Paris. He could neither swim, nor fence, nor shoot, and one day he could not explain some term of horsemanship to her that she had come across in a novel.

A man, on the contrary, should he not know everything, excel in manifold activities, initiate you into the energies of passion, the refinements of life, all mysteries? But this one taught nothing, knew nothing, wished nothing. He thought her happy; and she resented this easy calm, this serene heaviness, the very happiness she gave him.

Sometimes she would draw; and it was great amusement to Charles to stand there bolt upright and watch her bend over her paper, with eyes half-closed the better to see her work, or rolling, between her fingers, little bread-pellets. As to the piano, the more quickly her fingers glided over it the more he wondered. She struck the notes with aplomb, and ran from top to bottom of the keyboard without a break. Thus shaken up, the old instrument, whose strings buzzed, could be heard at the other end of the village when the window was open, and often the bailiff's clerk, passing along the highroad bareheaded and in slippers, stopped to listen, his sheet of paper in his hand.

Emma, on the other hand, knew how to look after her house. She sent the patients' accounts in well-phrased letters that had no suggestion of a bill. When they had a neighbor to dinner on Sundays, she managed to have some tasty dish, knew how to pile the plums in pyramids on vine-leaves, how to serve jam turned out on a plate, and even spoke of buying finger bowls for dessert. From all this much consideration was extended to Bovary.

Charles finished by rising in his own esteem for possessing such a wife. He showed with pride in the sitting-room two small pencil sketches by her that he had had framed in very large frames, and hung up against the wall-paper by long green cords. People returning from mass saw him standing on his doorstep, wearing beautiful carpet slippers.

He came home late—at ten o'clock, at midnight sometimes. Then he asked for something to eat, and as the servant had gone to bed, Emma waited on him. He took off his coat to dine more at his ease. He told her, one after the other, the people he had met, the villages where he had been, the prescriptions he had written, and, well pleased with himself, he finished the remainder of the boiled beef, peeled the crust of his cheese, munched an apple, finished the wine, and then went to bed, lay on his back and snored.

As he had been for a long time accustomed to wear nightcaps, his handkerchief would not keep down over his ears, so that his hair in the morning was all dishevelled and whitened with the feathers of the pillow, whose strings came untied during the night. He always wore thick boots that had two long creases over the instep running obliquely towards the ankle, while the upper part continued in a straight line as if stretched on a wooden foot. He said that this was quite good enough for someone who lived in the country.

His mother approved of his thrift, for she came to see him as before, after there had been some violent row at her place; and yet the elder Madame Bovary seemed prejudiced against her daughter-in-law. She thought she was living above her means; the wood, sugar and candles vanished as in a large establishment, and the

amount of stovewood used in the kitchen would have been enough for twenty-five courses. She straightened the linen chests, and taught her to keep an eye on the butcher when he brought the meat. Emma had to accept these lessons lavished upon her, and the words "daughter" and "mother" were exchanged all day long, accompanied by little quiverings of the lips, each one uttering sweet words in a voice trembling with anger.

In Madame Dubuc's time the old woman felt that she was still the favorite; but now the love of Charles for Emma seemed to her a desertion from her tenderness, an encroachment upon what was hers, and she watched her son's happiness in sad silence, as a ruined man looks through the windows at people dining in his old house. She recalled to him as remembrances her troubles and her sacrifices, and, comparing these with Emma's casual ways, came to the conclusion that it was not reasonable to adore her so exclusively.

Charles knew not what to answer: he respected his mother, and he loved his wife infinitely; he considered the judgment of the one infallible, and yet he thought the conduct of the other irreproachable. When Madame Bovary had gone, he tried timidly and in the same terms to hazard one or two of the more anodyne observations he had heard from his mamma. Emma proved to him with a word that he was mistaken, and sent him off to his patients.

And yet, in accord with theories she believed right, she wanted to experience love with him. By moonlight in the garden she recited all the passionate rhymes she knew by heart, and, sighing, sang to him many melancholy adagios; but she found herself as calm after this as before, and Charles seemed neither more amorous, nor more moved.

When she had thus for a while struck the flint on her heart without getting a spark, incapable, moreover, of understanding what she did not experience or of believing anything that did not take on a conventional form, she persuaded herself without difficulty that Charles's passion was no longer very ardent. His outbursts became regular; he embraced her at certain fixed times. It was one habit among other habits, like a familiar dessert after the monotony of dinner.

A gamekeeper, whom the doctor had cured of a lung infection, had given madame a little Italian greyhound; she took her out walking, for she went out sometimes in order to be alone for a moment, and not to see before her eyes the eternal garden and the dusty road.

She went as far as the beeches of Banneville, near the deserted pavilion which forms an angle on the field side of the wall. Amidst the grass of the ditches grow long reeds with sharp-edged leaves that cut you.

She began by looking round her to see if nothing had changed

since she had last been there. She found again in the same places the foxgloves and wallflowers, the beds of nettles growing round the big stones, and the patches of lichen along the three windows, whose shutters, always closed, were rotting away on their rusty iron bars. Her thoughts, aimless at first, wandered at random, like her greyhound, who ran round and round in the fields, yelping after the yellow butterflies, chasing the field-mice, or nibbling the poppies on the edge of a wheatfield. Then gradually her ideas took definite shape, and, sitting on the grass that she dug up with little pricks of her sunshade, Emma repeated to herself:—Why, for Heaven's sake, did I marry?

She asked herself if by some other chance combination it would not have been possible to meet another man; and she tried to imagine what would have been these unrealised events, this different life, this unknown husband. All, surely, could not be like this one. He might have been handsome, witty, distinguished, attractive, like, no doubt, the men her old companions of the convent had married. What were they doing now? In town, among the crowded streets, the buzzing theatres and the lights of the ball-room, they were living lives where the heart expands and the senses blossom out. As for her, her life was cold as a garret facing north, and ennui, the silent spider, was weaving its web in the darkness, in every corner of her heart. She recalled graduation day, when she mounted the platform to receive her little wreaths. With her hair in long plaits, in her white frock and open prunella shoes she had a pretty way, and when she went back to her seat, the gentlemen bent over to congratulate her; the courtyard was full of carriages; farewells were called to her through their windows; the music-master with his violin-case bowed in passing by. How far off all this! How far away!

She called Djali,² took her between her knees, and smoothed the long, delicate head, saying, "Come, kiss your mistress, you who are free of cares."

Then noting the melancholy face of the graceful animal, who yawned slowly, she softened, and comparing her to herself, spoke to her aloud as to somebody in pain whom one is consoling.

Occasionally there came gusts of wind, breezes from the sea rolling in one sweep over the whole plateau of the Caux country, which brought to these fields a salt freshness. The rushes, close to the ground, whistled; the branches of the beech trees trembled in a swift rustling, while their crowns, ceaselessly swaying, kept up a deep murmur. Emma drew her shawl round her shoulders and rose.

In the avenue a green light dimmed by the leaves lit up the short

2. Emma names her greyhound after the dainty goat dear to Esmerelda, the heroine of Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831). The greyhound was a fashionable breed of the time that Flaubert first mentions in describing keepsakes on page 33.



The greyhound as ornament of the fashionable lady. From a fashion plate of the 1840s. Though this plate appeared in an English publication, it indicates the fashions Emma would be following, since England, like the French provinces, as well as other European countries, looked to Paris as the capital of fashion. Thus, fashion plates were imported from French periodicals and reused in foreign contexts. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

moss that crackled softly beneath her feet. The sun was setting; the sky showed red between the branches, and the trunks of the trees, uniform, and planted in a straight line, seemed a brown colonnade standing out against a background of gold. A fear took hold of her; she called Djali, and hurriedly returned to Tostes by the highroad, threw herself into an armchair, and for the rest of the evening did not speak.

But towards the end of September something extraordinary befell her: she was invited by the Marquis d'Andervilliers to Vaubyessard.

Secretary of State under the Restoration, the Marquis, anxious to re-enter political life, had long since been preparing for his candidature to the *Chambre des Députés*.³ In the winter he distributed a great deal of firewood, and in the *Conseil Général* always enthusiastically demanded new roads for his *arrondissement*. During the height of the summer heat he had suffered from an abscess in the mouth, which Charles had cured as if by miracle by giving a timely little touch with the lancet. The steward sent to Tostes to pay for the operation reported in the evening that he had seen some superb cherries in the doctor's little garden. Now cherry trees did not thrive at Vaubyessard; the Marquis asked Bovary for some offshoots. He made it his business to thank him personally and, on that occasion, saw Emma. He thought she had a pretty figure, and that she did not greet him like a peasant; so that he did not think he was going beyond the bounds of condescension, nor, on the other hand, making a mistake, in inviting the young couple.

One Wednesday at three o'clock, Monsieur and Madame Bovary, seated in their dog-cart, set out for Vaubyessard, with a great trunk strapped on behind and a hat-box in front on the apron. Besides these Charles held a carton between his knees.

They arrived at nightfall, just as the lamps in the park were being lit to show the way for the carriages.

VIII

The château, a modern building in Italian style, with two projecting wings and three flights of steps, lay at the foot of an immense lawn, on which some cows were grazing among clumps of large trees set out at regular intervals, while large beds of arbutus, rhododendron, syringas and snowballs bulged out their irregular clusters of green along the curve of the gravel path. A river flowed under a bridge; through the mist one could distinguish buildings with thatched roofs scattered over the field bordered by two gently-sloping well-

3. The *Chambre des Députés* is one of the two governing bodies of representatives at the national level, while the *Conseil Général*, mentioned in the following sentence, is a governing representative body at the departmental level.

timbered hillocks, and in the background amid the trees rose in two parallel lines the coach-houses and stables, all that was left of the ruined old château.

Charles's dog-cart pulled up before the middle flight of steps; servants appeared; the Marquis came forward, and offering his arm to the doctor's wife, conducted her to the vestibule.

It was paved with marble slabs and seemed very lofty; the sound of footsteps and that of voices re-echoed through it as in a church. Opposite rose a straight staircase, and on the left a gallery overlooking the garden led to the billiard room, from where the click of the ivory balls could be heard immediately upon entering. As she crossed it to go to the drawing-room, Emma saw standing round the table men with grave faces, their chins resting on high cravats. They all wore orders, and smiled silently as they made their strokes. On the dark wainscoting of the walls large gold frames bore at the bottom names written in black letters. She read: "Jean-Antoine d'Andervilliers d'Yverbonville, Count de la Vaubyessard and Baron de la Fresnaye, killed at the battle of Coutras on the 20th of October 1587." And on another: "Jean-Antoine-Henry-Guy d'Andervilliers de la Vaubyessard, Admiral of France and Chevalier of the Order of St. Michael, wounded at the battle of the Hougue-Saint-Vaast on the 29th of May 1692; died at Vaubyessard on the 23rd of January 1693." One could hardly make out the next ones, for the light of the lamps lowered over the green cloth threw a dim shadow round the room. Burnishing the horizontal pictures, it broke up in delicate lines among the cracks in the varnish, and from all these great black squares framed in gold stood out here and there some lighter portion of the painting—a pale brow, two eyes that looked at you, wigs resting on the powdered shoulder of red coats, or the buckle of a garter above a well-rounded calf.

The Marquis opened the drawing-room door; one of the ladies (the Marquise herself) came to meet Emma. She made her sit down by her on an ottoman, and began talking to her as amicably as if she had known her a long time. She was a woman of about forty, with fine shoulders, a hook nose, a drawling voice, and on this evening she wore over her brown hair a simple scarf of netted lace that fell in a point at the back. A blond young woman sat by her side in a high-backed chair, and gentlemen with flowers in their button-holes were talking to ladies round the fire.

At seven dinner was served. The men, who were in the majority, sat down at the first table in the vestibule; the ladies at the second in the dining-room with the Marquis and Marquise.

Emma, on entering, felt herself wrapped round as by a warm breeze, a blending of the perfume of flowers and of the fine linen, of the fumes of the roasts and the odor of the truffles. The candles

in the candelabra threw their lights on the silver dish covers; the cut crystal, covered with a fine mist of steam, reflected pale rays of light; bouquets were placed in a row the whole length of the table; and in the large-bordered plates each napkin, arranged after the fashion of a bishop's mitre, held between its two gaping folds a small oval-shaped roll. The red claws of lobsters hung over the dishes; rich fruit in woven baskets was piled up on moss; the quails were dressed in their own plumage, smoke was rising; and in silk stockings, knee-breeches, white cravat, and frilled shirt, the steward, grave as a judge, passed between the shoulders of the guests, offering ready-carved dishes and, with a flick of the spoon, landed on one's plate the piece one had chosen. On the large porcelain stove inlaid with copper baguettes the statue of a woman, draped to the chin, gazed motionless on the crowded room.

Madame Bovary noticed that many ladies had not put their gloves in their glasses.⁴

At the upper end of the table, alone amongst all these women, bent over his full plate, and his napkin tied round his neck like a child, an old man sat eating, letting drops of gravy drip from his mouth. His eyes were bloodshot, and he wore his hair in a little queue tied with a black ribbon. He was the Marquis's father-in-law, the old Duke de Laverdière, once on a time favourite of the Count d'Artois, in the days of the Marquis de Conflans' hunting-parties at le Vaudreuil, and had been, it was said, the lover of Queen Marie Antoinette, between Monsieur de Coigny and Monsieur de Lauzun. He had lived a life of loud dissipation, full of duels, bets, elopements; he had squandered his fortune and frightened all his family. A servant behind his chair shouted in his ear, in reply to his mutterings, the names of the dishes that he pointed to, and constantly Emma's eyes turned involuntarily to this old man with hanging lips, as to something extraordinary. He had lived at court and slept in the bed of queens!

Iced champagne was poured out. Emma shivered all over as she felt its cold in her mouth. She had never seen pomegranates nor tasted pineapples. Even the powdered sugar seemed to her whiter and finer than elsewhere.

The ladies afterwards retired to their rooms to prepare for the ball.

Emma made her toilette with the fastidious care of an actress on her début. She did her hair according to the directions of the hair-

4. Frances Steegmuller explains this sentence in his introduction to his translation of *Madame Bovary*. The ladies in the provinces, unlike their Paris counterparts, did not drink wine at public dinner parties, and signified their intention by putting their gloves in their wine-glasses. The fact that they fail to do so suggests to Emma the high degree of sophistication of the company.



Fashion plate of women in ballgowns, from a German edition of *La Mode* (1846). Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Note the resemblance to Emma's toilette described on pages 42–44.

dresser, and put on the barege dress spread out upon the bed. Charles's trousers were tight across the belly.

"My trouser-straps will be rather awkward for dancing," he said.

"Dancing?" repeated Emma.

"Yes!"

"Why, you must be mad! They would make fun of you; stay in your place, as it becomes a doctor."

Charles was silent. He walked up and down waiting for Emma to finish dressing.

He saw her from behind in the mirror between two lights. Her black eyes seemed blacker than ever. Her hair, gently undulating towards the ears, shone with a blue lustre; a rose in her chignon trembled on its mobile stalk, with artificial dewdrops on the tip of the leaves. She wore a gown of pale saffron trimmed with three bouquets of pompon roses mixed with green.

Charles came and kissed her on her shoulder.

"Don't touch me!" she cried; "I'll be all ruffled."

One could hear the flourish of the violin and the notes of a horn. She went downstairs restraining herself from running.

Dancing had begun. Guests were arriving and crowding the room. She sat down on a bench near the door.

The quadrille over, the floor was occupied by groups of talking men and by servants in livery bearing large trays. Along the line of seated women painted fans were fluttering, bouquets half-hid smiling faces, and gold-stoppered scent-bottles were turned in half-clenched hands, with white gloves outlining the nail and tightening on the flesh at the wrists. Lace trimmings, diamond brooches, medallion bracelets trembled on blouses, gleamed on breasts, clinked on bare arms. The hair, well smoothed over the temples and knotted at the nape, bore crowns, or bunches, or sprays of myosotis, jasmine, pomegranate blossoms, wheat-sprays and corn-flowers. Calmly seated in their places, mothers with forbidding countenances were wearing red turbans.

Emma's heart beat rather faster when, her partner holding her by the tips of the fingers, she took her place in a line with the dancers, and waited for the first note to start. But her emotion soon vanished, and, swaying to the rhythm of the orchestra, she glided forward with slight movements of the neck. A smile rose to her lips at certain delicate phrases of the violin, that sometimes played alone while the other instruments were silent; one could hear the clear clink of the louis d'or that were being thrown down upon the card-tables in the next room; then all struck in again, the trumpet uttered its sonorous note, feet marked time, skirts swelled and rustled, hands touched and parted; the same eyes that had been lowered returned to gaze at you again.

A few men (some fifteen or so), of twenty-five to forty, scattered here and there among the dancers or talking at the doorways, distinguished themselves from the crowd by a certain family-air, whatever their differences in age, dress, or countenance.

Their clothes, better made, seemed of finer cloth, and their hair, brought forward in curls towards the temples, glossy with more delicate pomades. They had the complexion of wealth,—that clear complexion that is heightened by the pallor of porcelain, the shimmer of satin, the veneer of old furniture, and that a well-ordered diet of exquisite food maintains at its best. Their necks moved easily in their low cravats, their long whiskers fell over their turned-down collars, they wiped their lips upon handkerchiefs with embroidered initials that gave forth a subtle perfume. Those who were beginning to grow old had an air of youth, while there was something mature in the faces of the young. Their indifferent eyes had the appeased expression of daily-satiated passions, and through all their gentleness of manner pierced that peculiar brutality that stems from a steady command over half-tame things, for the exercise of one's strength and the amusement of one's vanity—the handling of thoroughbred horses and the society of loose women.

A few steps from Emma a gentleman in a blue coat was talking of Italy with a pale young woman wearing a parure of pearls. They were praising the width of the columns of St. Peter's, Tivoli, Vesuvius, Castellamare, and the Cascines, the roses of Genoa, the Coliseum by moonlight. With her other ear Emma was listening to a conversation full of words she did not understand. A circle gathered round a very young man who the week before had beaten "Miss Arabella" and "Romulus," and won two thousand louis jumping a ditch in England. One complained that his racehorses were growing fat; another of the printers' errors that had disfigured the name of his horse.

The atmosphere of the ball was heavy; the lamps were growing dim. Guests were flocking to the billiard-room. A servant got upon a chair and broke the window-panes. At the crash of the glass Madame Bovary turned her head and saw in the garden the faces of peasants pressed against the window looking in at them. Then the memory of the Bertaux came back to her. She saw the farm again, the muddy pond, her father in his apron under the apple-trees, and she saw herself again as formerly, skimming with her finger the cream off the milk-pans in the dairy. But in the splendor of the present hour her past life, so distinct until then, faded away completely, and she almost doubted having lived it. She was there; beyond the ball was only shadow overspreading all the rest. She was eating a maraschino ice that she held with her left hand in a

silver-gilt cup, her eyes half-closed, and the spoon between her teeth.

A lady near her dropped her fan. A gentleman was passing.

"Would you be good enough," said the lady, "to pick up my fan that has fallen behind the sofa?"

The gentleman bowed, and as he moved to stretch out his arm, Emma saw the hand of the young woman throw something white, folded in a triangle, into his hat. The gentleman picking up the fan, respectfully offered it to the lady; she thanked him with a nod and breathed in the smell of her bouquet.

After supper, consisting of plenty of Spanish and Rhine wines, bisque and almond-cream soups, Trafalgar puddings and all sorts of cold meats with jellies that trembled in the dishes, the carriages began to leave one after the other. Raising the corners of the muslin curtain, one could see the light of their lanterns glimmering through the darkness. The seats began to empty, some card-players were still left; the musicians were cooling the tips of their fingers on their tongues. Charles was half asleep, his back propped against a door.

At three o'clock the cotillion began. Emma did not know how to waltz. Every one was waltzing.⁵ Mademoiselle d'Andervilliers herself and the Marquis; only the guests staying at the castle were still there, about a dozen persons.

One of the waltzers, however, who was addressed as Viscount, and whose low cut waistcoat seemed moulded to his chest, came a second time to ask Madame Bovary to dance, assuring her that he would guide her, and that she would get through it very well.

They began slowly, then increased in speed. They turned; all around them was turning, the lamps, the furniture, the wainscoting, the floor, like a disc on a pivot. On passing near the doors the train of Emma's dress caught against his trousers. Their legs intertwined; he looked down at her; she raised her eyes to his. A torpor seized her and she stopped. They started again, at an even faster pace; the Viscount, sweeping her along, disappeared with her to the end of the gallery, where, panting, she almost fell, and for a moment rested her head upon his breast. And then, still turning, but more slowly, he guided her back to her seat. She leaned back against the wall and covered her eyes with her hands.

When she opened them again, in the middle of the drawing-room three waltzers were kneeling before a lady sitting on a stool. She chose the Viscount, and the violin struck up once more.

Every one looked at them. They kept passing by, she with rigid

5. Already popular and frequently performed among the cosmopolitan elite of Europe by the 1790s, the waltz was subject to moral censure well into the nineteenth century because of the unprecedented close embrace in which the couple dances.

body, her chin bent down, and he always in the same pose, his figure curved, his elbow rounded, his chin thrown forward. That woman knew how to waltz! They kept it up a long time, and tired out all the others.

Then they talked a few moments longer, and after the good-nights, or rather good-mornings, the guests of the château retired to bed.

Charles dragged himself up by the banister. His knees were giving way under him. For five consecutive hours, he had stood bolt upright at the card-tables, watching them play whist, without understanding anything about it, and it was with a deep sigh of relief that he pulled off his boots.

Emma threw a shawl over her shoulders, opened the window, and leant out.

The night was dark; some drops of rain were falling. She breathed in the damp wind that refreshed her eyelids. The music of the ball was still echoing in her ears, and she tried to keep herself awake in order to prolong the illusion of this luxurious life that she would soon have to give up.

Day began to break. She looked long at the windows of the château, trying to guess which were the rooms of all those she had noticed the evening before. She would have wanted to know their lives, to penetrate into them, to blend with them.

But she was shivering with cold. She undressed, and covered down between the sheets against Charles, who was asleep.

There were a great many people to luncheon. The meal lasted ten minutes; to the doctor's astonishment, no liqueurs were served. Next, Mademoiselle d'Andervilliers collected some rolls in a small basket to take them to the swans on the ornamental waters, and they went for a walk in the hothouses, where strange plants, bristling with hairs, rose in pyramids under hanging vases from where fell, as from overfilled nests of serpents, long green cords interlacing. The orangery, at the other end, led by a covered way to the tenant houses of the château. The Marquis, to amuse the young woman, took her to see the stables. Above the basket-shaped racks porcelain slabs bore the names of the horses in black letters. Each animal in its stall whisked its tail when any one came near and clicked his tongue. The boards of the harness-room shone like the flooring of a drawing-room. The carriage harness was piled up in the middle against two twisted columns, and the bits, the whips, the spurs, the curbs, were lined up in a line all along the wall.

Charles, meanwhile, went to ask a groom to harness his horse. The dog-cart was brought to the foot of the steps, and all the parcels being crammed in, the Bovarys paid their respects to the Marquis and the Marquise and set out again for Tostes.

Emma watched the turning wheels in silence. Charles, on the extreme edge of the seat, held the reins with his arms spread far apart, and the little horse ambled along in the shafts that were too big for him. The loose reins hanging over his crupper were wet with foam, and the box fastened behind bumped regularly against the cart.

They were on the heights of Thibourville when suddenly some horsemen with cigars between their lips passed, laughing. Emma thought she recognised the Viscount, turned back, and caught on the horizon only the movement of the heads rising or falling with the unequal cadence of the trot or gallop.

A mile farther on they had to stop to mend with some string the traces that had broken.

But Charles, giving a last look to the harness, saw something on the ground between his horse's legs, and he picked up a cigar-case with a green silk border and a crest in the center like the door of a carriage.

"There are even two cigars in it," said he; "they'll do for this evening after dinner."

"Since when do you smoke?" she asked.

"Sometimes, when I get a chance."

He put his find in his pocket and whipped up the nag.

When they reached home the dinner was not ready. Madame lost her temper. Nastasie answered rudely.

"Leave the room!" said Emma. "You are being insolent. I'll dismiss you."

For dinner there was onion soup and a piece of veal with sorrel. Charles, seated opposite Emma, rubbed his hands gleefully.

"How good it is to be at home again!"

Nastasie could be heard crying. He was rather fond of the poor girl. She had formerly, during the wearisome time of his widowhood, kept him company many an evening. She had been his first patient, his oldest acquaintance in the place.

"Have you dismissed her for good?" he asked at last.

"Yes. Who is to prevent me?" she replied.

Then they warmed themselves in the kitchen while their room was being made ready. Charles began to smoke. He smoked with lips protruded, spitting every moment, drawing back at every puff.

"You'll make yourself ill," she said scornfully.

He put down his cigar and ran to swallow a glass of cold water at the pump. Seizing the cigar case, Emma threw it quickly to the back of the cupboard.

The next day was a long one. She walked about her little garden, up and down the same walks, stopping before the beds, before the fruit tree, before the plaster priest, looking with amazement at all

these things of the past that she knew so well. How far off the ball seemed already! What was it that thus set so far asunder the morning of the day before yesterday and the evening of to-day? Her journey to Vaubyessard had made a gap in her life, like the huge crevasses that a thunderstorm will sometimes carve in the mountains, in the course of a single night. Still she was resigned. She devoutly put away in her drawers her beautiful dress, down to the satin shoes whose soles were yellowed with the slippery wax of the dancing floor. Her heart resembled them: in its contact with wealth, something had rubbed off on it that could not be removed.

The memory of this ball, then, became an occupation for Emma. Whenever Wednesday came round she said to herself as she awoke, "Ah! I was there a week—a fortnight—three weeks ago." And little by little the faces grew confused in her remembrance. She forgot the tune of the quadrilles; she no longer saw the liveries and the guest-houses so distinctly; some of the details faded but the wistful feeling remained with her.

IX

Often when Charles was out she took from the cupboard, between the folds of the linen where she had left it, the green silk cigar-case.

She looked at it, opened it, and even smelt the odour of the lining, a mixture of verbena and tobacco. Whose was it? . . . The Viscount's? Perhaps it was a present from his mistress. It had been embroidered on some rosewood frame, a pretty piece of furniture, hidden from all eyes, that had occupied many hours, and over which had fallen the soft curls of the pensive worker. A breath of love had passed over the stitches on the canvas; each prick of the needle had fixed there a hope or a memory, and all those interwoven threads of silk were but the continued extension of the same silent passion. And then one morning the Viscount had taken it away with him. Of what had they spoken when it lay upon the wide-mantelled chimneys between flower-vases and Pompadour clocks? She was at Tostes; he was at Paris now, far away! What was this Paris like? What a boundless name! She repeated it in a low voice, for the mere pleasure of it; it rang in her ears like a great cathedral bell; it shone before her eyes, even on the labels of her jars of pomade.

At night, when the carts passed under her windows, carrying fish to Paris to the tune of "la Marjolaine," she awoke, and listened to the noise of the iron-bound wheels, which, as they gained the country road, was soon deadened by the earth. "They will be there tomorrow!" she said to herself.

And she followed them in thought up and down the hills, crossing villages, gliding along the highroads by the light of the stars. At the end of some indefinite distance there was always a confused spot, into which her dream died.

She bought a plan of Paris, and with the tip of her finger on the map she walked about the capital. She went up the boulevards, stopping at every turn, between the lines of the streets, in front of the white squares that represented the houses. At last she would close the lids of her weary eyes, and see in the darkness the gas jets flaring in the wind and the steps of carriages lowered noisily in front of the theatre-entrances.

She subscribed to *La Corbeille*, a ladies' magazine, and the *Sylphe des Salons*.⁶ She devoured, without skipping a word, all the accounts of first nights, races, and soirées, took an interest in the début of a singer, in the opening of a new shop. She knew the latest fashions, the addresses of the best tailors, the days of the Bois and the Opera. In Eugène Sue she studied descriptions of furniture; she read Balzac and George Sand, seeking in them imaginary satisfaction for her own desires. She even brought her book to the table, and turned over the pages while Charles ate and talked to her. The memory of the Viscount always cropped up in everything she read. She made comparisons between him and the fictional characters in her books. But the circle of which he was the center gradually widened round him, and the aureole that he bore, fading from his form and extending beyond his image, lit up her other dreams.

Paris, more vague than the ocean, glimmered before Emma's eyes with a silvery glow. The many lives that stirred amid this tumult were, however, divided into parts, classed as distinct pictures. Emma perceived only two or three that hid from her all the rest, and in themselves represented all humanity. The world of ambassadors moved over polished floors in drawing-rooms lined with mirrors, round oval tables covered with velvet and gold-fringed cloths. There were dresses with trains, deep mysteries, anguish hidden beneath smiles. Then came the society of the duchesses; all were pale; all got up at four o'clock; the women, poor angels, wore English point on their petticoats; and the men, their talents hidden under a frivolous appearance, rode horses to death at pleasure par-

6. Emma's readings in this paragraph evoke newspapers and novelists concerned with fashion and current events, above all in Paris, that were popular during the July Monarchy, the constitutional monarchy that followed the Restoration, lasting from the Revolution of 1830 to the Revolution of 1848. During this time, the perfection of technical means for cheap publication, including the mass reproduction of images, led to the inception of the mass press, which can be dated to the newspaper *La Presse*, founded by Emile de Girardin in 1836. Balzac, Sand, and Sue were among the most prominent novelists of the July Monarchy depicting contemporary society who remained highly respected at the time Flaubert was writing *Madame Bovary*.



Illustration from Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*, of Virginie bidding farewell to Paul on the eve of her journey to France to receive a lady's education, from a nineteenth-century illustrated edition of the novel. Orrin Smith, after T. Johannot, from *Paul et Virginie* by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (Paris [1838]). Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

a corded girdle with great tassels, and her small wine-red slippers had a large knot of ribbon that fell over her instep. She had bought herself a blotter, writing-case, pen-holder, and envelopes although she had no one to write to; she dusted her shelf, looked at herself in the mirror, picked up a book, and then, dreaming between the lines, let it drop on her knees. She longed to travel or to go back to her convent. She wanted to die, but she also wanted to live in Paris.

Charles trotted over the country-roads in snow and rain. He ate omelettes on farmhouse tables, poked his arm into damp beds, received the tepid spurt of blood-letting in his face, listened to death-rattles, examined basins, turned over a good deal of dirty linen; but every evening he found a blazing fire, his dinner ready, easy-chairs, and a well-dressed woman, charming and so freshly scented that it was impossible to say where the perfume came from; it might have been her skin that communicated its fragrance to her blouse.

She delighted him by numerous attentions; now it was some new way of arranging paper sconces for the candles, a flounce that she altered on her gown, or an extraordinary name for some very simple dish that the servant had spoilt, but that Charles swallowed with pleasure to the last mouthful. At Rouen she saw some ladies who wore a bundle of charms hanging from their watch-chains; she bought some. She wanted for her mantelpiece two large blue glass vases, and some time after an ivory nécessaire with a silver-gilt thimble. The less Charles understood these refinements the more they seduced him. They added something to the pleasure of the senses and to the comfort of his fireside. It was like a golden dust sanding all along the narrow path of his life.

He was well, looked well; his reputation was firmly established. The country-folk loved him because he was not proud. He petted the children, never went to the public-house, and, moreover, his good behavior inspired confidence. He was specially successful with heavy colds and chest ailments. Being much afraid of killing his patients, Charles, in fact, only prescribed sedatives, from time to time an emetic, a footbath, or leeches. It was not that he was afraid of surgery; he bled people copiously like horses, and for the pulling of teeth the strength of his grasp was second to no one.

Finally, to keep up with the times, he subscribed to *La Ruche Médicale*, a new journal whose prospectus had been sent him. He read it a little after dinner, but in about five minutes, the warmth of the room added to the effect of his dinner sent him to sleep; and he sat there, his chin on his two hands and his hair spreading like a mane to the foot of the lamp. Emma looked at him and shrugged her shoulders. Why at least, was not her husband one of those silently determined men who work at their books all night, and at

last, when at sixty the age of rheumatism was upon them, wear a string of medals on their ill-fitting black coat? She would have wished this name of Bovary, which was hers, to be illustrious, to see it displayed at the booksellers', repeated in the newspapers, known to all France. But Charles had no ambition. An Yvetot doctor whom he had lately met in consultation had somewhat humiliated him at the very bedside of the patient, before the assembled relatives. When, in the evening, Charles told this incident Emma inveighed loudly against his colleague. Charles was much touched. He kissed her forehead with a tear in his eyes. But she was angered with shame; she felt a wild desire to strike him; she went to open the window in the passage and breathed in the fresh air to calm herself.

"What a man! what a man!" she said in a low voice, biting her lips.

She was becoming more irritated with him. As he grew older his manner grew coarser; at dessert he cut the corks of the empty bottles; after eating he cleaned his teeth with his tongue; in eating his soup he made a gurgling noise with every spoonful; and, as he was getting fatter, the puffed-out cheeks seemed to push the eyes, always small, up to the temples.

Sometimes Emma tucked the red borders of his undervest into his waistcoat, rearranged his cravat, and threw away the faded gloves he was going to put on; and this was not, as he fancied, for his sake; it was for herself, by an expansion of selfishness, of nervous irritation. At other times, she told him what she had been reading, some passage in a novel, a new play, or an anecdote from high society found in a newspaper story; for, after all, Charles was someone to talk to, an ever-open ear, an ever-ready approbation. She even confided many a thing to her greyhound! She would have done so to the logs in the fireplace or to the pendulum of the clock.

All the while, however, she was waiting in her heart for something to happen. Like shipwrecked sailors, she turned despairing eyes upon the solitude of her life, seeking afar some white sail in the mists of the horizon. She did not know what this act of fortune would be, what wind would bring it, towards what shore it would drive her, if it would be a rowboat or an ocean liner with three decks, carrying anguish or laden to the gunwales with bliss. But each morning, as she awoke, she hoped it would come that day; she listened to every sound, sprang up with a start, wondered that it did not come; then at sunset, always more saddened, she longed for the next day.

Spring came round. With the first warm weather, when the pear-trees began to blossom, she had fainting-spells.

From the beginning of July she counted off on her fingers how many weeks there were to October, thinking that perhaps the Mar-

quis d'Andervilliers would give another ball at Vaubyessard. But all September passed without letters or visits.

After the shock of this disappointment her heart once more remained empty, and then the same series of identical days recommenced.

So now they would keep following one another, always the same, immovable, and bringing nothing new. Other lives, however flat, had at least the chance of some event. One adventure sometimes brought with it infinite consequences and the scene changed. But nothing happened to her; God had willed it so! The future was a dark corridor, with its door at the end shut tight.

She gave up music. What was the good of playing? Who would hear her? Since she could never, in a velvet gown with short sleeves, striking with her light fingers the ivory keys of an Erard concert piano, feel the murmur of ecstasy envelop her like a breeze, it was not worthwhile boring herself with practicing. Her drawing cardboard and her embroidery she left in the cupboard. What was the use? What was the use? Sewing irritated her.

"I have read everything," she said to herself.

And she sat there, letting the tongs grow red-hot or looking at the rain falling.

How sad she was on Sundays when vespers sounded! She listened with dull attention to each stroke of the cracked bell. A cat slowly walking over some roof put up his back in the pale rays of the sun. The wind on the highroad blew up clouds of dust. A dog sometimes howled in the distance; and the bell, keeping time, continued at regular intervals its monotonous ringing that died away over the fields.

Then the people came out from church. The women had waxed their wooden shoes, the farmers wore new smocks, and with the little bareheaded children skipping along in front of them, all were going home. And till nightfall, five or six men, always the same, stayed playing at corks in front of the large door of the inn.

The winter was severe. Every morning, the windows were covered with rime, and the light that shone through them, dim as through ground-glass, sometimes did not change the whole day long. At four o'clock the lamp had to be lighted.

On fine days she went down into the garden. The dew had left a silver lace on the cabbages with long transparent threads spreading from one to the other. No birds were to be heard; everything seemed asleep, the fruit tree covered with straw, and the vine, like a great sick serpent under the coping of the wall, along which, on drawing near, one saw the many-footed woodlice crawling. Under the spruce by the hedgerow, the curé in the three-cornered hat

reading his breviary had lost his right foot, and the very plaster, scaling off with the frost, had left white scabs on his face.

Then she went up again, shut her door, put on coals, and fainting with the heat of the hearth, felt her boredom weigh more heavily than ever. She would have liked to go down and talk to the maid, but a sense of shame restrained her.

Every day at the same time the schoolmaster in a black skull-cap opened the shutters of his house, and the village policeman, wearing his sword over his blouse, passed by. Night and morning the post-horses, three by three, crossed the street to water at the pond. From time to time the bell of a café would tinkle, and when it was windy one could hear the little brass basins that served as signs for the hairdresser's shop creaking on their two rods. The shop was decorated with an old engraving of a fashion-plate stuck against a window-pane and with the wax bust of a woman with yellow hair. He, too, the hairdresser, lamented his wasted calling, his hopeless future, and dreaming of some shop in a big town—at Rouen, for example, overlooking the harbor, near the theatre—he walked up and down all day from the mairie to the church, sombre and waiting for customers. When Madame Bovary looked up, she always saw him there, like a sentinel on duty, with his skull-cap over his ears and his woolen jacket.

Sometimes in the afternoon outside the window of her room, the head of a man appeared, a swarthy head with black whiskers, smiling slowly, with a broad, gentle smile that showed his white teeth. A waltz began, and on the barrel-organ, in a little drawing-room, dancers the size of a finger, women in pink turbans, Tyrolians in jackets, monkeys in frock-coats, gentlemen in knee breeches, turned and turned between the armchairs, the sofas and the tables, reflected in small pieces of mirror that strips of paper held together at the corners. The man turned the handle, looking to the right, to the left and up at the windows. Now and again, while he shot out a long squirt of brown saliva against the milestone, he lifted his instrument with his knee, to relieve his shoulder from the pressure of the hard straps; and now, doleful and drawling, or merry and hurried, the music issued forth from the box, droning through a curtain of pink taffeta underneath an ornate brass grill. They were airs played in other places at the theatres, sung in drawing-rooms, danced to at night under lighted lustres, echoes of the world that reached even to Emma. Endless sarabands ran through her head, and, like an Oriental dancing-girl on the flowers of a carpet, her thoughts leapt with the notes, swung from dream to dream, from sadness to sadness. When the man had caught some pennies in his cap he drew down an old cover of blue cloth, hitched his organ on

to his back, and went off with a heavy tread. She watched him going.

But it was above all the meal-times that were unbearable to her, in this small room on the ground-floor, with its smoking stove, its creaking door, the walls that sweated, the damp pavement; all the bitterness of life seemed served up on her plate, and with the smoke of the boiled beef there rose from her secret soul waves of nauseous disgust. Charles was a slow eater; she played with a few nuts, or, leaning on her elbow, amused herself drawing lines along the oil-cloth table-cover with the point of her knife.

She now let everybody in her household go its own way, and the elder Madame Bovary, when she came to spend part of Lent at Tostes, was much surprised at the change. She who was formerly so careful, so dainty, now spent whole days without dressing, wore grey cotton stockings, and used tallow candles to light the house. She kept saying they must be economical since they were not rich, adding that she was very contented, very happy, that Tostes pleased her very much, and other such statements that left her mother-in-law speechless. Besides, Emma no longer seemed inclined to follow her advice; on one occasion, when Madame Bovary had thought fit to maintain that masters ought to keep an eye on the religion of their servants, she had answered with a look so angry and a smile so cold that the old lady preferred to let the matter drop.

Emma was growing difficult, capricious. She ordered dishes for herself, then she did not touch them; one day drank only pure milk, and the next cups of tea by the dozen. Often she persisted in not going out, then, stifling, threw open the windows and put on light dresses. After she had well scolded her maid she gave her presents or sent her out to see neighbors. She sometimes threw beggars all the silver in her purse, although she was by no means tender-hearted or easily accessible to the feelings of others; like most country-bred people, she always retained in her soul something of the horny hardness of the paternal hands.

Towards the end of February old Rouault, in memory of his cure, personally brought a superb turkey to his son-in-law, and stayed three days at Tostes. Charles being with his patients, Emma kept him company. He smoked in the room, spat on the andirons, talked farming, calves, cows, poultry, and municipal council, so that when he left she closed the door on him with a feeling of satisfaction that surprised even herself. Moreover she no longer concealed her contempt for anything or anybody, and at times expressed singular opinions, finding fault with whatever others approved, and approving things perverse and immoral, all of which left her husband wide-eyed.

Would this misery last for ever? Would she never escape from it?

Yet she was the equal of all the women who were living happily. She had seen duchesses at Vaubyessard with clumsier waists and commoner ways, and she hated the divine injustice of God. She leant her head against the walls to weep; she longed for lives of adventure, for masked balls, for shameless pleasures that were bound, she thought, to initiate her to ecstasies she had not yet experienced.

She grew pale and suffered from palpitations of the heart. Charles prescribed valerian drops and camphor baths. Everything that was tried only seemed to irritate her the more.

On certain days she chattered with feverish profusion, and this overexcitement was suddenly followed by a state of torpor, in which she remained without speaking, without moving. What then revived her was to pour a bottle of eau-de-cologne over her arms.

As she was constantly complaining about Tostes, Charles fancied that her illness was no doubt due to some local cause, and, struck by this idea, he began to think seriously of setting up practice elsewhere.

From that moment she drank vinegar to lose weight, contracted a sharp little cough, and lost all appetite.

It cost Charles much to give up Tostes after living there four years, just when he was beginning to get somewhere. Yet if it must be! He took her to Rouen to see his old master. It was a nervous condition; she needed a change of air.

After some looking around, Charles discovered that the doctor of a considerable market-town in the arrondissement of Neufchâtel, a former Polish refugee, had vanished a week earlier. Then he wrote to the local pharmacist to ask the size of the population, the distance from the nearest doctor, how much his predecessor had earned in a year, and so forth; and the answer being satisfactory, he made up his mind to move towards the spring, if Emma's health did not improve.

One day when, in view of her departure, she was tidying a drawer, something pricked her finger. It was a wire of her wedding-bouquet. The orange blossoms were yellow with dust and the silver-bordered satin ribbons frayed at the edges. She threw it into the fire. It flared up more quickly than dry straw. Then it was like a red bush in the cinders, slowly shrinking away. She watched it burn. The little pasteboard berries burst, the wire twisted, the gold lace melted; and the shrivelled paper petals, fluttering like black butterflies at the back of the stove, at last flew up the chimney.

When they left Tostes in the month of March, Madame Bovary was pregnant.

Part Two

I

Yonville-l'Abbaye (named after an old Capuchin abbey of which not even the ruins remain) is a market-town some twenty miles from Rouen, between the Abbeville and Beauvais roads. It lies at the foot of a valley watered by the Rieule, a little river that runs into the Andelle after turning three water-mills near its mouth; it contains a few trout and, on Sundays, the village boys entertain themselves by fishing.

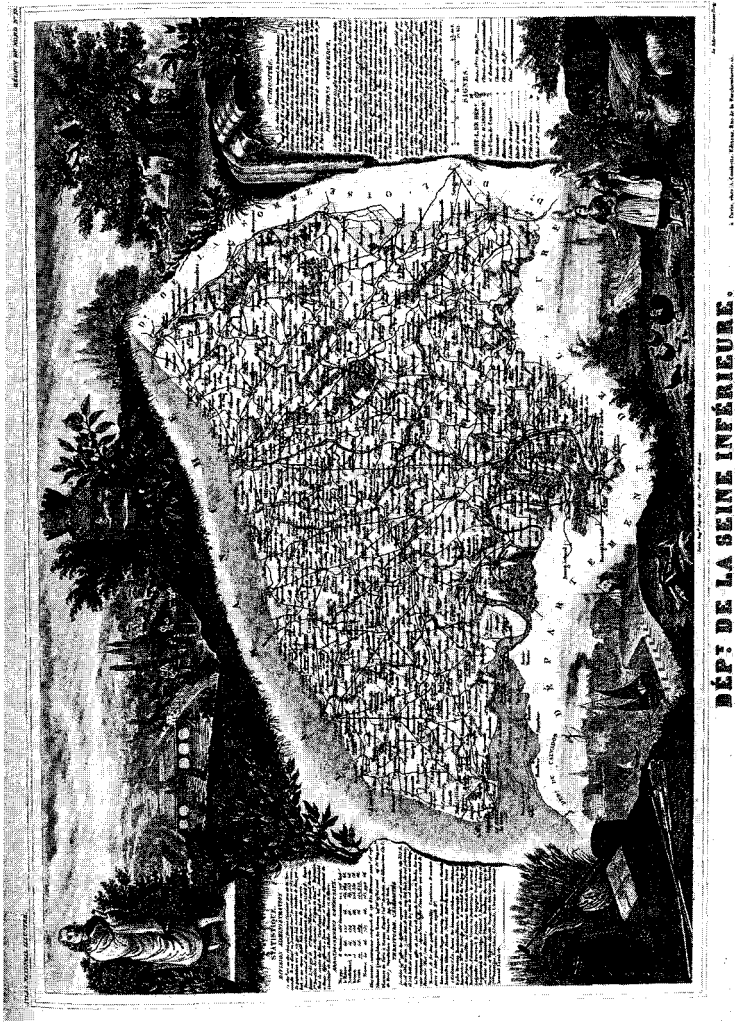
Leaving the main road at la Boissière, one reaches the height of les Leux from where the valley comes into view. The river that runs through it has divided the area into two very distinct regions: on the left are pastures, while the right consists of tilled land. The meadow stretches under a bulge of low hills to join at the back with the pasture land of the Bray country, while on the eastern side, the plain, gently rising, broadens out, showing as far as the eye can reach its blond wheatfields. The water, flowing through the grass, divides with a white line the color of the meadows from that of the ploughed fields, and the country is like a great unfolded mantle with a green velvet cape bordered with a fringe of silver.

On the horizon rise the oaks of the forest of Argueil, with the steepes of the Saint-Jean hills scarred from top to bottom with red irregular lines; they are rain-tracks, and these brick-tones standing out in narrow streaks against the grey color of the mountain are due to the high iron content of the springs that flow beyond in the neighboring country.

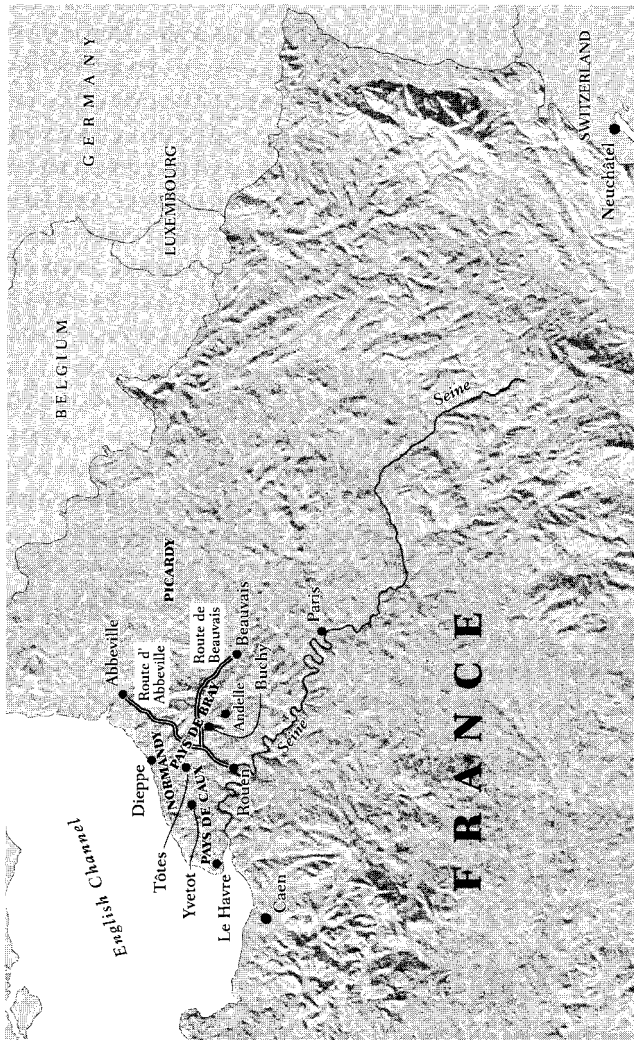
These are the confines of Normandy, Picardy, and the Ile-de-France, a mongrel land whose language, like its landscape, is without accent or character. The worst Neufchâtel cheeses in the arrondissement are made here; and, on the other hand, farming is costly because so much manure is needed to enrich this brittle soil, full of sand and stones.

Up to 1835 no practicable road for getting to Yonville existed, but about this time a cross-road was cut, joining the Abbeville to the Amiens highway; it is occasionally used by the Rouen teamsters on their way to Flanders. Yonville-l'Abbaye has remained stationary in spite of its "new outlet." Instead of improving the soil they persist in keeping up the pasture lands, however depreciated they may be in value, and the lazy village, growing away from the plain, has naturally spread riverwards. It is seen from afar sprawling along the banks like a cowherd taking a nap by the side of the river.

At the foot of the hill beyond the bridge begins a roadway, planted with young aspens that leads in a straight line to the first



Seine Inférieure in Victor Lavasseur, *Atlas National* (1856). The images surrounding the map evoke the shipping and farming for which this department in the province of Normandy was famous and which figure in the novel, as in the scene at the agricultural fair, or the evocation of boats and the harbor of Rouen. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.



Map of the region where Flaubert sets the novel. Note the actual geographical reference points that permit the reader to pinpoint the imaginary town of Yonville, like Rouen at the bottom, Yvetot, and the Abbeville and Beauvais roads.

houses in the place. These, fenced in by hedges, are in the middle of courtyards full of straggling buildings, wine-presses, cart-sheds, and distilleries scattered under thick trees, with ladders, poles, or scythes hooked over the branches. The thatched roofs, like fur caps drawn over eyes, reach down over about a third of the low windows, whose coarse convex glasses have bull's eyes in the middle, like the bottom of a bottle. A meager pear-tree may be found leaning against some plaster wall crossed by black beams, and one enters the ground-floors through a door with a small swing-gate that keeps out the chicks when they pilfer, on the threshold, crumbs of bread steeped in cider. Gradually the courtyards grow narrower, the houses closer together, and the fences disappear; a bundle of ferns swings under a window from the end of a broomstick; there is a blacksmith's forge and then a wheelwright's, with two or three new carts outside that partly block the way. Then across an open space appears a white house at the end of a round lawn ornamented by a Cupid, his finger on his lips. Two cast-iron jars flank the high porch, copper signs gleam on the door. It is the notary's house, the finest in the place.

The church is on the other side of the street, twenty paces farther down, at the entrance of the square. The little graveyard that surrounds it, closed in by a breast-high wall, is so full of graves that the old stones, level with the ground, form a continuous pavement, on which the grass has, by itself, marked out regular green squares. The church was rebuilt during the last years of the reign of Charles X.¹ The wooden roof is beginning to rot from the top, and here and there black hollows appear in the blue paint. Over the door, where the organ should be, is a gallery for the men, with a spiral staircase that reverberates under the weight of their wooden shoes.

The daylight coming through the plain glass windows falls obliquely upon the pews perpendicular to the walls, here and there adorned with a straw mat inscribed, in large letters, with the name of some parishioner. Further on, where the nave grows narrow, the confessional faces a small Madonna, clothed in satin, wearing a tulle veil sprinkled with silver stars and with cheeks stained red like an idol of the Sandwich Islands; finally, a painted copy entitled "The Holy Family, a gift from the Minister of the Interior," flanked by four candlesticks, crowns the main altar and rounds off the view. The choir stalls, of pine wood, have been left unpainted.

The market, that is to say, a tiled roof supported by some twenty posts, occupies by itself about half the public square of Yonville. The town hall, constructed "after the designs of a Paris architect," is a sort of Greek temple that forms the corner next to the phar-

1. Charles X was king of France from 1824 to 1830.

macy. On the ground-floor are three Ionic columns and on the first floor a gallery with arched windows, while the crowning frieze is occupied by a Gallic cock, resting one foot upon the Charter² and holding in the other the scales of Justice.

But what catches the eye most of all is Mr. Homais' pharmacy, right across from the Lion d'Or. In the evening especially its lamp is lit up and the red and green jars that embellish his shop-front cast their colored reflection far across the street; beyond them, as in a Bengal light, the silhouette of the pharmacist can be seen leaning over his desk.³ His house is plastered from top to bottom with inscriptions written in longhand, in round, in lower case: "Vichy, Seltzer and Barrège waters, depurative gum drops, Raspail patent medicine, Arabian racahout, Dareet lozenges, Regnault ointment, trusses, baths, laxative chocolate, etc." And the signboard, which stretches all the breadth of the shop, bears in gold letters "Homais, Pharmacist." Then at the back of the shop, behind the great scales fixed to the counter, the word "Laboratory" appears on a scroll above a glass door on which, about half-way up, the word Homais is once more repeated in gold letters on a black ground.

Beyond this there is nothing to see at Yonville. The street (the only one) a gunshot long and flanked by a few shops on either side stops short at the turn of the high road. Turning right and following the foot of the Saint-Jean hills one soon reaches the graveyard.

At the time of the cholera epidemic, a piece of wall was pulled down and three acres of land purchased in order to make more room, but the new area is almost deserted; the tombs, as heretofore, continue to crowd together towards the gate. The keeper, who is at once gravedigger and church sexton (thus making a double profit out of the parish corpses), has taken advantage of the unused plot of ground to plant potatoes. From year to year, however, his small field grows smaller, and when there is an epidemic, he does

2. *La Charte constitutionnelle de la France*, the basis of the French constitution between 1814 and 1848, was established by Louis XVIII, when the Bourbons returned to power following the exile of Napoleon. The Charter was a hybrid document, restoring France as a monarchy and recognizing Catholicism as the state religion of France, even as it guaranteed basic civil liberties to French citizens and established a constitutional monarchy. When the Charter was revised following the downfall of Charles X in the Revolution of 1830, the new ruler, Louis-Philippe was transformed from "king of France," into "king of the French," expressing the notion that sovereign authority derived from the will of the people first institutionalized in the Revolution of 1789. The tricolor flag mentioned on page 63 is another legacy of the French Revolution that is revived in 1830, replacing the royal white flag of the Restoration. The inclusion of the Charter in an obviously mediocre example of nineteenth-century architecture exemplifies Flaubert's technique of recalling the political struggles of the nineteenth century through their trivialized manifestations amid everyday life.

3. In describing the milieu and interests of Homais, Flaubert uses details from state-of-the-art developments and trends in nineteenth-century politics, science, medicine, and technology that Paul de Man translated with contemporary English terminology, following the Marx Aveling translation, though these details are now obscure. The interested reader can find definitions in a dictionary of the Victorian era.

not know whether to rejoice at the deaths or regret the added graves.

"You feed on the dead, Lestiboudois!" the curé told him one day.

This grim remark made him reflect; it checked him for some time; but to this day he carries on the cultivation of his little tubers, and even maintains stoutly that they grow naturally.

Since the events about to be narrated, nothing in fact has changed at Yonville. The tin tricolor flag still swings at the top of the church-steeple; the two streamers at the novelty store still flutter in the wind; the spongy white lumps, the pharmacist's foetuses, rot more and more in their cloudy alcohol, and above the big door of the inn the old golden lion, faded by rain, still shows passers-by its poodle mane.

On the evening when the Bovarys were to arrive at Yonville, the widow Lefrançois, the landlady of this inn, was so busy that she sweated great drops as she moved her saucepans around. Tomorrow was market-day. The meat had to be cut beforehand, the chickens drawn, the soup and coffee made. Moreover, she had the boarders' meal to see to, and that of the doctor, his wife, and their maid; the billiard-room was echoing with bursts of laughter; three millers in the small parlour were calling for brandy; the wood was blazing, the charcoal crackling, and on the long kitchen-table, amid the quarters of raw mutton, rose piles of plates that rattled with the shaking of the block on which spinach was being chopped. From the poultry-yard was heard the screaming of the chickens whom the servant was chasing in order to wring their necks.

A slightly pockmarked man in green leather slippers, and wearing a velvet cap with a gold tassel, was warning his back at the chimney. His face expressed nothing but self-satisfaction, and he appeared as calmly established in life as the gold-finch suspended over his head in its wicker cage: he was the pharmacist.

"Artémise!" shouted the innkeeper, "chop some wood, fill the water bottles, bring some brandy, hurry up! If only I knew what dessert to offer the guests you are expecting! Good heavens! Those furniture-movers are beginning their racket in the billiard-room again; and their van has been left before the front door! The stagecoach *Hirondelle*⁴ might crash into it when it draws up. Call Polyte and tell him to put it away. . . . Imagine, Monsieur Homais, that since morning they have had about fifteen games, and drunk eight pots of cider! . . . Why they'll tear my billiard-cloth to pieces!" she went on, looking at them from a distance, her strainer in her hand.

4. The French word for swallow (*hirondelle*) was a typical name for stagecoaches and boats at the time, signifying speed.

"That wouldn't be much of a loss," replied Monsieur Homais. "You would buy another."

"Another billiard-table!" exclaimed the widow.

"Since that one is coming to pieces, Madame Lefrançois. I tell you again you are doing yourself harm, much harm! And besides, players now want narrow pockets and heavy cues. They don't play the way they used to, everything is changed! One must keep pace with the times! Just look at Tellier!"

The hostess grew red with anger. The pharmacist added:

"You may say what you like; his table is better than yours; and if one were to think, for example, of getting up a patriotic tournament for Polish independence or for the victims of the Lyon floods . . ."⁵

"It isn't beggars like him that'll frighten us," interrupted the landlady, shrugging her fat shoulders. "Come, come, Monsieur Homais; as long as the 'Lion d'Or' exists people will come to it. We are no fly-by-nights, we have feathered our nest! While one of these days you'll find the 'Café Français' closed with a fine poster on the shutters. Change my billiard-table!" she went on, speaking to herself, "the table that comes in so handy for folding the washing, and on which, in the hunting season, I have slept six visitors! . . . But what can be keeping the slowpoke of a Hivert?"

"Are you waiting for him to serve you gentlemen's dinner?"

"Wait for him! And what about Monsieur Binet? As the clock strikes six you'll see him come in, for he hasn't his equal under the sun for punctuality. He must always have his seat in the small parlour. He'd rather die than eat anywhere else. And he is finicky! and particular about his cider! Not like monsieur Léon; he sometimes comes at seven, or even half-past, and he doesn't so much as look at what he eats. Such a nice young man! Never speaks a cross word!"

"Well, you see, there's a great difference between an educated man and a former army man who is now a tax-collector."

Six o'clock struck. Binet came in.

He was dressed in a blue frock-coat falling in a straight line round his thin body, and his leather cap, with its lappets knotted over the top of his head with string, showed under the turned-up peak a bald forehead, flattened by the constant wearing of a helmet. He wore a black cloth vest, a hair collar, grey trousers, and, all the year round, well-blackened boots, that had two parallel swellings where the big toes protruded. Not a hair stood out from the regular line of fair whiskers, which, encircling his jaws, framed like a garden border his long, wan face, with smallish eyes and a hooked nose. Clever at all games of cards, a good hunter, and writing a fine hand, he had at home a lathe, and amused himself by turning

5. There was a famous Lyon flood of 1832, and mention of Polish independence recalls the Polish Revolution of 1830.

napkin-rings, with which he crammed his house, jealous as an artist and selfish as a bourgeois.

He went to the small parlor, but the three millers had to be got out first, and during the whole time necessary for resetting the table, Binet remained silent in his place near the stove. Then he shut the door and took off his cap as usual.

"Politeness will not wear out his tongue," said the pharmacist, as soon as he was alone with the hostess.

"He never talks more," she replied. "Last week I had two traveling salesmen here selling cloth, really a cheerful pair, who spent the night telling jokes. They made me weep with laughter but he, he stood there mute as a fish, never opened his mouth."

"Yes," said the pharmacist, "no imagination, no wit, nothing that makes a man shine in society."

"Yet they say he is a man of means," objected the landlady.

"Of means?" replied the pharmacist. "He? In his own line, perhaps," he added in a calmer tone. And he went on:

"Now, that a businessman with numerous connections, a lawyer, a doctor, a pharmacist, should be thus absent-minded, that they should become whimsical or even peevish, I can understand; such cases are cited in history. But at least it is because they are thinking of something. How often hasn't it happened to me, for instance, to look on my desk for my pen when I had to write out a label, merely to discover, at last, that I had put it behind my ear?"

Madame Lefrançois just then went to the door to see if the stage-coach *Hirondelle* was not coming. She started. A man dressed in black suddenly came into the kitchen. By the last gleam of the twilight one could see that he was red-faced and powerfully built.

"What can I do for you, Monsieur le curé?" asked the hostess, as she reached down a copper candlestick from the row of candles. "Will you have something to drink? A thimbleful of *Cassis*? A glass of wine?"

The priest declined very politely. He had come for his umbrella, that he had forgotten the other day at the Ernemont convent, and after asking Madame Lefrançois to have it sent to him at the rectory in the evening, he left for the church; the Angelus was ringing.

When the pharmacist no longer heard the noise of his boots along the square, he confessed that he had found the priest's behaviour just now very unbecoming. This refusal to take any refreshment seemed to him the most odious hypocrisy; all priests tumbled on the sly, and were trying to bring back the days of the tithe.

The landlady took up the defense of her curé.

"Besides, he could double up four men like you over his knee. Last year he helped our people to bring in the hay, he carried as many as six bales at once, he is so strong."

“Bravo!” said the pharmacist. “Now just send your daughters to confess to such vigorous fellows! I, if I were the Government, I’d have the priests bled once a month. Yes, Madame Lefrançois, every month—a good phlebotomy, in the interests of the police and morals.”

“Be quiet, Monsieur Homais. You are a godless man! You have no religion.”

The chemist replied:

“I have a religion, my religion, and I even have more than all these others with their mummeries and their juggling. I adore God, on the contrary. I believe in the Supreme Being, in a Creator, whatever he may be. I care little who has placed us here below to fulfill our duties as citizens and parents; but I don’t need to go to church to kiss silver plates, and fatten, out of my pocket, a lot of good-for-nothings who live better than we do. For one can know him as well in a wood, in a field, or even contemplating the ethereal heavens like the ancients. My God is the God of Socrates, of Franklin, of Voltaire, and of Béranger! I support the *Profession de Foi du vicaire savoyard* and the immortal principles of ’89!⁶ And I can’t admit of an old boy of a God who takes walks in his garden with a cane in his hand, who lodges his friends in the belly of whales, dies uttering a cry, and rises again at the end of three days; things absurd in themselves, and completely opposed, moreover, to all physical laws, which proves to us, by the way, that priests have always wallowed in squalid ignorance, and tried to drag whole nations down after them.”

He stopped, looked around as if expecting to find an audience, for in his enthusiasm the pharmacist had for a moment fancied himself in the midst of the town council. But the landlady no longer heard him; she was listening to a distant rolling. One could distinguish the noise of a carriage mingled with the clattering of loose horseshoes that beat against the ground, and at last the *Hirondelle* stopped at the door.

It was a yellow box on two large wheels, that, reaching to the tilt, prevented travellers from seeing the road and dirtied their shoulders. The small panes of narrow windows rattled in their frames when the coach was closed, and retained here and there patches of mud amid the old layers of dust, that not even storms of rain had altogether washed away. It was drawn by three horses, the first a leader, and when it came down-hill its lower side jolted against the ground.

6. Homais here invokes celebrated figures and works in the pantheon of Enlightenment reason. The *Profession de Foi* (1782) is by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The “principles of ’89” refers to the democratic ideals of the French Revolution of 1789, epitomized in *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen*.

Some of the inhabitants of Yonville came out into the square; they all spoke at once, asking for news, for explanations of the delay, for their orders. Hivert did not know whom to answer first. He ran the errands in town for the entire village. He went to the shops and brought back rolls of leather for the shoemaker, old iron for the farrier, a barrel of herrings for his mistress, hats from the hat-shop and wigs from the hairdresser, and all along the road on his return journey he distributed his parcels, throwing them over fences as he stood upright on his seat and shouted at the top of his voice, while his horses went their own way.

An accident had delayed him. Madame Bovary's greyhound had escaped across the field. They had whistled for him a quarter of an hour; Hivert had even gone back a mile and a half expecting every moment to catch sight of her; but they had been forced to resume the journey. Emma had wept, grown angry; she had accused Charles of this misfortune. Monsieur Lheureux, a draper, who happened to be in the coach with her, had tried to console her by a number of examples of lost dogs recognizing their masters at the end of long years. He had been told of one, he said, who had come back to Paris from Constantinople. Another had gone one hundred and fifty miles in a straight line, and swum four rivers; and his own father had owned a poodle, which, after twelve years of absence, had all of a sudden jumped on his back in the street as he was going to dine in town.

II

Emma got out first, then Félicité, Monsieur Lheureux, and a nurse, and they had to wake up Charles in his corner, where he had slept soundly since night set in.

Homais introduced himself; he offered his homages to madame and his respects to monsieur; said he was charmed to have been able to render them some slight service, and added cordially that he had taken the liberty to join them at dinner, his wife being away.

When Madame Bovary entered the kitchen she went up to the fireplace. With two fingertips she caught her dress at the knee, and having thus pulled it up to her ankle, held out her black-booted foot to the fire above the revolving leg of mutton. The flame lit up the whole of her, casting its harsh light over the pattern of her gown, the fine pores of her fair skin, and even her eyelids, when she blinked from time to time. A great red glow passed over her with the wind, blowing through the half-open door.

On the other side of the fireplace, a fair-haired young man watched her in silence.

As he was frequently bored at Yonville, where he was a clerk at

Maître Guillaumin, the notary, Monsieur Léon Dupuis (the second of the *Lion d'Or's* daily customers) often delayed his dinner-hour in the hope that some traveller might come to the inn, with whom he could chat in the evening. On the days when his work was done early, he had, for want of something else to do, to come punctually, and endure from soup to cheese a *tête-à-tête* with Binet. It was therefore with delight that he accepted the hostess's suggestion that he should dine in company with the newcomers, and they passed into the large parlour where Madame Lefrançois, hoping to make an impression, had had the table laid for four.

Homais asked to be allowed to keep on his skull-cap, for fear of catching cold; then, turning to his neighbor:

"Madame is no doubt a little fatigued; one gets so frightfully shaken up in our *Hirondelle*."

"That is true," replied Emma; "but moving about always amuses me. I like a change."

"It is so tedious," sighed the clerk, "to be always riveted to the same places."

"If you were like me," said Charles, "constantly obliged to be in the saddle" . . .

"But," Leon went on, addressing himself to Madame Bovary, "nothing, it seems to me, is more pleasant—when one can," he added.

"Moreover," said the pharmacist, "the practice of medicine is not very hard work in our part of the world, for the state of our roads allows us the use of gigs, and generally, as the farmers are well off, they pay pretty well. We have, medically speaking, besides the ordinary cases of enteritis, bronchitis, bilious affections, &c., now and then a few intermittent fevers at harvest-time; but on the whole, little of a serious nature, nothing special to note, unless it be a great deal of scrofula, due, no doubt, to the deplorable hygienic conditions of our peasant dwellings. Ah! you will find many prejudices to combat, Monsieur Bovary, much obstinacy of routine, with which all the efforts of your science will daily come into collision; for people still have recourse to novenas, to relics, to the priest, rather than come straight to the doctor or the pharmacist. The climate, however, is truly not too bad, and we even have a few nonagenarians in our parish. The thermometer (I have made some observations) falls in winter to 4 degrees, and in the hottest season rises to 25 or 30 degrees Centigrade at the outside, which gives us 24 degrees Réaumur as the maximum, or otherwise stated 54 degrees Fahrenheit (English scale), not more. And, as a matter of fact, we are sheltered from the north winds by the forest of Argueil on the one side, from the west winds by the Saint Jean hills on the other; and this heat, moreover, which, on account of the watery vapors

given off by the river and the considerable number of cattle in the fields, which, as you know, exhale much ammonia, that is to say, nitrogen, hydrogen, and oxygen (no, nitrogen and hydrogen alone), and which sucking up the humus from the soil, mixing together all those different emanations, unites them into a single bundle, so to speak, and combining with the electricity diffused through the atmosphere, when there is any, might in the long-run, as in tropical countries, engender poisonous fumes,—this heat, I say, finds itself perfectly tempered on the side from where it comes, or rather from where it ought to come, that is the south side, by the south-eastern winds, which, having cooled themselves in crossing the Seine, reach us sometimes all at once like blasts from Russia!”

“Do you at least have some walks in the neighborhood?” continued Madame Bovary, speaking to the young man.

“Oh, very few,” he answered. “There is a place they call La Pâture, on the top of the hill, on the edge of the forest. Sometimes, on Sundays, I go and stay there with a book, watching the sunset.”

“I think there is nothing so beautiful as sunsets,” she resumed; “but especially by the seashore.”

“Oh, I love the sea!” said Monsieur Léon.

“And doesn’t it seem to you,” continued Madame Bovary, “that the mind travels more freely on this limitless expanse, of which the contemplation elevates the soul, gives ideas of the infinite, the ideal?”

“It is the same with mountainous landscapes,” continued Léon. “A cousin of mine who travelled in Switzerland last year told me that one could not picture to oneself the poetry of the lakes, the charm of the waterfalls, the gigantic effect of the glaciers. One sees pines of incredible size across torrents, cottages suspended over precipices, and, a thousand feet below one, whole valleys when the clouds open. Such spectacles must stir to enthusiasm, incline to prayer, to ecstasy; and I no longer wonder why a celebrated musician, in order to stimulate his imagination, was in the habit of playing the piano before some imposing view.”

“Do you play?” she asked.

“No, but I am very fond of music,” he replied.

“Ah! don’t you listen to him, Madame Bovary,” interrupted Homais, bending over his plate. “That’s sheer modesty. Why, my friend, the other day in your room you were singing ‘L’Ange Gardien’⁷ to perfection. I heard you from the laboratory. You articulated with the skill of an actor.”

Léon rented a small room at the pharmacist’s, on the second

7. According to Paul de Man, a sentimental romance written by Pauline Duchambre, author of songs that appeared in published albums and keepsakes targeting a female audience.

floor overlooking the Square. He blushed at the compliment of his landlord, who had already turned to the doctor, and was enumerating to him, one after the other, all the principal inhabitants of Yonville. He was telling anecdotes, giving information; no one knew just how wealthy the notary was and there were, of course, the *Tuvaches* who put up a considerable front.

Emma continued, "And what music do you prefer?"

"Oh, German music; that which makes you dream."

"Have you been to the opera?"

"Not yet; but I shall go next year, when I'll be living in Paris to get a law degree."

"As I had the honor of putting it to your husband," said the pharmacist, "with regard to this poor Yanoda who has run away, you will find yourself, thanks to his extravagance, in the possession of one of the most comfortable houses of Yonville. Its greatest convenience for a doctor is a door giving on the Walk, where one can go in and out unseen. Moreover, it contains everything that is useful in a household—a laundry, kitchen with pantry, sitting-room, fruit bins, etc. He was a gay dog, who didn't care what he spent. At the end of the garden, by the side of the water, he had an arbor built just for the purpose of drinking beer in summer; and if madame is fond of gardening she will be able . . ."

"My wife doesn't care to," said Charles; "although she has been advised to take exercise, she prefers always sitting in her room reading."

"Just like me," replied Léon. "And indeed, what is better than to sit by one's fireside in the evening with a book, while the wind beats against the window and the lamp is burning? . . ."

"What, indeed?" she said, fixing her large black eyes wide open upon him.

"One thinks of nothing," he continued; "the hours slip by. Without having to move, we walk through the countries of our imagination, and your thought, blending with the fiction, toys with the details, follows the outline of the adventures. It mingles with the characters, and it seems you are living their lives, that your own heart beats in their breast."

"That is true! that is true!" she said.

"Has it ever happened to you," Léon went on, "to discover some vague idea of one's own in a book, some dim image that comes back to you from afar, and as the fullest expression of your own slightest sentiment?"

"I have experienced it," she replied.

"That is why," he said, "I especially love the poets. I think verse more tender than prose, and that it makes one weep more easily."

"Still in the long-run it is tiring," continued Emma, "and now, on the contrary, I have come to love stories that rush breathlessly

along, that frighten one. I detest commonplace heroes and moderate feelings, as one finds them in nature."

"You are right," observed the clerk, "since these works fail to touch the heart, they miss, it seems to me, the true end of art. It is so sweet, amid all the disenchantments of life, to be able to dwell in thought upon noble characters, pure affections, and pictures of happiness. For myself, living here far from the world, this is my one distraction. But there is so little to do in Yonville!"

"Like Tostes, no doubt," replied Emma; "and so I always subscribed to a lending library."

"If madame will do me the honor of making use of it," said the pharmacist, who had just caught the last words, "I have at her disposal a library composed of the best authors, Voltaire, Rousseau, Delille, Walter Scott, the *Echo des Feuilletons*; and in addition I receive various periodicals, among them the *Fanal de Rouen*⁸ daily, being privileged to act as its correspondent for the districts of Buchy, Forges, Neufchâtel, Yonville, and vicinity."

They had been at the table for two hours and a half, for Artémise, the maid, listlessly dragged her slippered feet over the tile-floor, brought in the plates one by one, forgot everything, understood nothing and constantly left the door of the billiard-room half open, so that the handle kept beating against the wall with its hooks.

Unconsciously, Léon, while talking, had placed his foot on one of the bars of the chair on which Madame Bovary was sitting. She wore a small blue silk necktie, which held upright, stiff as a ruff, a pleated batiste collar, and with the movements of her head the lower part of her face gently sank into the linen or rose from it. Thus side by side, while Charles and the pharmacist chatted, they entered into one of those vague conversations where the hazard of all that is said brings you back to the fixed centre of a common sympathy. The Paris theatres, titles of novels, new quadrilles, and the world they did not know; Tostes, where she had lived, and Yonville, where they were; they examined all, talked of everything till the end of dinner.

When coffee was served Félicité left to prepare the room in the new house, and the guests soon rose from the table. Madame Lefrançois was asleep near the cinders, while the stable-boy, lantern in hand, was waiting to show Monsieur and Madame Bovary the way home. Bits of straw stuck in his red hair, and his left leg had a limp. When he had taken in his other hand the curé's umbrella, they started.

The town was asleep; the pillars of the market threw great shadows; the earth was all grey as on a summer's night.

8. *Beacon of Rouen*, a name suggesting that the newspaper shares Homais's enthusiasm for progress.

But as the doctor's house was only some fifty paces from the inn, they had to say good-night almost immediately, and the company dispersed.

As soon as she entered the hallway, Emma felt the cold of the plaster fall about her shoulders like damp linen. The walls were new and the wooden stairs creaked. In their bedroom, on the first floor, a whitish light passed through the curtainless windows. She could catch glimpses of tree-tops, and beyond, the fields, half-drowned in the fog that lay like smoke over the course of the river. In the middle of the room, pell-mell, were scattered drawers, bottles, curtain-rods, gilt poles, with mattresses on the chairs and basins on the floor—the two men who had brought the furniture had left everything about carelessly.

This was the fourth time that she had slept in a strange place. The first was the day she went to the convent; the second, of her arrival at Tostes; the third, at Vaubyessard; and this was the fourth; and it so happened that each one had marked in her life a new beginning. She did not believe that things could remain the same in different places, and since the portion of her life that lay behind her had been bad, no doubt that which remained to be lived would be better.

III

The next day, as she was getting up, she saw the clerk on the Place. She had on a dressing-gown. He looked up and bowed. She nodded quickly and reclosed the window.

Léon waited all day for six o'clock in the evening to come, but on going to the inn, he found only Monsieur Binet already seated at the table.

The dinner of the evening before had been a considerable event for him; he had never till then talked for two hours consecutively to a "lady." How then had he been able to express, and in such language, so many things that he could not have said so well before? He was usually shy, and maintained that reserve which partakes at once of modesty and dissimulation. At Yonville, his manners were generally admired. He listened to the opinions of the older people, and seemed to have moderate political views, a rare thing for a young man. Then he had some accomplishments; he painted in water-colors, could read music, and readily talked literature after dinner when he did not play cards. Monsieur Homais respected him for his education; Madame Homais liked him for his good-nature, for he often took the little Homais into the garden—little brats who were always dirty, very much spoilt, and somewhat slow-moving, like their mother. They were looked after by the maid and

by Justin, the pharmacist's apprentice, a second cousin of Monsieur Homais, who had been taken into the house out of charity and was also being put to work as a servant.

The druggist proved the best of neighbors. He advised Madame Bovary as to the tradespeople, sent expressly for his own cider merchant, tasted the wine himself, and saw that the casks were properly placed in the cellar; he explained how to stock up cheaply on butter, and made an arrangement with Lestiboudois, the sacristan, who, besides his ecclesiastical and funereal functions, looked after the main gardens at Yonville by the hour or the year, according to the wishes of the customers.

The need of looking after others was not the only thing that urged the pharmacist to such obsequious cordiality; there was a plan underneath it all.

He had infringed the law of the 19th Ventôse, year xi., article 1, which forbade all persons not having a diploma to practice medicine; so that, after certain anonymous denunciations, Homais had been summoned to Rouen to see the royal prosecutor in his private office; the magistrate receiving him standing up, ermine on shoulder and cap on head.⁹ It was in the morning, before the court opened. In the corridors one heard the heavy boots of the gendarmes walking past, and like a far-off noise great locks that were shut. The druggist's ears tingled as if he were about to have a stroke; he saw the depths of dungeons, his family in tears, his shop sold, all the jars dispersed; and he was obliged to enter a café and take a glass of rum and soda water to recover his spirits.

Little by little the memory of this reprimand grew fainter, and he continued, as heretofore, to give anodyne consultations in his back-parlor. But the mayor resented it, his colleagues were jealous, he had everything and everyone to fear; gaining over Monsieur Bovary by his attentions was to earn his gratitude, and prevent his speaking out later on, should he notice anything. So every morning Homais brought him the paper, and often in the afternoon left his shop for a few moments to have a chat with the doctor.

Charles was depressed: he had no patients. He remained seated for hours without speaking, went into his consulting-room to sleep, or watched his wife sewing. Then for diversion he tried to work as a handyman around the house; he even tried to decorate the attic with some paint that had been left behind by the painters. But money matters worried him. He had spent so much for repairs at Tostes, for madame's toilette, and for the moving, that the whole dowry, over three thousand écus, had slipped away in two years. Then how many things had been spoilt or lost during their move

9. A law passed when France still used the Revolutionary calendar (March 10, 1803).

from Tostes to Yonville, without counting the plaster curé, who, thrown out of the carriage by a particularly severe jolt, had broken in a thousand pieces on the pavement of Quincampoix!

A more positive worry came to distract him, namely, the pregnancy of his wife. As the time of birth approached he cherished her more. It was another bond of the flesh between them, and, as it were, a continued sentiment of a more complex union. When he caught sight of her indolent walk or watched her figure filling out over her uncorseted hips, when he had the opportunity to look at her undisturbed taking tired poses in her armchair, then his happiness knew no bounds; he got up, embraced her, passed his hands over her face, called her little mamma, wanted to make her dance, and, half-laughing, half-crying, uttered all kinds of caressing pleasantries that came into his head. The idea of having begotten a child delighted him. Now he wanted nothing more. He knew all there was to know of human life and sat down to enjoy it serenely, his elbows planted on the table as for a good meal.

Emma at first felt a great astonishment; then was anxious to be delivered that she might know what it felt like to be a mother. But not being able to spend as much as she would have liked on a suspended cradle with rose silk curtains, and embroidered caps, in a fit of bitterness she gave up looking for the layette altogether and had it all made by a village seamstress, without choosing or discussing anything.

Thus she did not amuse herself with those preparations that stimulate the tenderness of mothers, and so her affection was perhaps impaired from the start.

As Charles, however, spoke of the baby at every meal, she soon began to think of him more steadily.

She hoped for a son; he would be strong and dark; she would call him George; and this idea of having a male child was like an expected revenge for all her impotence in the past. A man, at least, is free; he can explore all passions and all countries, overcome obstacles, taste of the most distant pleasures. But a woman is always hampered. Being inert as well as pliable, she has against her the weakness of the flesh and the inequity of the law. Like the veil held to her hat by a ribbon, her will flutters in every breeze; she is always drawn by some desire, restrained by some rule of conduct.

She gave birth on a Sunday at about six o'clock, as the sun was rising.

"It is a girl!" said Charles.

She turned her head away and fainted.

Madame Homais, as well as Madame Lefrançois of the Lion d'Or, almost immediately came running in to embrace her. The pharmacist, as a man of discretion, only offered a few provisional

felicitations through the half-opened door. He asked to see the child, and thought it well made.

During her recovery, she spent much time seeking a name for her daughter. First she went over all names that have Italian endings, such as Clara, Louisa, Amanda, Atala; she liked Galsuinde pretty well, and Yseult or Léocadie still better. Charles wanted the child to be called after her mother; Emma opposed this. They ran over the calendar from end to end, and then consulted outsiders.

"Monsieur Léon," said the chemist, "with whom I was talking about it the other day, wonders why you do not choose Madeleine. It is very much in fashion just now."

But Monsieur Bovary's mother protested loudly against this name of a sinner. As to Monsieur Homais, he had a preference for all names that recalled some great man, an illustrious fact, or a generous idea, and it was in accordance with this system that he had baptized his four children. Thus Napoleon represented glory and Franklin liberty; Irma was perhaps a concession to romanticism, but Athalie was a homage to the greatest masterpiece of the French stage. For his philosophical convictions did not interfere with his artistic tastes; in him the thinker did not stifle the man of sentiment; he could make distinctions, make allowances for imagination and fanaticism. In this tragedy, for example, he found fault with the ideas, but admired the style; he detested the conception, but applauded all the details, and loathed the characters while he grew enthusiastic over their dialogue. When he read the fine passages he was transported, but when he thought that the Catholics would use it to their advantage, he was disconsolate; and in this confusion of sentiments in which he was involved he would have liked both to crown Racine with both his hands and take him to task for a good quarter of an hour.

At last Emma remembered that at the château of Vaubyessard she had heard the Marquise call a young lady Berthe; from that moment this name was chosen; and as old Rouault could not come, Monsieur Homais was requested to be godfather. His gifts were all products from his establishment, to wit: six boxes of jujubes, a whole jar of racahout, three cakes of marsh-mallow paste, and six sticks of sugar-candy that he had come across in a cupboard. On the evening of the ceremony there was a grand dinner; the curé was present; there was much excitement. Towards liqueur time, Monsieur Homais began singing "Le Dieu des bonnes gens." Monsieur Léon sang a barcarolle, and the elder Madame Bovary, who was godmother, a romance of the time of the Empire, finally, M. Bovary, senior, insisted on having the child brought down, and began baptizing it with a glass of champagne that he poured over its head. This mockery of the first of the sacraments aroused the indignation

of the Abbé Bournisien; Father Bovary replied by a quotation from *La Guerre des Dieux*; the curé wanted to leave; the ladies implored, Homais interfered; they succeeded in making the priest sit down again, and he quietly went on with the half-finished coffee in his saucer.

Monsieur Bovary père stayed at Yonville a month, dazzling the natives by a superb soldier's cap with silver tassels that he wore in the morning when he smoked his pipe in the square. Being also in the habit of drinking a good deal of brandy, he often sent the servant to the Lion d'Or to buy him a bottle, which was put down to his son's account, and to perfume his handkerchiefs he used up his daughter-in-law's whole supply of eau-de-cologne.

The latter did not at all dislike his company. He had knocked about the world, he talked about Berlin, Vienna, and Strasbourg, of his soldier times, of his mistresses, of the brilliant dinner-parties he had attended; then he was amiable, and sometimes even, either on the stairs or in the garden, would catch her by the waist, exclaiming: "Charles, you better watch out!"

Then the elder Madame Bovary became alarmed for her son's happiness, and fearing that her husband might in the long run have an immoral influence upon the ideas of the young woman, she speeded up their departure. Perhaps she had more serious reasons for uneasiness. Monsieur Bovary was the man to stop at nothing.

One day Emma was suddenly seized with the desire to see her little girl, who had been put to nurse with the carpenter's wife, and, without looking at the calendar to see whether the six weeks of the Virgin¹ were yet passed, she set out for the Rollets' house, situated at the extreme end of the village, between the highroad and the fields.

It was mid-day, the shutters of the houses were closed, and the slate roofs that glittered beneath the fierce light of the blue sky seemed to strike sparks from the crest of their gables. A heavy wind was blowing; Emma felt weak as she walked; the stones of the pavement hurt her; she was doubtful whether she would not go home again, or enter somewhere to rest.

At that moment Monsieur Léon came out from a neighboring door with a bundle of papers under his arm. He came to greet her, and stood in the shade in front of Lheureux's shop under the projecting grey awning.

Madame Bovary said she was going to see her baby, but that she was getting tired.

"If . . ." said Léon, not daring to go on.

1. The six weeks that separate Christmas from Purification (February 2); convention at the time held that after giving birth a woman should refrain from vigorous exertion for an analagous period, at the end of which a party celebrated her return to full activity.

“Have you any business to attend to?” she asked.

And on the clerk’s negative answer, she begged him to accompany her. That same evening this was known in Yonville, and Madame Tuvache, the mayor’s wife, declared in the presence of her maid that Madame Bovary was jeopardizing her good name.

To get to the nurse’s it was necessary to turn to the left on leaving the street, as if heading for the cemetery, and to follow between little houses and yards a small path bordered with privet hedges. They were in bloom, and so were the speedwells, eglantines, thistles, and the sweetbriar that sprang up from the thickets. Through openings in the hedges one could see into the huts, some pig on a dung-heap, or tethered cows rubbing their horns against the trunk of trees. The two, side by side, walked slowly, she leaning upon him, and he restraining his pace, which he regulated by hers; in front of them flies were buzzing in the warm air.

They recognized the house by an old walnut-tree which shaded it. Low and covered with brown tiles, there hung outside it, beneath the attic-window, a string of onions. Faggots upright against a thorn fence surrounded a bed of lettuces, a few square feet of lavender, and sweet peas strung on sticks. Dirty water was running here and there on the grass, and all round were several indefinite rags, knitted stockings, a red flannel undershirt, and a large sheet of coarse linen spread over the hedge. At the noise of the gate the wet nurse appeared with a baby she was suckling on one arm. With her other hand she was pulling along a poor puny little boy, his face covered with a scrofulous rash, the son of a Rouen hosier, whom his parents, too taken up with their business, left in the country.

“Go in,” she said; “your baby is there asleep.”

The room on the ground-floor, the only one in the dwelling, had at its farther end, against the wall, a large bed without curtains, while a kneading-trough took up the side by the window, one pane of which was mended with a piece of blue paper. In the corner behind the door, shining hob-nailed shoes stood in a row under the slab of the washstand, near a bottle of oil with a feather stuck in its mouth; a *Mathieu Laensberg*² lay on the dusty mantelpiece amid gunflints, candle-ends, and bits of tinder. Finally, the last extravagance in the room was a picture representing Fame blowing her trumpets, cut out, no doubt, from some perfumer’s prospectus and nailed to the wall with six wooden shoe-pegs.

Emma’s child was asleep in a wicker-cradle. She took it up in the wrapping that enveloped it and began singing softly as she rocked it to and fro.

Léon walked up and down the room; it seemed strange to him to

2. A famous farmer’s almanac of seventeenth-century origin that was disseminated widely in France during the nineteenth century by traveling book salesmen (*colporteurs*).

see this beautiful woman in her silk dress in the midst of all this poverty. Madame Bovary blushed; he turned away, thinking perhaps there had been an impertinent look in his eyes. Then she put back the little girl, who had just thrown up over her collar. The nurse at once came to dry her, protesting that it wouldn't show.

"You should see some of the other tricks she plays on me," she said. "I always seem to be sponging her off. If you would have the goodness to order Camus, the grocer, to let me have a little soap; it would really be more convenient for you, as I needn't trouble you then."

"All right, all right!" said Emma. "Good-bye, Madame Rollet."

And she went out, wiping her shoes at the door.

The woman accompanied her to the end of the garden, complaining all the time of the trouble she had getting up nights.

"I'm so worn out sometimes that I drop asleep on my chair. You could at least give me a pound of ground coffee; that'd last me a month, and I'd take it in the morning with some milk."

After having submitted to her thanks, Madame Bovary left. She had gone a little way down the path when, at the sound of wooden shoes, she turned round. It was the nurse.

"What is it?"

Then the peasant woman, taking her aside behind an elm tree, began talking to her of her husband, who with his trade and six francs a year that the captain . . .

"Hurry up with your story," said Emma.

"Well," the nurse went on, heaving sighs between each word, "I'm afraid he'll be put out seeing me have coffee alone, you know men . . ."

"But I just told you you'll get some," Emma repeated; "I will give you some. Leave me alone!"

"Oh, my dear lady! you see, his wounds give him terrible cramps in the chest. He even says that cider weakens him."

"Do make haste, Mère Rollet!"

"Well," the latter continued, making a curtsy, "if it weren't asking too much," and she curtsied once more, "if you would"—and her eyes begged—"a jar of brandy," she said at last, "and I'd rub your little one's feet with it; they're as tender as your tongue."

Once they were rid of the nurse, Emma again took Monsieur Léon's arm. She walked fast for some time, then more slowly, and looking straight in front of her, her eyes rested on the shoulder of the young man, whose frock-coat had a black-velvet collar. His brown hair fell over it, straight and carefully combed. She noticed his nails, which were longer than one wore them in Yonville. It was one of the clerk's chief concerns to trim them, and for this purpose he kept a special knife in his writing-desk.

They returned to Yonville by the water-side. In the warm season

the bank, wider than at other times, showed to their foot the garden walls from where a few steps led to the river. It flowed noiselessly, swift, and cold to the eye; long, thin grasses huddled together in it as the current drove them, and spread themselves upon the limpid water like streaming hair. Sometimes at the top of the reeds or on the leaf of a water-lily an insect with fine legs crawled or rested. The sun pierced with a ray the small blue bubbles of the waves that broke successively on the bank; branchless old willows mirrored their grey barks in the water; beyond, all around, the meadows seemed empty. It was the dinner-hour at the farms, and the young woman and her companion heard nothing as they walked but the fall of their steps on the earth of the path, the words they spoke, and the sound of Emma's dress rustling round her.

The walls of the gardens, crested with pieces of broken bottle, were heated like the glass roof of a hothouse. Wallflowers had sprung up between the bricks, and with the tip of her open parasol Madame Bovary, as she passed, made some of their faded flowers crumble into yellow dust, or else a spray of overhanging honeysuckle and clematis would catch in the fringe of the parasol and scrape for a moment over the silk.

They were talking of a troupe of Spanish dancers who were expected shortly at the Rouen theatre.

"Are you going?" she asked.

"If I can," he answered.

Had they nothing else to say to one another? Yet their eyes were full of more serious speech, and while they forced themselves to find trivial phrases, they felt the same languor stealing over them both; it was like the deep, continuous murmur of the soul dominating that of their voices. Surprised with wonder at this strange sweetness, they did not think of speaking of the sensation or of seeking its cause. Future joys are like tropical shores; like a fragrant breeze, they extend their innate softness to the immense inland world of past experience, and we are lulled by this intoxication into forgetting the unseen horizons beyond.

In one place the ground had been trodden down by the cattle; they had to step on large green stones put here and there in the mud. She often stopped a moment to look where to place her foot, and tottering on the stone that shook, her arms outspread, her form bent forward with a look of indecision, she would laugh, afraid of falling into the puddles of water.

When they arrived in front of her garden, Madame Bovary opened the little gate, ran up the steps and disappeared.

Léon returned to his office. His employer was away; he just glanced at the briefs, then cut himself a pen, and finally took up his hat and went out.

He went to La Pâturée at the top of the Argueil hills at the beginning of the forest; he stretched out under the pines and watched the sky through his fingers.

"How bored I am!" he said to himself, "how bored I am!"

He thought he was to be pitied for living in this village, with Homais for a friend and Monsieur Guillaumin for master. The latter, entirely absorbed by his business, wearing gold-rimmed spectacles and red whiskers over a white cravat, understood nothing of mental refinements, although he affected a stiff English manner, which in the beginning had impressed the clerk.

As for Madame Homais, she was the best wife in Normandy, gentle as a sheep, loving her children, her father, her mother, her cousins, weeping for others' woes, letting everything go in her household, and detesting corsets; but so slow of movement, such a bore to listen to, so common in appearance, and of such restricted conversation, that although she was thirty and he only twenty, although they slept in rooms next to each other and he spoke to her daily, he never thought that she might be a woman to anyone, or that she possessed anything else of her sex than the gown.

And what else was there? Binet, a few shopkeepers, two or three innkeepers, the curé, and, finally, Monsieur Tuvache, the mayor, with his two sons, rich, haughty, obtuse people, who farmed their own lands and had feasts among themselves, devout Christians at that, but altogether unbearable as companions.

But from the general background of all these human faces the figure of Emma stood out isolated and yet farthest off; for between her and him he seemed to sense a vague abyss.

In the beginning he had called on her several times along with the pharmacist. Charles had not appeared particularly anxious to see him again, and Léon did not know what to do between his fear of being indiscreet and the desire for an intimacy that seemed almost impossible.

IV

When the first cold days set in Emma left her bedroom for the parlour, a long, low-ceilinged room, with on the mantelpiece a large bunch of coral spread out against the looking-glass. Seated in her armchair near the window, she could see the villagers pass along the pavement.

Twice a day Léon went from his office to the Lion d'Or. Emma could watch him coming from afar; she leant forward listening, and the young man glided past the curtain, always dressed in the same way, and without turning his head. But in the twilight, when, her chin resting on her left hand, she let her begun embroidery fall on

her knees, she often shuddered at the apparition of this shadow suddenly gliding past. She would get up and order the table to be laid.

Monsieur Homais called at dinner-time. Skull-cap in hand, he came in on tiptoe, in order to disturb no one, always repeating the same phrase, "Good evening, everybody." Then, when he had taken his seat at table between them, he asked the doctor about his patients, and the latter consulted him as to the probability of their payment. Next they talked of "what was in the paper." By this hour of the day, Homais knew it almost by heart, and he repeated from beginning to end, including the comments of the journalist, all the stories of individual catastrophes that had occurred in France or abroad. But the subject becoming exhausted, he was not slow in throwing out some remarks on the dishes before him. Sometimes even, half-rising, he delicately pointed out to madame the tenderest morsel, or turning to the maid, gave her some advice on the manipulation of stews and the hygiene of seasoning. He talked aroma, osmazome,³ juices, and gelatine in a bewildering manner. Moreover, Homais, with his head fuller of recipes than his shop of jars, excelled in making all kinds of preserves, vinegars, and sweet liqueurs; he knew also all the latest inventions in economic stoves, together with the art of preserving cheeses and of curing sick wines.

At eight o'clock Justin came to fetch him to shut up the shop. Then Monsieur Hornais gave him a sly look, especially if Félicité was there, for he had noticed that his apprentice was fond of the doctor's house.

"The young man," he said, "is beginning to have ideas, and the devil take me if I don't believe he's in love with your maid!"

But a more serious fault with which he reproached Justin was his constantly listening to conversation. On Sunday, for example, one could not get him out of the parlor, even when Madame Homais called him to fetch the children, who had fallen asleep in the arm-chairs, dragging down with their backs the overwide slip-covers.

Not many people came to the pharmacist's evening parties, his scandal-mongering and political opinions having successfully alienated various persons. The clerk never failed to be there. As soon as he heard the bell he ran to meet Madame Bovary, took her shawl, and put away under the shop-counter the heavy overshoes she wore when it snowed.

First they played some hands at trente-et-un; next Monsieur Homais played écarté with Emma; Léon standing behind her, gave

3. A chemical component of animal flesh believed at the time to give game animals their distinctive flavor, as Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin explained in *The Physiology of Taste*, where he likened it to alcohol.

advice. Standing up with his hands on the back of her chair, he saw the teeth of her comb that bit into her chignon. With every movement that she made to throw her cards the right side of her dress was drawn up. From her turned-up hair a dark color fell over her back, and growing gradually paler, lost itself little by little in the shade. Her dress dropped on both sides of her chair, blowing out into many folds before it spread on the floor. When Léon occasionally felt the sole of his boot resting on it, he drew back as if he had trodden on something alive.

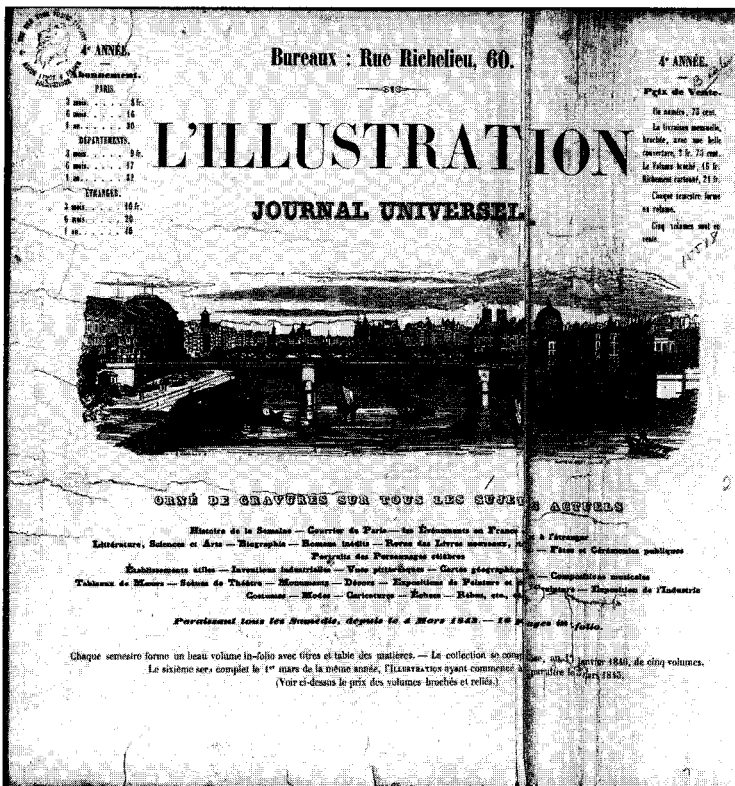
When the game of cards was over, the pharmacist and the Doctor played dominoes, and Emma, changing her place, leant her elbow on the table, turning over the pages of *L'Illustration*.⁴ She had brought her ladies' journal with her. Léon sat down near her; they looked at the engravings together, and waited for one another at the bottom of the pages. She often begged him to read her the verses; Léon declaimed them in a languid voice, to which he carefully gave a dying fall in the love passages. But the noise of the dominoes annoyed him. Monsieur Homais was strong at the game; he could beat Charles and give him a double-six. Then the three hundred finished, they both stretched in front of the fire, and were soon asleep. The fire was dying out in the cinders; the teapot was empty, Léon was still reading. Emma listened to him, mechanically turning round the lampshade, its gauze decorated with painted clowns in carriages, and tightrope dancers with balancing-poles. Léon stopped, pointing with a gesture to his sleeping audience; then they talked in low tones, and their conversation seemed the sweeter to them because it was unheard.

Thus a kind of bond was established between them, a constant exchange of books and of romances. Little inclined to jealousy, Monsieur Bovary thought nothing of it.

On his birthday he received a beautiful phrenological head, all marked with figures to the thorax and painted blue.⁵ This was a gift of the clerk's. He showed him many other attentions, to the point of running errands for him at Rouen: and a novel having made the mania for cactuses fashionable, Léon bought some for Madame

4. *L'Illustration*, founded March 4, 1843, was one of the most successful reviews of politics, manners, arts, and fashion during the July Monarchy, 1830–1848. At the time, the notion of “illustration” was considered an expression of modernity. The article “Illustrated Walls,” for example, printed in *Le Charivari*, January 29, 1845, opens: “We live in a century of illustrations,” going on to specify that illustrations overflow from books, newspapers, and “even walls are covered with them.”

5. Phrenology, invented by Franz Josef Gall, contributed to the nineteenth-century interest in establishing personality based on biological characteristics (in the case of phrenology, the shape of the skull), manifested also in the rise of biologically based racism and the notion that certain facial features were associated with aberrant personalities promulgated late in the century by Lombroso. At the same time, Gall's notion that different functions were located in different parts of the brain was to become central to modern neurology.



Cover of *L'Illustration* from the 1840s, which indicates the panorama of culture offered by this popular review as well as its focus on Paris. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

Bovary, bringing them back on his knees in the *Hirondelle*, pricking his fingers on their hard spikes.

She had a railed shelf suspended against her window to hold the pots. The clerk, too, had his small hanging garden; they saw each other tending their flowers at their windows.

One of the village windows was even more often occupied; for on Sundays from morning to night, and every morning when the weather was bright, one could see at an attic-window the profile of Monsieur Binet bending over his lathe; its monotonous humming could be heard at the Lion d'Or.

One evening on coming home Léon found in his room a rug in velvet and wool with leaves on a pale ground. He called Madame Homais, Monsieur Homais, Justin, the children, the cook; he spoke of it to his employer: every one wanted to see this rug. Why did the doctor's wife give the clerk presents? It looked odd: and they decided that he must be her lover.

He gave plenty of reason for this belief, so ceaselessly did he talk of her charms and of her wit: so much so, that Binet once roughly interrupted him:

"What do I care since I'm not one of her friends?"

He tortured himself to find out how he could make his declaration to her, and always halting between the fear of displeasing her and the shame of being such a coward, he wept with discouragement and desire. Then he took energetic resolutions, wrote letters that he tore up, put off to times that he again deferred. Often he set out with the determination to dare all; but this resolution soon deserted him in Emma's presence; and when Charles, dropping in, invited him to jump into his carriage to go with him to see some patient in the neighborhood, he at once accepted, bowed to madame, and left. Wasn't the husband also a part of her after all?

As for Emma, she did not ask herself whether she loved him. Love, she thought, must come suddenly, with great outbursts and lightnings,—a hurricane of the skies, which sweeps down on life, upsets everything, uproots the will like a leaf and carries away the heart as in an abyss. She did not know that on the terrace of houses the rain makes lakes when the pipes are choked, and she would thus have remained safe in her ignorance when she suddenly discovered a rent in the wall.

V

It was a Sunday in February, an afternoon when the snow was falling.

Monsieur and Madame Bovary, Homais, and Monsieur Léon had

all gone to see a yarn-mill that was being built in the valley a mile and a half from Yonville. The druggist had taken Napoleon and Athalie to give them some exercise, and Justin accompanied them, carrying the umbrellas over his shoulder.

Nothing, however, could be less worth seeing than this sight. A great piece of waste ground, on which, amid a mass of sand and stones, were scattered a few rusty cogwheels, surrounded by a long rectangular building pierced with numerous little windows. The building was unfinished; the sky could be seen through the beams of the roofing. Attached to the ridgepole of the gable a bunch of straw mixed with corn-ears fluttered its tricoloured ribbons in the wind.

Homais was talking. He explained to the company the future importance of this establishment, computed the strength of the floorings, the thickness of the walls, and regretted extremely not having a yard-stick such as Monsieur Binet possessed for his own special use.

Emma, who had taken his arm, bent lightly against his shoulder, and she looked at the sun's disc shining afar through the mist with pale splendour. She turned; there was Charles. His cap was drawn down over his eyebrows, and his two thick lips were trembling, which added a look of stupidity to his face; his very back, his calm back, was irritating to behold, and she saw all his platitude spelled out right there, on his very coat.

While she was considering him thus, savoring her irritation with a sort of depraved pleasure, Léon made a step forward. The cold that made him pale seemed to add a more gentle languor to his face; between his cravat and his neck the somewhat loose collar of his shirt showed the skin; some of his ear was showing beneath a lock of hair, and his large blue eyes, raised to the clouds, seemed to Emma more limpid and more beautiful than those mountain-lakes which mirror the heavens.

"Look out there!" suddenly cried the pharmacist.

And he ran to his son, who had just jumped into a pile of lime in order to whiten his boots. Overcome by his father's reproaches, Napoleon began to howl, while Justin dried his shoes with a wisp of straw. But a knife was needed; Charles offered his.

"Ah!" she said to herself, "he carries a knife in his pocket like a peasant."

It was beginning to snow and they turned back to Yonville.

In the evening Madame Bovary did not go to her neighbor's, and when Charles had left and she felt herself alone, the comparison again forced itself upon her, almost with the clarity of direct sensation, and with that lengthening of perspective which memory gives to things. Looking from her bed at the bright fire that was burning,

she still saw, as she had down there, Léon standing up with one hand bending his cane, and with the other holding Athalie, who was quietly sucking a piece of ice. She thought him charming; she could not tear herself away from him; she recalled his other attitudes on other days, the words he had spoken, the sound of his voice, his whole person; and she repeated, pouting out her lips as if for a kiss:

"Yes, charming! charming! Is he not in love?" . . . she asked herself: "but with whom? . . . With me!"

All the evidence asserted itself at once; her heart leapt. The flame of the fire threw a joyous light upon the ceiling; she turned on her back, stretched out her arms.

Then began the eternal lamentation: "Oh, if Heaven had but willed it! And why not? What prevented it?"

When Charles came home at midnight, she seemed to have just awakened, and as he made a noise undressing, she complained of a headache, then asked casually what had happened that evening.

"Monsieur Léon," he said, "went to his room early."

She could not help smiling, and she fell asleep, her soul filled with a new delight.

The next day, at dusk, she received a visit from Monsieur Lheureux, the owner of the local general store.

He was a smart man, this shopkeeper.

Born in Gascony but bred a Norman, he grafted upon his southern volubility the cunning of the Cauchois. His fat, flabby, beardless face seemed dyed by a decoction of liquorice, and his white hair made even more vivid the keen brilliance of his small black eyes. No one knew what he had been formerly; some said he was a peddler, others that he was a banker at Routot. One thing was certain: he could make complex figurings in his head that would have frightened Binet himself. Polite to obsequiousness, he always held himself with his back bent in the attitude of one who bows or who invites.

After leaving at the door his black-bordered hat, he put down a green cardboard box on the table, and began by complaining to madame, with many civilities, that he should have remained till that day without the benefit of her confidence. A poor shop like his was not made to attract a lady of fashion; he stressed the words; yet she had only to command, and he would undertake to provide her with anything she might wish, whether it be lingerie or knitwear, hats or dresses, for he went to town regularly four times a month. He was connected with the best houses. His name could be mentioned at the "Trois Frères," at the "Barbe d'Or," or at the "Grand Sauvage"; all these gentlemen knew him inside out. Today, then, he had come to show madame, in passing, various articles he hap-

pened to have by an unusual stroke of luck. And he pulled out half-a-dozen embroidered collars from the box.

Madame Bovary examined them.

"I don't need anything," she said.

Then Monsieur Lheureux delicately exhibited three Algerian scarves, several packages of English needles, a pair of straw slippers, and, finally, four eggcups in cocoa-nut wood, carved in open work by convicts. Then, with both hands on the table, his neck stretched out, leaning forward with open mouth, he watched Emma's gaze wander undecided over the merchandise. From time to time, as if to remove some dust, he flicked his nail against the silk of the scarves spread out at full length, and they rustled with a little noise, making the gold spangles of the material sparkle like stars in the greenish twilight.

"How much are they?"

"A mere trifle," he replied, "a mere trifle. But there's no hurry; whenever it's convenient. We are no Jews."

She reflected for a few moments, and ended by again declining Monsieur Lheureux's offer. Showing no concern, he replied:

"Very well! Better luck next time. I have always got on with ladies . . . even if I didn't with my own!"

Emma smiled.

"I wanted to tell you," he went on good-naturedly, after his joke, "that it isn't the money I should trouble about. Why, I could give you some, if need be."

She made a gesture of surprise.

"Ah!" he said quickly and in a low voice, "I shouldn't have to go far to find you some, rely on that."

And he began asking after Père Tellier, the owner of the "Café Français," who was being treated by Monsieur Bovary at the time.

"What's the matter with Père Tellier? He makes the whole house shake with his coughing, and I'm afraid he'll soon need a pine coat rather than a flannel jacket. He certainly lived it up when he was young! These people, madame, they never know when to stop! He burned himself up with brandy. Still it's sad, all the same, to see an acquaintance go."

And while he fastened up his box he discoursed about the doctor's patients.

"It's the weather, no doubt," he said, looking frowningly at the floor, "that causes these illnesses. I myself don't feel just right. One of these days I shall even have to consult the doctor for a pain I have in my back. Well, good-bye, Madame Bovary. At your service; your very humble servant."

And he gently closed the door behind him.

Emma had her dinner served in her bedroom on a tray by the

fireside; she took a long time catting; everything seemed wonderful.

"How good I was!" she said to herself, thinking of the scarves.

She heard steps on the stairs. It was Léon. She got up and took from the chest of drawers the first pile of dusters to be hemmed. When he came in she seemed very busy.

The conversation languished; Madame Bovary let it drop every few minutes, while he himself seemed quite embarrassed. Seated on a low chair near the fire, he kept turning the ivory thimble case with his fingers. She stitched on, or from time to time turned down the hem of the cloth with her nail. She did not speak; he was silent, captivated by her silence, as he would have been by her speech.

"Poor fellow!" she thought.

"How have I displeased her?" he asked himself.

At last, however, Léon said that one of these days, he had to go to Rouen on business.

"Your music subscription has expired: shall I renew it?"

"No," she replied.

"Why?"

"Because . . ."

And pursing her lips she slowly drew a long stitch of grey thread.

This work irritated Léon. It seemed to roughen the ends of her fingers. A gallant phrase came into his head, but he did not risk it.

"Then you are giving it up?" he went on.

"What?" she asked hurriedly. "Music? Ah! yes! Have I not my house to look after, my husband to attend to, a thousand things, in fact, many duties that must be considered first?"

She looked at the clock. Charles was late. Then she affected anxiety. Two or three times she even repeated, "He is so good!"

The clerk was fond of Monsieur Bovary. But this tenderness on his behalf came as an unpleasant surprise; still, he sang his praise: everyone did, he said, especially the pharmacist.

"Ah! he is a good man," continued Emma.

"Certainly," replied the clerk.

And he began talking of Madame Homais, whose very untidy appearance generally made them laugh.

"What does it matter?" interrupted Emma. "A good housewife does not trouble about her appearance."

Then she relapsed into silence.

It was the same on the following days; her talks, her manners, everything changed. She took interest in the housework, went to church regularly, and looked after her maid with more severity.

She took Berthe away from the nurse. When visitors called, Félicité brought her in, and Madame Bovary undressed her to show off her limbs. She claimed to love children; they were her consola-

tion, her joy, her passion, and she accompanied her caresses with lyrical outbursts that would have reminded any one but the Yonvillians of Sachette in *Notre Dame de Paris*.⁶

When Charles came home he found his slippers put to warm near the fire. His waistcoat now never wanted lining, nor his shirt buttons, and it was quite a pleasure to see in the cupboard the night-caps arranged in piles of the same height. She no longer grumbled as before when asked to take a walk in the garden; what he proposed was always done, although she never anticipated the wishes to which she submitted without a murmur; and when Léon saw him sit by his fireside after dinner, his two hands on his stomach, his two feet on the fender, his cheeks flushed with wine, his eyes moist with happiness, the child crawling along the carpet, and this woman with the slender waist who came behind his armchair to kiss his forehead:

“What madness!” he said to himself. “How could I ever hope to reach her?”

She seemed so virtuous and inaccessible to him that he lost all hope, even the faintest. But, by thus renouncing her, he made her ascend to extraordinary heights. She transcended, in his eyes, those sensuous attributes which were forever out of his reach; and in his heart she rose forever, soaring away from him like a winged apotheosis. It was one of those pure feelings that do not interfere with life, that are cultivated for their rarity, and whose loss would afflict more than their fulfilment rejoices.

Emma grew thinner, her cheeks paler, her face longer. With her black hair, her large eyes, her straight nose, her birdlike walk, and always silent now, did she not seem to be passing through life scarcely touching it, bearing on her brow the slight mark of a sublime destiny? She was so sad and so calm, at once so gentle and so reserved, that near her one came under the spell of an icy charm, as we shudder in churches at the perfume of the flowers mingling with the cold of the marble. Even others could not fail to be impressed. The pharmacist said.

“She is a real lady! She would not be out of place in a sous-préfecture!”⁷

The housewives admired her thrift, the patients her politeness, the poor her charity.

But she was eaten up with desires, with rage, with hate. The rigid folds of her dress covered a tormented heart of which her chaste lips never spoke. She was in love with Léon, and sought solitude

6. Sachette is Esmerelda's long-lost mother in Victor Hugo's novel.

7. Flaubert underscores the limited compass of Emma's world in having the admiring pharmacist raise her to the level of the wife of a minor provincial civil servant, rather than to the level of the grande bourgeoisie or nobility.

that she might more easily delight in his image. His physical presence troubled the voluptuousness of this meditation. Emma thrilled at the sound of his step; then in his presence the emotion subsided, and afterwards there remained in her only an immense astonishment that ended in sorrow.

Léon did not know that when he left her in despair she rose after he had gone to see him in the street. She concerned herself about his comings and goings; she watched his face; she invented quite a story to find an excuse for going to his room. She envied the pharmacist's wife for sleeping under the same roof, and her thoughts constantly centered upon this house, like the Lion d'Or pigeons who alighted there to dip their pink feet and white wings in the rainpipes. But the more Emma grew conscious of her love, the more she repressed it, hoping thus to hide and to stifle her true feeling. She would have liked Léon to know, and she imagined circumstances, catastrophes that would make this possible. What restrained her was, no doubt, idleness and fear, as well as a sense of shame. She thought she had repulsed him too much, that the time was past, that all was lost. Then, pride, the joy of being able to say to herself, "I am virtuous," and to look at herself in the mirror striking resigned poses, consoled her a little for the sacrifice she thought she was making.⁸

Then the desires of the flesh, the longing for money, and the melancholy of passion all blended into one suffering, and instead of putting it out of her mind, she made her thoughts cling to it, urging herself to pain and seeking everywhere the opportunity to revive it. A poorly served dish, a half open door would aggravate her; she bewailed the clothes she did not have, the happiness she had missed, her overexalted dreams, her too cramped home.

What exasperated her was that Charles did not seem to be aware of her torment. His conviction that he was making her happy looked to her a stupid insult, and his self-assurance on this point sheer ingratitude. For whom, then, was she being virtuous? Was it not for him, the obstacle to all happiness, the cause of all misery, and, as it were, the sharp clasp of that complex strap that buckled her in all sides?

Thus he became the butt of all the hatred resulting from her frustrations; but all efforts to conquer them augmented her suffering—for this useless humiliation still added to her despair and widened the gap between them. His very gentleness would drive her at times to rebellion. Domestic mediocrity urged her on to wild

8. In the scenario with Léon in this section, Emma flirts with the role of a heroine from sentimental fiction, who struggles to sacrifice her love out of duty to uphold the principles of the social collective. See, for example, the wife who struggles against her forbidden love for her husband's ward and apprentice in Sophie Cottin's *Claire d'Albe* (1799).

extravagance, matrimonial tenderness to adulterous desires. She would have liked Charles to beat her, that she might have a better right to hate him, to revenge herself upon him. She was surprised sometimes at the shocking thoughts that came into her head, and she had to go on smiling, to hear repeated to her at all hours that she was happy, to pretend to be happy and let it be believed.

Yet, at moments, she loathed this hypocrisy. She was tempted to flee somewhere with Léon and try a new life; but at once a dark, shapeless chasm would open within her soul.

"Besides, he no longer loves me," she thought. "What is to become of me? What help can I hope for, what consolation, what relief?"

Such thoughts would leave her shattered, exhausted, frozen, sobbing silently, with flowing tears.

"Why don't you tell monsieur?" the maid asked her when she came in during these crises.

"It is nerves," said Emma. "Don't mention it to him, he would worry."

"Ah! yes," Félicité went on, "you are just like La Guérine, the daughter of Père Guérin, the fisherman at le Pollet,⁹ that I used to know at Dieppe before I came to see you. She was so sad, so sad, that to see her standing on the threshold of her house, she looked like a winding-sheet spread out before the door. Her illness, it appears, was a kind of fog that she had in the head, and the doctors could do nothing about it, neither could the priest. When she had a bad spell, she went off by herself to the sea-shore, so that the customs officer, going his rounds, often found her flat on her face, crying on the pebbles. Then, after her marriage, it stopped, they say."

"But with me," replied Emma, "it was after marriage that it began."

VI

One evening when she was sitting by the open window, watching Lestiboudois, the sexton, trim the boxwood, she suddenly heard the Angelus ringing.

It was the beginning of April, when the primroses are in bloom, and a warm wind blows over the newly-turned flower beds, and the gardens, like women, seem to be getting ready for the summer dances. Through the bars of the arbor and away beyond, the river could be seen in the fields, meandering through the grass in sinuous curves. The evening vapors rose between the leafless poplars, touching their outlines with a violet tint, paler and more transparent than a subtle gauze caught amidst their branches. Cattle moved around in the distance; neither their steps nor their lowing could

9. Suburb of Dieppe, where the fishermen live.

be heard; and the bell, still ringing through the air, kept up its peaceful lamentation.

This repeated tinkling stirred in the young woman distant memories of her youth and school-days. She remembered the great candlesticks that rose above the vases full of flowers on the altar, and the tabernacle with its small columns. She would have liked to be once more lost in the long line of white veils, marked off here and there by the stiff black hoods of the good sisters bending over their praying-chairs. At mass on Sundays, when she looked up, she saw the gentle face of the Virgin amid the blue smoke of the rising incense. The image awoke a tender emotion in her; she felt limp and helpless, like the down of a bird whirled by the tempest, and it was unconsciously that she went towards the church, ready for any kind of devotion, provided she could humble her soul and lose all sense of selfhood.

On the Square she met Lestibouois on his way back, for, in order not to lose out on a full day's wages, he preferred to interrupt his gardening-work and go ring the Angelus when it suited him best. Besides, the earlier ringing warned the boys that catechism time had come.

Already a few who had arrived were playing marbles on the stones of the cemetery. Others, astride the wall, swung their legs, trampling with their wooden shoes the large nettles that grew between the little enclosure and the newest graves. This was the only green spot. All the rest was but stones, always covered with a fine dust, in spite of Lestibouois' broom.

The children played around in their socks, as if they were on their own ground. The shouts of their voices could be heard through the humming of the bell. The noise subsided with the swinging of the great rope that, hanging from the top of the belfry, dragged its end on the ground. Swallows flitted to and fro uttering little cries, cutting the air with the edge of their wings, and swiftly returned to their yellow nests under the eave-tiles of the coping. At the end of the church a lamp was burning, the wick of a night-light hung up in a glass. Seen from a distance, it looked like a white stain trembling in the oil. A long ray of the sun fell across the nave and seemed to darken the lower sides and the corners.

"Where is the priest?" Madame Bovary asked one of the boys, who was entertaining himself by shaking the turnstile in its too loose socket.

"He is coming," he answered.

Indeed, the door of the rectory creaked and the Abbé Bournisien appeared; the children fled in a heap into the church.

"The little brats!" muttered the priest, "always the same!" Then, picking up a ragged catechism on which he had stepped:

"They have respect for nothing!"

But, as soon as he caught sight of Madame Bovary:

"Excuse me," he said; "I did not recognise you."

He thrust the catechism into his pocket, and stopped, balancing the heavy key of the sacristy between his two fingers.

The full light of the setting sun upon his face made the cloth of his cassock, shiny at the elbows and frayed at the hem, seem paler. Grease and tobacco stains ran along his broad chest, following the line of his buttons, growing sparser in the vicinity of his neckcloth, in which rested the massive folds of his red chin; it was dotted with yellow spots that disappeared beneath the coarse hair of his greyish beard. He had just eaten his dinner, and was breathing noisily.

"And how are you?" he added.

"Not well," replied Emma; "I am suffering."

"So do I," answered the priest. "The first heat of the year is hard to bear, isn't it? But, after all, we are born to suffer, as St. Paul says. But, what does Monsieur Bovary think of it?"

"He!" she said with a gesture of contempt.

"What!" he replied, genuinely surprised, "doesn't he prescribe something for you?"

"Ah!" said Emma, "it is no earthly remedy I need."

But the curé time and again was looking into the church, where the kneeling boys were shouldering one another, and tumbling over like packs of cards.

"I should like to know . . ." she went on.

"You look out, Riboudet," the priest cried angrily, "I'll box your ears, you scoundrel!" Then turning to Emma. "He's Boudet the carpenter's son; his parents are well off, and let him do just as he pleases. Yet he could learn quickly if he would, for he is very sharp. And so sometimes for a joke I call him *Riboudet* (like the road one takes to go to Maromme), and I even say '*Mon Riboudet*.' Ha! ha! '*Mont Riboudet*.' The other day I repeated this little joke to the bishop, and he laughed. Can you imagine? He deigned to laugh. And how is Monsieur Bovary?"

She seemed not to hear him. And he went on . . .

"Always very busy, no doubt; for he and I are certainly the busiest people in the parish. But he is doctor of the body," he added with a thick laugh, "and I of the soul."

She fixed her pleading eyes upon the priest. "Yes," she said, "you solace all sorrows."

"Ah! don't tell me of it, Madame Bovary. This morning I had to go to Bas-Diauville for a cow was all swollen; they thought it was under a spell. All their cows, I don't know how it is . . . But pardon me! Longueuarre and Boudet! Bless me! Will you stop it?"

And he bounded into the church.

The boys were just then clustering round the large desk, climbing over the cantor's footstool, opening the missal; and others on tiptoe were just about to venture into the confessional. But the priest suddenly distributed a shower of blows among them. Seizing them by the collars of their coats, he lifted them from the ground, and deposited them on their knees on the stones of the choir, firmly, as if he meant to plant them there.

"Yes," said he, when he returned to Emma, unfolding his large cotton handkerchief, one corner of which he put between his teeth, "farmers are much to be pitied."

"Others, too," she replied.

"Certainly. Workingmen in the cities, for instance."

"I wasn't thinking of them . . ."

"Oh, but excuse me! I've known housewives there, virtuous women. I assure you, real saints, who didn't even have bread to eat."

"But those," replied Emma, and the corners of her mouth twitched as she spoke, "those, Monsieur le Curé, who have bread and have no . . ."

"Fire in the winter," said the priest.

"Oh, what does it matter?"

"What! What does it matter? It seems to me that when one has firing and food . . . for, after all . . ."

"My God! my God!" she sighed.

"Do you feel unwell?" he asked, approaching her anxiously. "It is indigestion, no doubt? You must get home, Madame Bovary; drink a little tea, that will strengthen you, or else a glass of fresh water with a little moist sugar."

"Why?"

And she looked like one awaking from a dream.

"Well, you see, you were putting your hand to your forehead. I thought you felt faint."

Then, bethinking himself: "But you were asking me something? What was it? I don't remember."

"I? Oh, nothing . . . nothing," Emma repeated.

And the glance she cast round her slowly fell upon the old man in the cassock. They looked at each other face to face without speaking.

"Well then, Madame Bovary," he said at last, "excuse me, but duty comes first as the saying goes; I must look after my brats. The first communion will soon be upon us, and I fear we shall be behind, as ever. So after Ascension Day I regularly keep them an extra hour every Wednesday. Poor children! One cannot lead them too soon into the path of the Lord . . . he himself advised us to do

so, through the mouth of his Divine Son. Good health to you, madame; my respects to your husband."

And he went into the church making a genuflection as soon as he reached the door.

Emma saw him disappear between the double row of benches, walking with heavy tread, his head a little bent over his shoulder, and with his two half-open hands stretched sideways.

Then she turned on her heel all of one piece, like a statue on a pivot, and went homewards. But the loud voice of the priest, the clear voices of the boys still reached her ears, and pursued her:

"Are you a Christian?"

"Yes, I am a Christian."

"What is a Christian?"

"He who, being baptized . . . baptized . . . baptized . . ."

She climbed the steps of the staircase holding on to the banisters, and when she was in her room threw herself into an arm-chair.

The whitish light of the window-panes was softly wavering. The pieces of furniture seemed more frozen in their places, about to lose themselves in the shadow as in an ocean of darkness. The fire was out, the clock went on ticking, and Emma vaguely wondered at this calm of all things while within herself there was such tumult. But little Berthe was there, between the window and the work-table, tottering on her knitted shoes, and trying to reach the end of her mother's apron-strings.

"Leave me alone," Emma said, pushing her back with her hand.

The little girl soon came up closer against her knees, and leaning on them with her arms, she looked up with her large blue eyes, while a small thread of clear saliva drooled from her lips on to the silk of her apron.

"Leave me alone," repeated the young woman quite angrily.

Her expression frightened the child, who began to scream.

"Will you leave me alone?" she said, forcing her away with her elbow.

Berthe fell at the foot of the chest of drawers against the brass handle; she cut her cheek, blood appeared. Madame Bovary rushed to lift her up, broke the bell-rope, called for the maid with all her might, and she was just going to curse herself when Charles appeared. It was dinner time; he was coming home.

"Look, dear!" said Emma calmly, "the child fell down while she was playing, and she hurt herself."

Charles reassured her; it was only a slight cut, and he went for some adhesive plaster.

Madame Bovary did not go downstairs to the dining-room; she wished to remain alone to look after the child. Then watching her

sleep, the little anxiety she still felt gradually wore off, and she seemed very stupid to herself, and very kind to have been so worried just now at so little. Berthe, in fact, no longer cried. Her breathing now imperceptibly raised the cotton covering. Big tears lay in the corner of the half-closed eyelids, through whose lashes one could see two pale sunken pupils; the adhesive plaster on her cheek pulled the skin aside.

"It is very strange," thought Emma, "how ugly this child is!"

When at eleven o'clock Charles came back from the pharmacist's shop, where he had gone after dinner to return the remainder of the plaster, he found his wife standing by the cradle.

"I assure you it's nothing," he said, kissing her on the forehead. "Don't worry, my poor darling; you will make yourself ill."

He had stayed a long time at the pharmacist's. Although he had not seemed much concerned, Homais, nevertheless, had exerted himself to buoy him up, to "raise his spirits." Then they had talked of the various dangers that threaten childhood, of the carelessness of servants. Madame Homais knew what he meant: she still carried on her chest the scars of a load of charcoal that a cook dropped on her when she was a child. Hence that her kind parents took all sorts of precautions. The knives were not sharpened, nor the floors waxed; there were iron gratings in front of the windows and strong bars across the fireplace. In spite of their spirit, the little Homais could not stir without some one watching them; at the slightest cold their father stuffed them with cough-syrups; and until they turned four they all were mercilessly forced to use padded head-wear. This, it is true, was a fancy of Madame Homais'; her husband was secretly afflicted by it. Fearing the possible consequences of such compression to the intellectual organs, he even went so far as to say to her:

"Do you want to make them into Caribs or Botocudos?"¹

Charles, however, had several times tried to interrupt the conversation.

"I would like a word with you," he whispered, addressing the clerk who preceded him on the stairs.

"Can he suspect anything?" Léon asked himself. His heart beat faster, and all sorts of conjectures occurred to him.

At last, Charles, having closed the door behind him, begged him to inquire at Rouen after the price of a fine daguerreotype. It was a sentimental surprise he intended for his wife, a delicate attention: his own portrait in black tail coat. But he wanted first to know how much it would cost. It wouldn't cause Monsieur Léon too much trouble to find out, since he went to town almost every week.

1. Native peoples of the New World.

Why? Monsieur Homais suspected some love affair, an intrigue. But he was mistaken. Léon was carrying on no flirtations. He was sadder than ever, as Madame Lefrançois saw from the amount of food he left on his plate. To find out more about it she questioned the tax-collector. Binet answered roughly that he wasn't being paid to spy on him.

All the same, his companion's behavior seemed very strange to him, for Léon often threw himself back in his chair, and stretching out his arms, complained vaguely about life.

"It's because you have no distractions," said the collector.

"What distractions?"

"If I were you I'd have a lathe."

"But I don't know how to turn," answered the clerk.

"Ah! that's true," said the other, rubbing his chin with an air of mingled contempt and satisfaction.

Léon was weary of loving without success; moreover, he was beginning to feel that depression caused by the repetition of the same life, with no interest to inspire and no hope to sustain it. He was so bored with Yonville and the Yonvillers, that the sight of certain persons, of certain houses, irritated him beyond endurance; and the pharmacist, good companion though he was, was becoming absolutely unbearable to him. Yet the prospect of a new condition of life frightened as much as it seduced him.

This apprehension soon changed into impatience, and then Paris beckoned from afar with the music of its masked balls, the laughter of the grisettes.² Since he was to go to law-school there anyway, why not set out at once? Who prevented him? And, inwardly, he began making preparations; he arranged his occupations beforehand. In his mind, he decorated an apartment. He would lead an artist's life there! He would take guitar lessons! He would have a dressing-gown, a Basque béret, blue velvet slippers! He already admired two crossed foils over his chimney-piece, with a skull on the guitar above them.

The main difficulty was to obtain his mother's consent, though nothing could seem more reasonable. Even his employer advised him to go to some other law office where he could learn more rapidly. Taking a middle course, then, Léon looked for some position as second clerk in Rouen; found none, and at last wrote his mother a long letter full of details, in which he set forth the reasons for going to live in Paris at once. She consented.

He did not hurry. Every day for a month Hivert carried boxes, valises, parcels for him from Yonville to Rouen and from Rouen to

2. Young working-class women who dated students and were known for living with them out of wedlock.

Yonville; and when Léon had rounded out his wardrobe, had his three armchairs restuffed, bought a supply of neckties, in a word, had made more preparations than for a trip round the world, he put it off from week to week, until he received a second letter from his mother urging him to leave, since he wanted to pass his examination before the vacation.

When the moment for the farewells had come, Madame Homais wept, Justin sobbed; Homais, as a strong man, concealed his emotion; he wished to carry his friend's overcoat himself as far as the gate of the notary, who was taking Léon to Rouen in his carriage. The latter had just time to bid farewell to Monsieur Bovary.

When he reached the head of the stairs he stopped, he was so out of breath. When he entered, Madame Bovary rose hurriedly.

"It is I again!" said Léon.

"I was sure of it!"

She bit her lips, and a rush of blood flowing under her skin made her red from the roots of her hair to the top of her collar. She remained standing, leaning with her shoulder against the wainscot.

"The doctor is not here?" he went on.

"He is out."

She repeated:

"He is out."

Then there was silence. They looked one at the other, and their thoughts, united in the same agony, clung together like two hearts in a passionate embrace.

"I would like to kiss little Berthe good-bye," said Léon.

Emma went down a few steps and called Félicité.

He threw one long look around him that took in the walls, the shelves, the fireplace, as if to appropriate everything, to carry it with him.

She returned, and the servant brought Berthe, who was swinging an upside down windmill at the end of a string. Léon kissed her several times on the neck.

"Good-bye poor child! good-bye, dear little one! good-bye!" And he gave her back to her mother.

"Take her away," she said.

They remained alone—Madame Bovary, her back turned, her face pressed against a window-pane; Léon held his cap in his hand, tapping it softly against his thigh.

"It is going to rain," said Emma.

"I have a coat," he answered.

"Ah!"

She turned round, her chin lowered, her forehead bent forward. The light covered it to the curve of the eyebrows, like a single piece

of marble, without revealing what Emma was seeing on the horizon or what she was thinking within herself.

"Well, good-bye," he sighed.

She raised her head with a quick movement.

"Yes, good-bye . . . go!"

They faced each other; he held out his hand; she hesitated.

"In the English manner, then," she said, offering him her hand and forcing a laugh.

Léon felt it between his fingers, and the very substance of all his being seemed to pass into that moist palm.

He opened his hand; their eyes met again, and he disappeared. When he reached the market-place, he stopped and hid behind a pillar to look for the last time at this white house with the four green blinds. He thought he saw a shadow behind the window in the room; but the curtain, sliding along the rod as though no one were touching it, slowly opened its long oblique folds, that spread out all at once, and thus hung straight and motionless as a plaster wall. Léon ran away.

From afar he saw his employer's buggy in the road, and by it a man in a coarse apron holding the horse. Homais and Monsieur Guillaumin were talking. They were waiting for him.

"Embrace me," said the pharmacist with tears in his eyes. "Here is your coat, my good friend. Mind the cold; take care of yourself; don't overdo it!"

"Come, Léon, jump in," said the notary.

Homais bent over the splash-board, and in a voice broken by sobs uttered these three sad words:

"A pleasant journey!"

"Good-night," said Monsieur Guillaumin. "Go ahead!"

They departed and Homais went home.

Madame Bovary had opened her window that looked out over the garden and watched the clouds. They were gathering round the sunset in the direction of Rouen, and rolling back swiftly in black swirls, behind which the great rays of the sun looked out like the golden arrows of a suspended trophy, while the rest of the empty heavens was white as porcelain. But a gust of wind bowed the poplars, and suddenly the rain fell; it rattled against the green leaves. Then the sun reappeared, the hens clucked, sparrows shook their wings in the damp thickets, and the pools of water on the gravel as they flowed away carried off the pink flowers of an acacia.

"Ah! how far off he must be already!" she thought.

Monsieur Homais, as usual, came at half-past six during dinner.

"Well," said he, "so we've sent off our young friend!"

"So it seems," replied the doctor.

Then, turning on his chair: "Any news at home?"

"Nothing much. Only my wife was a little out of sorts this afternoon. You know women—a nothing upsets them, especially my wife. And we shouldn't object to that, since their nervous system is much more fragile than ours."

"Poor Léon!" said Charles. "How will he live at Paris? Will he get used to it?"

Madame Bovary sighed.

"Of course!" said the pharmacist, smacking his lips. "The late night suppers! the masked balls, the champagne—he won't be losing his time, I assure you."

"I don't think he'll go wrong," objected Bovary.

"Nor do I," said Monsieur Homais quickly; "although he'll have to do like the rest for fear of passing for a Jesuit. And you don't know what a life those jokers lead in the Latin quarter, actresses and the rest! Besides, students are thought a great deal of in Paris. Provided they have a few accomplishments, they are received in the best society; there are even ladies of the Faubourg Saint-Germain who fall in love with them, which later gives them opportunities for making very good matches."

"But," said the doctor, "I fear for him that . . . down there . . ."

"You are right," interrupted the pharmacist, "that is the other side of the coin. And you are constantly obliged to keep your hand in your pocket there. Let us say, for instance, you are in a public garden. A fellow appears, well dressed, even wearing a decoration, and whom one would take for a diplomat. He addresses you, you chat with him; he forces himself upon you; offers you a pinch of snuff, or picks up your hat. Then you become more intimate; he takes you to a café, invites you to his countryhouse, introduces you, between two drinks, to all sorts of people; and three-fourths of the time it's only to get hold of your money or involve you in some shady deal."

"That is true," said Charles; "but I was thinking specially of illnesses—of typhoid fever, for example, that attacks students from the provinces."

Emma shuddered.

"Because of the change of diet," continued the pharmacist, "and of the resulting upset for the whole system. And then the water at Paris, don't you know! The dishes at restaurants, all the spiced food, end by heating the blood, and are not worth, whatever people may say of them, a good hearty stew. As for me, I have always preferred home cooking; it is healthier. So when I was studying pharmacy at Rouen, I boarded in a boarding-house; and dined with the professors."

And thus he went on, expounding his general opinions and his personal preferences, until Justin came to fetch him for a mulled egg for a customer.

"Not a moment's peace!" he cried; "always at it! I can't go out for a minute! Like a plough-horse, I have always to be sweating blood and water! What drudgery!" Then, when he was at the door, "By the way, do you know the news?"

"What news?"

"It is very likely," Homais went on, raising his eyebrows and assuming one of his gravest expressions, "that the agricultural fair of the Seine-Inférieure will be held this year at Yonville-l'Abbaye."

The rumor, at all events, is going the round. This morning the paper alluded to it. It would be of the utmost importance for our district. But we'll talk it over later. I can see, thank you; Justin has the lantern."

VII

The next day was a dreary one for Emma. Everything seemed shrouded in an atmosphere of bleakness that hung darkly over the outward aspect of things, and sorrow blew into her soul with gentle moans, as the winter wind makes in ruined castles. Her reverie was that of things gone forever, the exhaustion that seizes you after everything is done; the pain, in short, caused by the interruption of a familiar motion, the sudden halting of a long drawn out vibration.

As on the return from Vaubyessard, when the quadrilles were running in her head, she was full of a gloomy melancholy, of a numb despair. Léon reappeared, taller, handsomer, more charming, more vague. Though separated from her, he had not left her; he was there, and the walls of the house seemed to hold his shadow. She could not detach her eyes from the carpet where he had walked, from those empty chairs where he had sat. The river still flowed on and slowly drove its ripples along the slippery banks. They had often walked there listening to the murmur of the waves over the moss-covered pebbles. How bright the sun had been! What happy afternoons they had known, alone, in the shade at the end of the garden! He read aloud, bare-headed, sitting on a footstool of dry sticks; the fresh wind of the meadow set trembling the leaves of the book and the nasturtiums of the arbor. Ah! he was gone, the only charm of her life, the only possible hope of joy. Why had she not seized this happiness when it came to her? Why did she not keep him from leaving, beg him on her knees, when he was about to flee from her? And she cursed herself for not having loved Léon. She thirsted for his lips. She wanted to run after him, to throw herself into his arms and say to him, "It is I; I am yours." But Emma

recoiled beforehand at the difficulties of the enterprise, and her desires, increased by regret, became only the more acute.

Henceforth the memory of Léon was the center of her boredom; it burnt there more brightly than the fires left by travelers on the snow of a Russian steppe. She threw herself at his image, pressed herself against it; she stirred carefully the dying embers, sought all around her anything that could make it flare; and the most distant reminiscences, like the most immediate occasions, what she experienced as well as what she imagined, her wasted voluptuous desires that were unsatisfied, her projects of happiness that crackled in the wind like dead boughs, her sterile virtue, her lost hopes, the yoke of domesticity,—she gathered it all up, took everything, and made it all serve as fuel for her melancholy.

The flames, however, subsided, either because the supply had exhausted itself, or because it had been piled up too much. Love, little by little, was quelled by absence; regret stifled beneath habit; and the bright fire that had empurpled her pale sky was overspread and faded by degrees. In her slumbering conscience, she took her disgust for her husband for aspirations towards her lover, the burning of hate for the warmth of tenderness; but as the tempest still raged, and as passion burnt itself down to the very cinders, and no help came, no sun rose, there was night on all sides, and she was lost in the terrible cold that pierced her through.

Then the evil days of Tostes began again. She thought herself now far more unhappy; for she had the experience of grief, with the certainty that it would not end.

A woman who had consented to such sacrifices could well allow herself certain whims. She bought a gothic prie-Dieu, and in a month spent fourteen francs on lemons for polishing her nails; she wrote to Rouen for a blue cashmere gown; she chose one of Lheureux's finest scarves, and wore it knotted round her waist over her dressing-gown; thus dressed, she lay stretched out on the couch with closed blinds.

She often changed her hairdo; she did her hair *à la Chinoise*, in flowing curls, in plaited coils; she parted it on one side and rolled it under, like a man's.

She wanted to learn Italian; she bought dictionaries, a grammar, and a supply of white paper. She tried serious reading, history, and philosophy. Sometimes in the night Charles woke up with a start, thinking he was being called to a patient:

"I'm coming," he stammered.

It was the noise of a match Emma had struck to relight the lamp. But her reading fared like her pieces of embroidery, all of which, only just begun, filled her cupboard; she took it up, left it, passed on to other books.

She had attacks in which she could easily have been driven to commit any folly. She maintained one day, to contradict her husband, that she could drink off a large glass of brandy, and, as Charles was stupid enough to dare her to, she swallowed the brandy to the last drop.

In spite of her vaporish airs (as the housewives of Yonville called them), Emma, all the same, never seemed gay, and usually she had at the corners of her mouth that immobile contraction that puckers the faces of old maids, and those of men whose ambition has failed. She was pale all over, white as a sheet; the skin of her nose was drawn at the nostrils, her eyes had a vague look. After discovering three grey hairs on her temples, she talked much of her old age.

She often had spells. One day she even spat blood, and, as Charles fussed round her showing his anxiety . . .

"Bah!" she answered, "what does it matter?"

Charles fled to his study and wept there, both his elbows on the table, sitting in his office chair under the phrenological head.

Then he wrote to his mother to beg her to come, and they had many long consultations together on the subject of Emma.

What should they decide? What was to be done since she rejected all medical treatment?

"Do you know what your wife wants?" replied Madame Bovary senior. "She wants to be forced to occupy herself with some manual work. If she were obliged, like so many others, to earn her living, she wouldn't have these vapors, that come to her from a lot of ideas she stuffs into her head, and from the idleness in which she lives."

"Yet she is always busy," said Charles.

"Ah! always busy at what? Reading novels, bad books, works against religion, and in which they mock at priests in speeches taken from Voltaire. But all that leads you far astray, my poor child. A person who has no religion is bound to go astray."

So it was decided to keep Emma from reading novels. The enterprise did not seem easy. The old lady took it upon herself: She was, when she passed through Rouen, to go herself to the lending library and represent that Emma had discontinued her subscription. Would they not have a right to call in the police if the bookseller persisted all the same in his poisonous trade?

The farewells of mother and daughter-in-law were cold. During the three weeks that they had been together they had not exchanged half-a-dozen words except for the usual questions and greetings when they met at table and in the evening before going to bed.

Madame Bovary left on a Wednesday, the market-day at Yonville.

Since morning, the Square had been crowded by end on end of carts, which, with their shafts in the air, spread all along the line of

houses from the church to the inn. On the other side there were canvas booths for the sale of cotton goods, blankets, and woolen stockings, together with harness for horses, and packages of blue ribbon, whose ends fluttered in the wind. The coarse hardware was spread out on the ground between pyramids of eggs and hampers of cheeses showing pieces of sticky straw. Near the wheat threshers clucking hens passed their necks through the bars of flat cages. The crowds piled up in one place and refused to budge; they threatened at times to smash the window of the pharmacy. On Wednesdays his shop was never empty, and the people pushed in less to buy drugs than for consultations, so great was Homais' reputation in the neighboring villages. His unshakable assurance deeply impressed the country people. They considered him a greater doctor than all the doctors.

Emma was standing in the open window (she often did so: in the provinces, the window takes the place of the theatre and the promenade) and she amused herself with watching the rustic crowd, when she saw a gentleman in a green velvet coat. Although he was wearing heavy boots, he had on yellow gloves; he was coming towards the doctor's house, followed by a worried looking peasant with lowered head and quite a thoughtful air.

"Can I see the doctor?" he asked Justin, who was talking on the doorsteps with Félicité.

And, mistaking him for a servant of the house, he added,

"Tell him that M. Rodolphe Boulanger *de la* Huchette is here."

It was not out of affectation that the new arrival added "*de la* Huchette" to his name, but to make himself the better known. La Huchette, in fact, was an estate near Yonville, where he had just bought the château and two farms that he cultivated himself, without, however, taking too many pains. He lived as a bachelor, and was supposed to have an income of "at least fifteen thousand francs a year."

Charles came into the room. Monsieur Boulanger introduced his man, who wanted to be bled because he felt "as if ants were crawling all over him."

"It will clear me out," was his answer to all reasonable objections.

So Bovary brought a bandage and a basin, and asked Justin to hold it. Then addressing the peasant, who was already turning pale:

"Don't be scared, my friend."

"No, no, sir," said the other; "go ahead!"

And with an air of bravado he held out his heavy arm. At the prick of the lancet the blood spurted out, splashing against the looking-glass.

"Hold the basin nearer," exclaimed Charles.

"Look!" said the peasant, "one would swear it was a little fountain flowing. How red my blood is! That's a good sign, isn't it?"

"Sometimes," answered the officier de santé, "one feels nothing at first, and then they start fainting, especially when they're strong like this one."

At these words the peasant dropped the lancet-case he was holding back of his chair. A shudder of his shoulders made the chair-back creak. His hat fell off.

"I thought as much," said Bovary, pressing his finger on the vein.

The basin was beginning to tremble in Justin's hands; his knees shook, he turned pale.

"My wife! get my wife!" called Charles.

With one bound she rushed down the staircase.

"Vinegar," he cried. "Lord, two at a time!"

And he was so upset he could hardly put on the compress.

"It is nothing," said Monsieur Boulanger quietly, taking Justin in his arms. He seated him on the table with his back resting against the wall.

Madame Bovary opened the collar of his shirt. The strings of his shirt had got into a knot, and she was for some minutes moving her light fingers about the young fellow's neck. Then she poured some vinegar on her cambric handkerchief; she moistened his temples with little dabs, and then blew delicately upon them.

The ploughman revived, but Justin remained unconscious. His eyeballs disappeared in their whites like blue flowers in milk.

"We must hide this from him," said Charles.

Madame Bovary took the basin to put it under the table. With the movement she made in bending down, her dress (it was a summer dress with four flounces, yellow, long in the waist and wide in the skirt) spread out around on the tiles; and as Emma, stooping, staggered a little in stretching out her arms, the pull of her dress made it hug more closely the line of her bosom. Then she went to fetch a bottle of water, and she was melting some pieces of sugar when the pharmacist arrived. The maid had gone for him at the height of the confusion; seeing his pupil with his eyes open he gave a sigh of relief; then going round him he looked at him from head to foot.

"You fool!" he said, "you're a real fool! A capital idiot! And all that for a little blood-letting! and coming from a fellow who isn't afraid of anything! a real squirrel, climbing to incredible heights in order to steal nuts! You can be proud of yourself! showing a fine talent for the pharmaceutical profession; for, later on, you may be called before the courts of justice in serious circumstances, to enlighten the consciences of the magistrates, and you would have to keep your head then, to reason, show yourself a man, or else pass for an imbecile."

Justin did not answer. The pharmacist went on:

"Who asked you to come? You are always pestering the doctor and madame. Anyway, on Wednesday, I need you in the shop. There are over twenty people there now waiting to be served. I left them just out of concern for you. Get going! hurry! Wait for me there and keep an eye on the jars."

When Justin, who was rearranging his clothes, had gone, they talked for a little while about fainting-fits. Madame Bovary had never fainted.

"That is most unusual for a lady," said Monsieur Boulanger; "but some people are very susceptible. Thus in a duel, I have seen a witness faint away at the mere sound of the loading of pistols."

"As for me," said the pharmacist, "the sight of other people's blood doesn't affect me in the least, but the mere thought of my own flowing would make me faint if I reflected upon it too much."

Monsieur Boulanger, however, dismissed his servant and told him to be quiet, now that his whim was satisfied.

"It gave me the opportunity of making your acquaintance," he added, and he looked at Emma as he said this.

Then he put three francs on the corner of the table, bowed casually, and went out.

He soon had crossed to the other bank of the river (this was his way back to La Huchette), and Emma saw him in the meadow, walking under the poplars, slackening his pace now and then as one who reflects.

"She is nice, very nice, that doctor's wife," he said to himself. "Fine teeth, black eyes, a dainty foot, a figure like a Parisienne's. Where the devil does she come from? Where did that boor ever pick her up?"

Monsieur Rodolphe Boulanger was thirty-four; he combined brutality of temperament with a shrewd judgment, having had much experience with women and being something of a connoisseur. This one had seemed pretty to him; so he kept dreaming about her and her husband.

"I think he is very stupid. She must be tired of him, no doubt. He has dirty nails, and hasn't shaven for three days. While he is trotting after his patients, she sits there mending socks. How bored she gets! How she'd want to be in the city and go dancing every night! Poor little woman! She is gaping after love like a carp on the kitchen table after water. Three gallant words and she'd adore me, I'm sure of it. She'd be tender, charming. Yes; but how get rid of her afterwards?"

The prospect of love's involvements brought to mind, by contrast, his present mistress. She was an actress in Rouen whom he kept, and when he had pondered over this image, even in memory he found himself satiated.

"Madame Bovary," he thought, "is much prettier, much fresher too. Virginie is decidedly beginning to grow fat. Her enthusiasms bore me to tears. And that habit of hers of eating prawns all the time . . . !"

The fields were empty; around him Rodolphe only heard the noise of the grass as it rubbed against his boots, and the chirping of the cricket hidden away among the oats. He again saw Emma in her room, dressed as he had seen her, and he undressed her.

"Oh, I will have her," he cried, smashing, with a blow of his cane, a clod of earth before him.

At once, he began to consider the strategy. He wondered:

"Where shall we meet? And how? We shall always be having the brat on our hands, and the maid, the neighbors, the husband, all sorts of worries. Bah!" he concluded, "it would be too time-consuming!"

Then he started again:

"But she really has eyes that bore into your heart. And that pale complexion! And I, who love pale women!"

When he reached the top of the Argueil hills he had made up his mind.

"All that remains is to create the proper opportunity. Well, I will call in now and then, I'll send game and poultry: I'll have myself bled, if need be. We shall become friends; I'll invite them to my place. Of course!" he added, "the agricultural fair is coming on; she'll be there. I'll see her. We'll begin boldly, for that's the surest way."

VIII

At last it came, the much-awaited agricultural fair. Ever since the morning of the great day, the villagers, on their doorsteps, were discussing the preparations. The facade of the townhall had been hung with garlands of ivy; a tent had been erected in a meadow for the banquet; and in the middle of the Place, in front of the church, a kind of a small cannon was to announce the arrival of the prefect and the names of the fortunate farmers who had won prizes. The National Guard of Buchy (there was none at Yonville) had come to join the corps of firemen, of whom Binet was captain. On that day he wore a collar even higher than usual; and, tightly buttoned in his tunic, his figure was so stiff and motionless that all life seemed to be confined to his legs, which moved in time with the music, with a single motion. As there was some rivalry between the tax-collector and the colonel, both, to show off their talents, drilled their men separately. The red epaulettes and the black breastplates kept parading up and down, one after the other; there was no end

to it, and it constantly began again. Never had there been such a display of pomp. Several citizens had washed down their houses the evening before; tricolor flags hung from half-open windows; all the cafés were full; and in the lovely weather the starched caps, the golden crosses, and the colored neckerchiefs seemed whiter than snow, shone in the sun, and relieved with their motley colors the somber monotony of the frock-coats and blue smocks. The neighboring farmers' wives, when they got off their horses, removed the long pin with which they had gathered their dresses tight around them for fear of getting them spattered; while their husbands protected their hats by covering them with handkerchiefs, of which they held one corner in their teeth.

The crowd came into the main street from both ends of the village. People poured in from the lanes, the alleys, the houses; and from time to time one heard the banging of doors closing behind ladies of the town in cotton gloves, who were going out to see the fête. Most admired of all were two long lamp-stands covered with lanterns, that flanked a platform on which the authorities were to sit. Aside from this, a kind of pole had been placed against the four columns of the townhall, each bearing a small standard of greenish cloth, embellished with inscriptions in gold letters. On one was written, "To Commerce"; on the other, "To Agriculture"; on the third, "To Industry"; and on the fourth, "To the Fine Arts."

But the jubilation that brightened all faces seemed to darken that of Madame Lefrançois, the innkeeper. Standing on her kitchen-steps she muttered to herself:

"How stupid! How stupid they are with their canvas booth! Do they think the prefect will be glad to dine down there under a tent like a gipsy? They call all this fussing for the good of the town! As if it helped the town to send to Neufchâtel for the keeper of a cook-shop! And for whom? For cowheads! for tramps!"

The pharmacist passed by. He was wearing a frock-coat, nankeen trousers, beaver shoes, and, to everyone's surprise, a hat—a low crowned hat.

"Your servant," he said. "Excuse me, I am in a hurry."

And as the fat widow asked where he was going . . .

"It seems odd to you, doesn't it, I who am always more cooped up in my laboratory than the man's rat in his cheese."

"What cheese?" asked the landlady.

"Oh, nothing, never mind!" Homais continued. "I merely wished to convey to you, Madame Lefrançois, that I usually live at home like a recluse. To-day, however, considering the circumstances, it is necessary . . ."

"Oh, are you going down there?" she said contemptuously.

"Yes, I am going," replied the pharmacist, astonished. "Am I not a member of the Advisory committee?"

Mère Lefrançois looked at him for a few moments, and ended by saying with a smile:

"That's another matter! But is agriculture any of your business? Do you understand anything about it?"

"Certainly I understand it, since I am a pharmacist,—that is to say, a chemist. And the object of chemistry, Madame Lefrançois, being the knowledge of the reciprocal and molecular action of all natural bodies, it follows that agriculture is comprised within its domain. And, in fact, the composition of the manure, the fermentation of liquids, the analyses of gases, and the effects of miasmas, what, I ask you, is all this, if it isn't chemistry, pure and simple?"

The landlady did not answer. Homais went on:

"Do you think that to be an agriculturist it is necessary to have tilled the earth or fattened fowls oneself? It is much more important to know the composition of the substances in question—the geological strata, the atmospheric actions, the quality of the soil, the minerals, the waters, the density of the different bodies, their capillarity, and what not. And one must be master of all the principles of hygiene in order to direct, criticize the construction of buildings, the feeding of animals; the diet of the servants. And, moreover, Madame Lefrançois, one must know botany, be able to distinguish between plants, you understand, which are the wholesome and those that are deleterious, which are unproductive and which nutritive, if it is well to pull them up here and re-sow them there, to propagate some, destroy others; in brief, one must keep pace with science by reading publications and papers, be always on the alert to detect improvements."

The landlady never took her eyes off the "Café Français" and the pharmacist went on:

"Would to God our agriculturists were chemists, or that at least they would pay more attention to the counsels of science. Thus lately I myself wrote a substantial paper, a memoir of over seventy-two pages, entitled, 'Cider, its Manufacture and its Effects, together with some New Reflections on this Subject,' that I sent to the Agricultural Society in Rouen, and which even procured me the honor of being received among its members—Section, Agriculture; Class, Pomology. Well, if my work had been given to the public . . ."

But the pharmacist stopped, so distracted did Madame Lefrançois seem.

"Just look at them!" she said. "It's past comprehension! Such a hash-house!" And with a shrug of the shoulders that stretched out the stitches of her sweater, she pointed with both hands at the rival

establishment, from where singing erupted. "Well, it won't last long," she added, "It'll be over before a week."

Homais drew back in surprise. She came down three steps and whispered in his ear:

"What! you didn't know it? They'll foreclose this week. It's Lheureux who does the selling; he killed them off with his notes."

"What a dreadful catastrophe!" exclaimed the pharmacist, who always found expressions that filled all imaginable circumstances.

Then the landlady began telling him this story, that she had heard from Theodore, Monsieur Guillaumin's servant, and although she detested Tellier, she blamed Lheureux. He was "a wheedler, a fawner."

"There!" she said. "Look at him! There he goes down the square; he is greeting Madame Bovary, who's wearing a green hat. And she is on Monsieur Boulanger's arm."

"Madame Bovary!" exclaimed Homais. "I must go at once and pay her my respects. Perhaps she'll be pleased to have a seat in the enclosure under the peristyle." And, without heeding Madame Lefrançois, who was calling him back for more gossip, the pharmacist walked off rapidly with a smile on his face and his walk jauntier than ever, bowing copiously to right and left, and taking up much room with the large tails of his frock-coat that fluttered behind him in the wind.

Rodolphe having caught sight of him from afar, quickened his pace, but Madame Bovary couldn't keep up; so he walked more slowly, and, smiling at her, said roughly:

"It's only to get away from that fat fellow, you know, the pharmacist."

She nudged him with her elbow.

"How shall I understand that?" he asked himself.

And, walking on, he looked at her out of the corner of his eyes.

Her profile was so calm that it revealed nothing.

It stood out in the light from the oval of her hat that was tied with pale ribbons like waving rushes. Her eyes with their long curved lashes looked straight before her, and though wide open, they seemed slightly slanted at the cheek-bones, because of the blood pulsing gently under the delicate skin. A rosy light shone through the partition between her nostrils. Her head was bent upon her shoulder, and the tips of her teeth shone through her lips like pearls.

"Is she making fun of me?" thought Rodolphe.

Emma's gesture, however, had only been meant for a warning; for Monsieur Lheureux was accompanying them, and spoke now and again as if to enter into the conversation.

"What a beautiful day! Everybody is outside! The wind is from the east!"

Neither Madame Bovary nor Rodolphe answered him, but their slightest movement made him draw near saying, "I beg your pardon!" and raising his hat.

When they reached the blacksmith's house, instead of following the road up to the fence, Rodolphe suddenly turned down a path, drawing Madame Bovary with him. He called out:

"Good evening, Monsieur Lheureux! We'll see you soon!"

"How you got rid of him!" she said, laughing.

"Why," he went on, "allow oneself to be intruded upon by others? And as to-day I have the happiness of being with you . . ."

Emma blushed. He did not finish his sentence. Then he talked of the fine weather and of the pleasure of walking on the grass. A few daisies had sprung up again.

"Here are some pretty Easter daisies," he said, "and enough to provide oracles for all the lovers in the vicinity."

He added,

"Shall I pick some? What do you think?"

"Are you in love?" she asked, coughing a little.

"H'm, h'm! who knows?" answered Rodolphe.

The meadow was beginning to fill up, and the housewives were hustling about with their great umbrellas, their baskets, and their babies. One often had to make way for a long file of country girls, servant-maids with blue stockings, flat shoes and silver rings, who smelt of milk when one passed close to them. They walked along holding one another by the hand, and thus they spread over the whole field from the row of open trees to the banquet tent. But this was the judging time, and the farmers one after the other entered a kind of enclosure formed by ropes supported on sticks.

The beasts were there, their noses turned toward the rope, and making a confused line with their unequal rumps. Drowsy pigs were burrowing in the earth with their snouts, calves were lowing and bleating; the cows, one leg folded under them stretched their bellies on the grass, slowly chewing their cud, and blinking their heavy eyelids at the gnats that buzzed around them. Ploughmen with bare arms were holding by the halter prancing stallions that neighed with dilated nostrils looking in the direction of the mares. These stood quietly, stretching out their heads and flowing manes, while their foals rested in their shadow, or sucked them from time to time. And above the long undulation of these crowded bodies one saw some white mane rising in the wind like a wave, or some sharp horns sticking out, and the heads of men running about. Apart, outside the enclosure, a hundred paces off, was a large black bull, muzzled, with an iron ring in its nostrils, and who moved no more than if he had been in bronze. A child in rags was holding him by a rope.

Between the two lines the committee-men were walking with heavy steps, examining each animal, then consulting one another in a low voice. One who seemed of more importance now and then took notes in a book as he walked along. This was the president of the jury, Monsieur Derozerays de la Panville. As soon as he recognised Rodolphe he came forward quickly, and smiling amiably, said:

"What! Monsieur Boulanger, you are deserting us?"

Rodolphe protested that he would come. But when the president had disappeared:

"To tell the truth," he said, "I shall not go. Your company is better than his."

And while poking fun at the show, Rodolphe, to move about more easily, showed the gendarme his blue card, and even stopped now and then in front of some fine beast, which Madame Bovary did not at all admire. He noticed this, and began jeering at the Yonville ladies and their dresses; then he apologized for his own casual attire. It had the inconsistency of things at once commonplace and refined which enchants or exasperates the ordinary man because he suspects that it reveals an unconventional existence, a dubious morality, the affectations of the artist, and, above all, a certain contempt for established conventions. The wind, blowing up his batiste shirt with pleated cuffs revealed a waistcoat of grey linen, and his broad-striped trousers disclosed at the ankle nankeen boots with patent leather gaiters. These were so polished that they reflected the grass. He trampled on horse's dung, one hand in the pocket of his jacket and his straw hat tilted on one side.

"Anyway," he added, "when one lives in the country . . ."

"Nothing is worth while," said Emma.

"That is true," replied Rodolphe. "To think that not one of these people is capable of understanding even the cut of a coat!"

Then they talked about provincial mediocrity, of the lives it stifles, the lost illusions.

"No wonder," said Rodolphe, "that I am more and more sinking in gloom."

"You!" she said in astonishment; "I thought you very light-hearted."

"Oh, yes, it seems that way because I know how to wear a mask of mockery in society, and yet, how many a time at the sight of a cemetery by moonlight have I not asked myself whether it were not better to join those sleeping there!"

"Oh! and your friends?" she said. "How can you forget them?"

"My friends! What friends? Have I any? Who cares about me?" And he followed up the last words with a kind of hissing whistle.

They were obliged to separate because of a great pile of chairs that a man was carrying behind them. He was so overladen that one could only see the tips of his wooden shoes and the ends of his two outstretched arms. It was Lestiboudois, the gravedigger, who was carrying the church chairs about amongst the people. Alive to all that concerned his interests, he had hit upon this means of turning the agricultural show to his advantage, and his idea was succeeding, for he no longer knew which way to turn. In fact, the villagers, who were tired and hot, quarrelled for these seats, whose straw smelt of incense, and they leant against the thick backs, stained with the wax of candles, with a certain veneration.

Madame Bovary again took Rodolphe's arm; he went on as if speaking to himself:

"Yes, I have missed so many things. Always alone! Ah! if I had some aim in life, if I had met some love, if I had found some one! Oh, how I would have spent all the energy of which I am capable, surmounted everything, overcome everything!"

"Yet it seems to me," said Emma, "that you are not to be pitied."

"Ah! you think so?" said Rodolphe.

"For, after all," she went on, "you are free . . ."

She hesitated,

"Rich . . ."

"Don't mock me," he replied.

And she protested that she was not mocking him, when the sound of a cannon was heard; immediately all began crowding one another towards the village.

It was a false alarm. The prefect seemed not to be coming, and the members of the jury felt much embarrassed, not knowing if they ought to begin the meeting or wait longer.

At last, at the end of the Place a large hired landau appeared, drawn by two thin horses, generously whipped by a coachman in a white hat. Binet had only just time to shout, "Present arms!" and the colonel to imitate him. There was a rush towards the guns; every one pushed forward. A few even forgot their collars.

But the prefectural coach seemed to sense the trouble, for the two yoked nags, dawdling in their harness, came at a slow trot in front of the townhall at the very moment when the National Guard and firemen deployed, beating time with their boots.

"Present arms!" shouted Binet.

"Halt!" shouted the colonel. "By the left flank, march!"

And after presenting arms, during which the clang of the band, letting loose, rang out like a brass kettle rolling downstairs, all the guns were lowered.

Then was seen stepping down from the carriage a gentleman in a

short coat with silver braiding, with bald brow, and wearing a tuft of hair at the back of his head, of a sallow complexion and the most benign of aspects. His eyes, very large and covered by heavy lids, were half-closed to look at the crowd, while at the same time he raised his sharp nose, and forced a smile upon his sunken mouth. He recognised the mayor by his scarf, and explained to him that the prefect was not able to come. He himself was a councillor at the prefecture; then he added a few apologies. Monsieur Tuvache reciprocated with polite compliments, humbly acknowledged by the other; and they remained thus, face to face, their foreheads almost touching, surrounded by members of the jury, the municipal council, the notable personages, the National Guard and the crowd. The councillor pressing his little cocked hat to his breast repeated his greetings, while Tuvache, bent like a bow, also smiled, stammered, tried to say something, protested his devotion to the monarchy and the honor that was being done to Yonville.

Hippolyte, the groom from the inn, took the head of the horses from the coachman, and, limping along with his clubfoot, led them to the door of the "Lion d'Or" where a number of peasants collected to look at the carriage. The drum beat, the howitzer thundered, and the gentlemen one by one mounted the platform, where they sat down in red utrecht velvet arm-chairs that had been lent by Madame Tuvache.

All these people looked alike. Their fair flabby faces, somewhat tanned by the sun, were the color of sweet cider, and their puffy whiskers emerged from stiff collars, kept up by white cravats with broad bows. All the waistcoats were of velvet, double-breasted; all the watches had, at the end of a long ribbon, an oval seal; all rested their two hands on their thighs, carefully stretching the stride of their trousers, whose unspunged glossy cloth shone more brilliantly than the leather of their heavy boots.

The ladies of the company stood at the back under the porch between the pillars, while the common herd was opposite, standing up or sitting on chairs. Lestiboudois had brought there all the chairs that he had moved from the field, and he even kept running back every minute to fetch others from the church. He caused such confusion with this piece of business that one had great difficulty in getting to the small steps of the platform.

"I think," said Monsieur Lheureux to the pharmacist who was heading for his seat, "that they ought to have put up two Venetian masts with something rather severe and rich for ornaments; it would have been a very pretty sight."

"Certainly," replied Homais; "but what can you expect? The mayor took everything on his own shoulders. He hasn't much taste.

Poor Tuvache! he is completely devoid of what is called the genius of art."

Meanwhile, Rodolphe and Madame Bovary had ascended to the first floor of the townhall, to the "council-room," and, as it was empty, he suggested that they could enjoy the sight there more comfortably. He fetched three chairs from the round table under the bust of the monarch, and having carried them to one of the windows, they sat down together.

There was commotion on the platform, long whisperings, much parleying. At last the councillor got up. It was known by now that his name was Lieuvain, and in the crowd the name was now passing from lip to lip. After he had reshuffled a few pages, and bent over them to see better, he began:

"Gentlemen! May I be permitted first of all (before addressing you on the object of our meeting to-day, and this sentiment will, I am sure, be shared by you all), may I be permitted, I say, to pay a tribute to the higher administration, to the government, to the monarch, gentlemen, our sovereign, to that beloved king, to whom no branch of public or private prosperity is a matter of indifference, and who directs with a hand at once so firm and wise the chariot of the state amid the incessant perils of a stormy sea, knowing, moreover, how to make peace respected as well as war, industry, commerce, agriculture, and the fine arts."

"I ought," said Rodolphe, "to get back a little further."

"Why?" said Emma.

But at this moment the voice of the councillor rose to an extraordinary pitch. He declaimed—

"This is no longer the time, gentlemen, when civil discord made blood flow in our market squares, when the landowner, the businessman, the working-man himself, lying down to peaceful sleep, trembled lest he should be awakened suddenly by the noise of alarming tocsins, when the most subversive doctrines audaciously sapped foundations . . ."

"Well, some one down there might see me," Rodolphe resumed, "then I should have to invent excuses for a fortnight; and with my bad reputation . . ."

"Oh, you are slandering yourself," said Emma.

"No! It is dreadful, I assure you."

"But, gentlemen," continued the councillor, "if, banishing from my memory the remembrance of these sad pictures, I carry my eyes back to the present situation of our dear country, what do I see there? Everywhere commerce and the arts are flourishing; everywhere new means of communication, like so many new arteries in

the body politic, establish within it new relations. Our great industrial centers have recovered all their activity; religion, more consolidated, smiles in all hearts; our ports are full, confidence is born again, and France breathes once more! . . .”

“Besides,” added Rodolphe, “perhaps from the world’s point of view they are right.”

“How so?” she asked.

“What!” said he. “Don’t you know that there are souls constantly tormented? They need by turns to dream and to act, the purest passions and the most turbulent joys, and thus they fling themselves into all sorts of fantasies, of follies.”

Then she looked at him as one looks at a traveler who has voyaged over strange lands, and went on:

“We have not even this distraction, we poor women!”

“A sad distraction, for happiness isn’t found in it.”

“But is it ever found?” she asked.

“Yes; one day it comes,” he answered.

“And this is what you have understood,” said the councillor. “You, farmers, agricultural laborers! you pacific pioneers of a work that belongs wholly to civilisation! you, men of progress and morality, you have understood, I say, that political storms are even more redoubtable than atmospheric disturbances!”

“A day comes,” repeated Rodolphe, “one is near despair. Then the horizon expands; it is as if a voice cried, ‘It is here!’ You feel the need of confiding the whole of your life, of giving everything, sacrificing everything to this person. There is no need for explanations; one understands each other, having met before in dreams!” (And he looked at her.) “At last, here it is, this treasure so sought after, here before you. It glitters, it flashes; yet one still doubts, one does not believe it; one remains dazzled, as if one went out from darkness into light.”

And as he ended Rodolphe suited the action to the word. He passed his hand over his face, like a man about to faint. Then he let it fall on Emma’s. She drew hers back. But the councillor was still reading.

“And who would be surprised at it, gentlemen? He only who was so blind, so imprisoned (I do not fear to say it), so imprisoned by the prejudices of another age as still to misunderstand the spirit of our rural populations. Where, indeed, is more patriotism to be found than in the country, greater devotion to the public welfare, in a word, more intelligence? And, gentlemen, I do not mean that su-

perfidial intelligence, vain ornament of idle minds, but rather that profound and balanced intelligence that applies itself above all else to useful objects, thus contributing to the good of all, to the common amelioration and to the support of the state, born of respect for law and the practice of duty . . .”

“Ah! again!” said Rodolphe. “Always ‘duty.’ I am sick of the word. They are a lot of old jackasses in woolen vests and old bigots with foot-warmers and rosaries who constantly drone into our ears ‘Duty, duty!’ Ah! by Jove! as if one’s real duty were not to feel what is great, cherish the beautiful, and not accept all the conventions of society with the hypocrisy it forces upon us.”

“Yet . . . yet . . .” objected Madame Bovary.

“No, no! Why cry out against the passions? Are they not the one beautiful thing on earth, the source of heroism, of enthusiasm, of poetry, music, the arts, in a word, of everything?”

“But one must,” said Emma, “to some extent bow to the opinion of the world and accept its morality.”

“Ah, but there are two moralities,” he replied, “the petty one, the morality of small men that constantly keeps changing, but yells itself hoarse; crude and loud like the crowd of imbeciles that you see down there. But the other, the eternal, that is about us and above, like the landscape that surrounds us, and the blue heavens that give us light.”

Monsieur Lieuvain had just wiped his mouth with a pocket-handkerchief. He continued:

“It would be presumptuous of me, gentlemen, to point out to you the uses of agriculture. Who supplies our wants, who provides our means of subsistence, if not the farmer? It is the farmer, gentlemen, who sows with laborious hand the fertile furrows of the country, brings forth the wheat, which, being ground, is made into a powder by means of ingenious machinery, issues from there under the name of flour, and is then transported to our cities, soon delivered to the baker, who makes it into food for poor and rich alike. Again, is it not the farmer who fattens his flocks in the pastures in order to provide us with warm clothing? For how should we clothe or nourish ourselves without his labor? And, gentlemen, is it even necessary to go so far for examples? Who has not frequently reflected on all the momentous things that we get out of that modest animal, the ornament of poultry-yards, that provides us at once with a soft pillow for our bed, with succulent flesh for our tables, and eggs? But I should never end if I were to enumerate one after the other all the different products which the earth, well cultivated, like a generous mother, lavishes upon her children. Here it is the

vine; elsewhere apple trees for cider; there rapeseed; further, cheeses; and flax; gentlemen, let us not forget flax, which has made such great strides forward these last years and to which I call your special attention!"

He had no need to call it, for all the mouths of the multitude were wide open, as if to drink in his words. Tuvache by his side listened to him with staring eyes. Monsieur Derozerays from time to time softly closed his eyelids, and farther on the pharmacist, with his son Napoleon between his knees, put his hand behind his ear in order not to lose a syllable. The chins of the other members of the jury nodded slowly up and down in their waistcoats in sign of approval. The firemen at the foot of the platform rested on their bayonets; and Binet, motionless, stood with out-turned elbows, the point of his sabre in the air. Perhaps he could hear, but he certainly couldn't see a thing, for the visor of his helmet fell down on his nose. His lieutenant, the youngest son of Monsieur Tuvache, had an even bigger one; it was so large that he could hardly keep it on, in spite of the cotton scarf that peeped out from underneath. He wore a smile of childlike innocence, and his thin pale face, dripping with sweat, expressed satisfaction, some exhaustion and sleepiness.

The square was crowded up to the houses. People were leaning on their elbows at all the windows, others were standing on their doorsteps, and Justin, in front of the pharmacy, seemed fascinated by the spectacle. In spite of the silence Monsieur Lieuvain's voice was lost in the air. It reached you in fragments of phrases, interrupted here and there by the creaking of chairs in the crowd; then, the long bellowing of an ox would suddenly burst forth from behind, or else the bleating of the lambs, who answered one another from street to street. Even the cowherds and shepherds had driven their beasts this far, and one could hear their lowing from time to time, while with their tongues they tore down some scrap of foliage that hung over their muzzles.

Rodolphe had drawn nearer to Emma, and was whispering hurriedly in her ear:

"Doesn't this conspiracy of society revolt you? Is there a single sentiment it does not condemn? The noblest instincts, the purest feelings are persecuted, slandered; and if at length two poor souls do meet, all is organized in such a way as to keep them from becoming one. Yet they will try, they will call to each other. Not in vain, for sooner or later, be it in six or ten years, they will come together in love; for fate has decreed it, and they are born for each other."

His arms were folded across his knees, and thus lifting his face at her from close by, he looked fixedly at her. She noticed in his eyes small golden lines radiating from the black pupils; she even smelt

the perfume of the pomade that made his hair glossy. Then something gave way in her; she recalled the Viscount who had waltzed with her at Vaubyessard, and whose beard exhaled a similar scent of vanilla and lemon, and mechanically she half-closed her eyes the better to breathe it in. But in making this movement, as she leant back in her chair, she saw in the distance, right on the line of the horizon, the old diligence the *Hirondelle*, that was slowly descending the hill of Leux, dragging after it a long trail of dust. It was in this yellow carriage that Léon had so often come back to her, and by this route down there that he had gone for ever. She fancied she saw him opposite at his window; then all grew confused; clouds gathered; it seemed to her that she was again turning in the waltz under the light of the lustres on the arm of the Viscount, and that Léon was not far away, that he was coming . . . and yet all the time she was conscious of Rodolphe's head by her side. The sweetness of this sensation revived her past desires, and like grains of sand under a gust of wind, they swirled around in the subtle breath of the perfume that diffused over her soul. She breathed deeply several times to drink in the freshness of the ivy round the columns. She took off her gloves and wiped her hands; then she fanned her face with her handkerchief while she kept hearing, through the throbbing of her temples, the murmur of the crowd and the voice of the councillor intoning his phrases.

He was saying:

“Persevere! listen neither to the suggestions of routine, nor to the over-hasty councils of a rash empiricism. Apply yourselves, above all, to the amelioration of the soil, to good manures, to the development of the breeds, whether equine, bovine, ovine, or porcine. May these shows be to you pacific arenas, where the victor in leaving will hold forth a hand to the vanquished, and will fraternise with him in the hope of even greater success. And you, aged servants! humble helpers, whose hard labor no Government up to this day has taken into consideration, receive the reward of your silent virtues, and be assured that the state henceforward has its eye upon you; that it encourages you, protects you; that it will accede to your just demands, and alleviate as much as possible the heavy burden of your painful sacrifices.”

Monsieur Lieuvain sat down; Monsieur Derozerays got up, beginning another speech. His was not perhaps so florid as that of the councillor, but it stood out by a more direct style, that is to say, by more specific knowledge and more elevated considerations. Thus the praise of the Government took up less space; religion and agriculture more. He showed the relation between both, and how they had always contributed to civilisation. Rodolphe was talking

dreams, forebodings, magnetism with Madame Bovary. Going back to the cradle of society, the orator painted those fierce times when men lived on acorns in the heart of woods. Then they had left off the skins of beasts, had put on cloth, tilled the soil, planted the vine. Was this a good, or wasn't there more harm than good in this discovery? That was the problem to which Monsieur Derozerays addressed himself. From magnetism little by little Rodolphe had come to affinities, and while the president was citing Cincinnatus and his plough, Diocletian planting his cabbages, and the Emperors of China inaugurating the year by the sowing of seed, the young man was explaining to the young woman that these irresistible attractions find their cause in some previous state of existence.

"Take us, for instance," he said, "how did we happen to meet? What chance willed it? It was because across infinite distances, like two streams uniting, our particular inclinations pushed us toward one another."

And he seized her hand; she did not withdraw it.

"First prize for general farming!" announced the president.

"—Just now, for example, when I went to your home . . ."

"To Mr. Bizat of Quincampoix."

"—Did I know I would accompany you?"

"Seventy francs!"

"—A hundred times I tried to leave; yet I followed you and stayed . . ."

"For manures!"

"—As I would stay to-night, to-morrow, all other days, all my life!"

"To Monsieur Caron of Argueil, a gold medal!"

"—For I have never enjoyed anyone's company so much."

"To Monsieur Bain of Givry-Saint-Martin."

"—And I will never forget you."

"For a merino ram . . ."

"—Whereas you will forget me; I'll pass through your life as a mere shadow . . ."

"To Monsieur Belot of Notre-Dame."

"—But no, tell me there can be a place for me in your thoughts, in your life, can't there?"

"Hog! first prize equally divided between Messrs. Lehérissé and Cullembourg, sixty francs!"

Rodolphe was holding her hand on his; it was warm and quivering like a captive dove that wants to fly away; perhaps she was trying to take it away or perhaps she was answering his pressure, at any rate, she moved her fingers; he exclaimed.

"Oh, thank you! You do not repulse me! You are kind! You understand that I am yours! Let me see you, let me look at you!"

A gust of wind that blew in at the window ruffled the cloth on the table, and in the square below all the large bonnets rose up like the fluttering wings of white butterflies.

"Use of oil-cakes!" continued the president.

He was hurrying now: "Flemish manure, flax-growing, drainage, long term leases . . . domestic service."

Rodolphe was no longer speaking. They looked at each other. As their desire increased, their dry lips trembled and languidly, effortlessly, their fingers intertwined.

"Catherine Nicaise Elizabeth Leroux, of Sassetot-la-Guerrière, for fifty-four years of service at the same farm, a silver medal—value, twenty-five francs!"

"Where is Catherine Leroux?" repeated the councillor.

She did not appear, and one could hear whispering voices:

"Go ahead!"

"No."

"To the left!"

"Don't be afraid!"

"Oh, how stupid she is!"

"Well, is she there?" cried Tuvache.

"Yes; here she is."

"Then what's she waiting for?"

There came forward on the platform a frightened-looking little old lady who seemed to shrink within her poor clothes. On her feet she wore heavy wooden shoes, and from her hips hung a large blue apron. Her pale face framed in a borderless cap was more wrinkled than a withered russet apple, and from the sleeves of her red jacket looked out two large hands with gnarled joints. The dust from the barns, washing soda and grease from the wool had so encrusted, roughened, hardened them that they seemed dirty, although they had been rinsed in clear water; and by dint of long service they remained half open, as if to bear humble witness of so much suffering endured. Something of monastic rigidity dignified her. No trace of sadness or tenderness weakened her pale face. Having lived so long among animals, she had taken on their silent and tranquil ways. It was the first time that she found herself in the midst of so large a company; and inwardly scared by the flags, the drums, the gentlemen in frock-coats, and the decorations of the councillor, she stood motionless, not knowing whether she should advance or run away, nor why the crowd was cheering and the jury smiling at her. Thus, a half century of servitude confronted these beaming bourgeois.

"Step forward, venerable Catherine Nicaise Elizabeth Leroux!" said the councillor, who had taken the list of prize-winners from the president; and, looking at the piece of paper and the old woman by turns, he repeated in a fatherly tone:

"Step forward, step forward!"

"Are you deaf?" said Tuvache, who was jumping around in his arm-chair; and he began shouting in her ear, "Fifty-four years of service. A silver medal! Twenty-five francs! For you!"

Then, when she had her medal, she looked at it, and a smile of beatitude spread over her face; and as she walked away they could hear her muttering:

"I'll give it to our curé at home, to say some masses for me!"

"What fanaticism!" exclaimed the pharmacist, leaning across to the notary.

The meeting was over, the crowd dispersed, and now that the speeches had been read, everything fell back into place again, and everything into the old grooves; the masters bullied the servants, the servants beat the animals, indolent victors returning to their stables with a green wreath between their horns.

The National Guards, however, had climbed up to the second floor of the townhall; brioches were stuck on their bayonets, and the drummer of the battalion carried a basket with bottles. Madame Bovary took Rodolphe's arm; he saw her home; they separated at her door; then he walked about alone in the meadow while waiting for the banquet to start.

The feast was long, noisy, ill served; the guests were so crowded that they could hardly move their elbows; and the narrow planks that served as benches almost broke under their weight. They ate huge amounts. Each one stuffed himself with all he could lay hands on. Sweat stood on every brow, and a whitish steam, like the vapour of a stream on an autumn morning, floated above the table between the hanging lamps. Rodolphe, leaning against the canvas of the tent, was thinking so intently of Emma that he heard nothing. Behind him on the grass the servants were piling up the dirty plates, his neighbors were talking; he did not answer them; they filled his glass, and there was silence in his thoughts in spite of the noise around him. He was dreaming of what she had said, of the line of her lips; her face, as in a magic mirror, shone on the plates of the shakos, the folds of her gown fell along the walls, and endless days of love unrolled before him in the future.

He saw her again in the evening during the fireworks, but she was with her husband, Madame Homais, and the pharmacist, who was worrying about the danger of stray rockets. Time and again he left the company to give some advice to Binet.

The fireworks sent to Monsieur Tuvache had, through an excess of caution, been locked in his cellar; so the damp powder would not light, and the main piece, that was to represent a dragon biting his tail, failed completely. From time to time, a meagre Roman-candle went off; then the gaping crowd sent up a roar that mingled with

the giggling of the women who were being tickled in the darkness. Emma silently nestled against Charles's shoulder; then, raising her chin, she watched the luminous rays of the rockets against the dark sky. Rodolphe gazed at her in the light of the burning lanterns.

One by one, they went out. Stars appeared. A few drops of rain began to fall. She tied her scarf over her bare head.

At this moment the councillor's carriage came out from the inn. His coachman, who was drunk, suddenly fell asleep, and one could see the mass of his body from afar above the hood, framed by the two lanterns, swaying from right to left with the motion of the springs.

"Truly," said the pharmacist, "severe measures should be taken against drunkenness! I should like to see written up weekly at the door of the townhall on a board *ad hoc* the names of all those who during the week got intoxicated on alcohol. Besides, with regard to statistics, one would thus have, as it were, public records that one could refer to if needed . . . But excuse me!"

And he once more ran off to the captain. The latter was returning to see his lathe.

"You might do well," said Homais to him, "to send one of your men, or to go yourself . . ."

"Oh, leave me alone!" answered the tax-collector. "I'm telling you everything is taken care of."

"There is nothing for you to worry about," said the pharmacist, when he returned to his friends. "Monsieur Binet has assured me that all precautions have been taken. No sparks have fallen; the pumps are full. Let's go to bed."

"I can certainly use some sleep," said Madame Homais with a huge yawn. "But never mind; we've had a beautiful day for our fete."

Rodolphe repeated in a low voice, and with a tender look, "Oh, yes! very beautiful!"

And after a final good night, they parted ways.

Two days later, in the *Fanal de Rouen*, there was a long article on the show. Homais had composed it on the spur of the moment, the very morning after the banquet.

"Why these festoons, these flowers, these garlands? Whereto was the crowd hurrying, like the waves of a furious sea under the torrents of a tropical sun pouring its heat upon our meadows?"

Then he spoke of the condition of the peasants. Certainly the Government was doing much, but not enough. "Be bold!" he told them; "a thousand reforms are needed; let us carry them out! Then, reporting on the entry of the councillor, he did not forget "the martial spirit of our militia," nor "our dazzling village maidens," nor the "bald-headed elders like patriarchs, some of whom, left over from

our immortal phalanxes, still felt their hearts beat at the manly sound of the drums." He cited himself among the first of the members of the jury, and he even called attention in a note to the fact that Monsieur Homais, pharmacist, had sent a memoir on cider to the agricultural society. When he came to the distribution of the prizes, he painted the joy of the prize-winners in dithyrambic strophes. "The father embraced the son, the brother the brother, the husband his wife. More than one showed his humble medal with pride; and no doubt when he got home to his good housewife, he hung it up weeping on the modest walls of his cottage.

"About six o'clock a banquet prepared in the meadow of Monsieur Leigeard brought together the main participants in the festivities. The utmost merriment reigned throughout. Several toasts were proposed: Monsieur Lieuvain, To the king! Monsieur Tuvache, To the prefect! Monsieur Derozerays, To Agriculture! Monsieur Homais, To the twin sisters, Industry and Fine Arts! Monsieur Leplichey, To Improvements! At night some brilliant fireworks suddenly lit up the sky. It was a real kaleidoscope, an operatic scene; and for a moment our little locality might have thought itself transported into the midst of a dream from the 'Thousand and One Nights.'

"Let us state that no untoward event disturbed this family meeting."

And he added: "Only the absence of the clergy was noted. No doubt the priests do not understand progress in the same way. Just as you please, *messieurs de Loyola!*"

IX

Six weeks passed. Rodolphe did not come again. At last one evening he appeared.

The day after the fair he told himself:

"Let's not go back too soon; that would be a mistake."

And at the end of a week he had gone off hunting. After the hunting he first feared that too much time had passed, and then he reasoned thus:

"If she loved me from the first day, impatience must make her love me even more. Let's persist!"

And he knew that his calculation had been right when, on entering the room, he saw Emma turn pale.

She was alone. Night was falling. The small muslin curtain along the windows deepened the twilight, and the gliding of the barometer, on which the rays of the sun fell, shone in the looking-glass between the meshes of the coral.

Rodolphe remained standing, and Emma hardly answered his first conventional phrases.

"I have been busy," he said, "I have been ill."

"Nothing serious?" she cried.

"Well," said Rodolphe, sitting down at her side on a footstool, "no . . . It was because I did not want to come back."

"Why?"

"Can't you guess?"

He looked at her again, but so hard that she lowered her head, blushing. He pursued:

"Emma . . ."

"Monsieur!" she exclaimed, drawing back a little.

"Ah! you see," he replied in a melancholy voice, "that I was right not to come back; for this name, this name that fills my whole soul, and that escaped me, you forbid me its use! Madame Bovary! . . . why, the whole world calls you thus! Moreover, it is not your name; it is the name of another!"

He repeated,

"Of another!"

And he hid his face in his hands.

"Yes, I think of you constantly! . . . The thought of you drives me to despair. Ah! forgive me! . . . I'll go . . . Adieu . . . I'll go far away, so far that you will never hear of me again; yet . . . today . . . I don't know what force made me come here. For one does not struggle against Heaven; it is impossible to resist the smile of angels; one is carried away by the beautiful, the lovely, the adorable."

It was the first time that Emma had heard such words addressed to her, and her pride unfolded languidly in the warmth of this language, like someone stretching in a hot bath.

"But if I didn't come," he continued, "if I couldn't see you, at least I have gazed long on all that surrounds you. At night, every night, I arose; I came here; I watched your house, the roof glimmering in the moon, the trees in the garden swaying before your window, and the little lamp, a gleam shining through the window-panes in the darkness. Ah! you never knew that there, so near you, so far from you, was a poor wretch . . ."

She turned towards him with a sob.

"Oh, you are kind!" she said.

"No, I love you, that is all! You do not doubt that! Tell me; one word, one single word!"

And Rodolphe imperceptibly glided from the footstool to the ground; but a sound of wooden shoes was heard in the kitchen, and he noticed that the door of the room was not closed.

"You would do an act of charity," he went on, rising, "if you accepted to gratify a whim!" It was to visit her home, he wished to see it, and since Madame Bovary could see no objection to this, they both rose just when Charles came in.

"Good morning, doctor," Rodolphe said to him.

Flattered by this unexpected title, Charles launched into elaborate displays of politeness. Of this the other took advantage to pull himself together.

"Madame was speaking to me," he then said, "about her health."

Charles interrupted; she was indeed giving him thousands of worries; her palpitations were beginning again. Then Rodolphe asked if riding would not be helpful.

"Certainly! excellent, just the thing! What a good idea! You ought to try it."

And as she objected that she had no horse, Monsieur Rodolphe offered one. She refused his offer; he did not insist. Then to explain his visit he said that his ploughman, the man of the blood-letting, still suffered from dizziness.

"I'll drop by," said Bovary.

"No, no! I'll send him to you; we'll come; that will be more convenient for you."

"Ah! very good! I thank you."

And as soon as they were alone, "Why don't you accept Monsieur Boulanger's offer? It was so gracious of him."

She seemed to pout, invented a thousand excuses, and finally declared that perhaps it would look odd.

"That's the least of my worries!" said Charles, turning on his heel. "Health first! You are making a mistake."

"Could I go riding without proper clothes?"

"You must order a riding outfit," he answered.

The riding-habit decided her.

When it was ready, Charles wrote to Monsieur Boulanger that his wife was able to accept his invitation and thanked him in advance for his kindness.

The next day at noon Rodolphe appeared at Charles's door with two saddle-horses. One had pink rosettes at his ears and a deerskin side-saddle.

Rodolphe had put on high soft boots, assuming that she had never seen the likes of them. In fact, Emma was charmed with his appearance as he stood on the landing in his great velvet coat and white corduroy breeches. She was ready; she was waiting for him.

Justin escaped from the store to watch her depart, and the pharmacist himself also came out. He was giving Monsieur Boulanger some good advice.

"An accident happens so easily. Be careful! Your horses may be skittish!"

She heard a noise above her; it was Félicité drumming on the window-panes to amuse little Berthe. The child blew her a kiss; her mother answered with a wave of her whip.



Fashion plate of woman and man in riding dress (1847). Compare their outfits with Rodolphe's, described on page 126, and Emma's, detailed on page 129. Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

"Have a pleasant ride!" cried Monsieur Homais. "Be careful! above all, be careful!"

And he flourished his newspaper as he saw them disappear.

As soon as he felt the ground, Emma's horse set off at a gallop. Rodolphe galloped by her side. Now and then they exchanged a word. With slightly bent head, her hand well up, and her right arm stretched out, she gave herself up to the cadence of the movement that rocked her in her saddle.

At the bottom of the hill Rodolphe gave his horse its head; they set off together at a bound, then at the top suddenly the horses stopped, and her large blue veil fell about her.

It was early in October. There was fog over the land. Hazy clouds hovered on the horizon between the outlines of the hills; others, rent asunder, floated up and disappeared. Sometimes through a rift in the clouds, beneath a ray of sunshine, gleamed from afar the roofs of Yonville, with the gardens at the water's edge, the yards, the walls and the church steeple. Emma half closed her eyes to pick out her house, and never had this poor village where she lived appeared so small. From the height on which they were the whole valley seemed an immense pale lake sending off its vapour into the air. Clumps of trees here and there stood out like black rocks, and the tall lines of the poplars that rose above the mist were like a beach stirred by the wind.

By the side, on the grass between the pines, a brown light shimmered in the warm atmosphere. The earth, ruddy like the powder of tobacco, deadened the noise of their steps, and as they walked, the horses kicked up fallen pine cones before them.

Rodolphe and Emma thus skirted the woods. She turned away from time to time to avoid his look, and then she saw only the line of pine trunks, whose monotonous succession made her a little giddy. The horses were panting; the leather of the saddles creaked.

Just as they were entering the forest the sun came out.

"God is with us!" said Rodolphe.

"Do you think so?" she said.

"Forward! forward!" he continued.

He clucked with his tongue. The horses set off at a trot.

Long ferns by the roadside caught in Emma's stirrup. Rodolphe leant forward and removed them as they rode along. At other times, to turn aside the branches, he passed close to her, and Emma felt his knee brushing against her leg. The sky was blue now. The leaves no longer stirred. There were spaces full of heather in flower, and patches of purple alternated with the confused tangle of the trees, grey, fawn, or golden colored, according to the nature of their leaves. Often in the thicket one could hear the fluttering of wings, or else the hoarse, soft cry of the ravens flying off amidst the oaks.

They dismounted. Rodolphe fastened up the horses. She walked on in front on the moss between the paths.

But her long dress got in her way, although she held it up by the skirt; and Rodolphe, walking behind her, saw between the black cloth and the black shoe the delicacy of her white stocking, that seemed to him as if it were a part of her nakedness.

She stopped.

"I am tired," she said.

"Come, try some more," he went on. "Courage!"

Some hundred paces further on she stopped again, and through her veil, that fell sideways from her man's hat over her hips, her face appeared in a bluish transparency as if she were floating under azure waves.

"But where are we going?"

He did not answer. She was breathing irregularly. Rodolphe looked round him biting his moustache.

They came to a larger space which had been cleared of undergrowth. They sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and Rodolphe began speaking to her of his love.

He did not frighten her at first with compliments. He was calm, serious, melancholy.

Emma listened to him with bowed head, and stirred the bits of wood on the ground with the tip of her foot.

But at the words, "Are not our destinies now forever united?"

"Oh, no!" she replied. "You know they aren't. It is impossible!"

She rose to go. He seized her by the wrist. She stopped. Then, having gazed at him for a few moments with an amorous and moist look, she said hurriedly:

"Well let's not speak of it again! Where are the horses? Let's go back."

He made a gesture of anger and annoyance. She repeated:

"Where are the horses? Where are the horses?"

Then smiling a strange smile, looking straight at her, his teeth set, he advanced with outstretched arms. She recoiled trembling. She stammered:

"Oh, you frighten me! You hurt me! Take me back!"

"If it must be," he went on, his face changing; and he again became respectful, caressing, timid. She gave him her arm. They went back. He said:

"What was the matter with you? Why? I do not understand. You were mistaken, no doubt. In my soul you are as a Madonna on a pedestal, in a place lofty, secure, immaculate. But I cannot live without you! I need your eyes, your voice, your thought! Be my friend, my sister, my angel!"

And he stretched out his arm and caught her by the waist. Gen-

tly she tried to disengage herself. He supported her thus as they walked along.

They heard the two horses browsing on the leaves.

"Not quite yet!" said Rodolphe. "Stay a minute longer! Please stay!"

He drew her farther on to a small pool where duckweeds made a greenness on the water. Faded waterlilies lay motionless between the reeds. At the noise of their steps in the grass, frogs jumped away to hide themselves.

"I shouldn't, I shouldn't!" she said. "I am out of my mind listening to you!"

"Why? . . . Emma! Emma!"

"Oh, Rodolphe! . . ." she said slowly and she pressed against his shoulder.

The cloth of her dress clung to the velvet of his coat. She threw back her white neck which swelled in a sigh, and, faltering, weeping, and hiding her face in her hands, with one long shudder, she abandoned herself to him.

The shades of night were falling; the horizontal sun passing between the branches dazzled the eyes. Here and there around her, in the leaves or on the ground, trembled luminous patches, as if humming-birds flying about had scattered their feathers. Silence was everywhere; something sweet seemed to come forth from the trees. She felt her heartbeat return, and the blood coursing through her flesh like a river of milk. Then far away, beyond the wood, on the other hills, she heard a vague prolonged cry, a voice which lingered, and in silence she heard it mingling like music with the last pulsations of her throbbing nerves. Rodolphe, a cigar between his lips, was mending with his penknife one of the two broken bridles.

They returned to Yonville by the same road. On the mud they saw again the traces of their horses side by side, the same thickets, the same stones in the grass; nothing around them seemed changed; and yet for her something had happened more stupendous than if the mountains had moved in their places. Rodolphe now and again bent forward and took her hand to kiss it.

She was charming on horseback—upright, with her slender waist, her knee bent on the mane of her horse, her face somewhat flushed by the fresh air in the red of the evening.

On entering Yonville she made her horse prance in the road.

People looked at her from the windows.

At dinner her husband thought she looked well, but she pretended not to hear him when he inquired about her ride, and she remained sitting there with her elbow at the side of her plate between the two lighted candles.

"Emma!" he said.

"What?"

"Well, I spent the afternoon at Monsieur Alexandre's. He has an old filly, still very fine, just a little broken in the knees, and that could be bought, I am sure, for a hundred crowns." He added, "And thinking it might please you, I have reserved her . . . I bought her . . . Have I done right? Do tell me!"

She nodded her head in assent; then a quarter of an hour later:

"Are you going out to-night?" she asked.

"Yes. Why?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing, dear!"

And as soon as she had got rid of Charles she went and shut herself up in her room.

At first she felt stunned; she saw the trees, the paths, the ditches, Rodolphe, and she again felt the pressure of his arms, while the leaves rustled and the reeds whistled.

But when she saw herself in the mirror she wondered at her face. Never had her eyes been so large, so black, nor so deep. Something subtle about her being transfigured her.

She repeated: "I have a lover! a lover!" delighting at the idea as if a second puberty had come to her. So at last she was to know those joys of love, that fever of happiness of which she had despaired! She was entering upon a marvelous world where all would be passion, ecstasy, delirium. She felt herself surrounded by an endless rapture. A blue space surrounded her and ordinary existence appeared only intermittently between these heights, dark and far away beneath her.

Then she recalled the heroines of the books that she had read, and the lyric legion of these adulterous women began to sing in her memory with the voice of sisters that charmed her. She became herself, as it were, an actual part of these lyrical imaginings; at long last, as she saw herself among those lovers she had so envied, she fulfilled the love-dream of her youth. Besides, Emma felt a satisfaction of revenge. How she had suffered! But she had won out at last, and the love so long pent up erupted in joyous outbursts. She tasted it without remorse, without anxiety, without concern.

The next day brought a new-discovered sweetness. They exchanged vows. She told him of her sorrows. Rodolphe interrupted her with kisses; and she, looking at him through half-closed eyes, asked him to call her again by her name and to say that he loved her. They were in the forest, as yesterday, this time in the hut of some *sabot* makers. The walls were of straw, and the roof so low they had to stoop. They were seated side by side on a bed of dry leaves.



Achille Devéria, *Heures de la Parisienne* (1840): Midi [Noon]. Emma adopts the range of activities that define the fashionable woman of the time in this collection, from 7 A.M., when the Parisian woman appears in riding dress, to noon, when she writes letters, to 5 A.M., when Devéria shows her asleep in her ball dress, presumably after a night of partying. Courtesy of Stanford University.



Achille Devéria, *Heures de la Parisienne* (1840): 5 heures [5 A.M.]. Courtesy of Stanford University.

From that day on they wrote to one another regularly every evening. Emma placed her letter at the end of the garden, by the river, in a crack of the wall. Rodolphe came to fetch it, and put another in its place that she always accused of being too short.

One morning, when Charles had gone out before daybreak, she felt the urge to see Rodolphe at once. She would go quickly to La Huchette, stay there an hour, and be back again at Yonville while every one was still asleep. The idea made her breathless with desire, and she soon found herself in the middle of the field, walking with rapid steps, without looking behind her.

Day was just breaking. Emma recognised her lover's house from a distance. Its two dove-tailed weathercocks stood out black against the pale dawn.

Beyond the farmyard there was a separate building that she assumed must be the château. She entered it as if the doors at her approach had opened wide of their own accord. A large straight staircase led up to the corridor. Emma raised the latch of a door, and suddenly at the end of the room she saw a man sleeping. It was Rodolphe. She uttered a cry.

"You here? You here?" he repeated. "How did you manage to come? Ah! your dress is wet."

"I love you!" she answered, winding her arm around his neck.

This first bold attempt having been successful, now every time Charles went out early Emma dressed quickly and slipped on tiptoe down the steps that led to the waterside.

But when the cow plank was taken up, she had to follow the walls alongside the river; the bank was slippery; to keep from falling, she had to catch hold of the tufts of faded wall-flowers. Then she went across ploughed fields, stumbling, her thin shoes sinking in the heavy mud. Her scarf, knotted round her head, fluttered to the wind in the meadows. She was afraid of the oxen; she began to run; she arrived out of breath, with rosy cheeks, and breathing out from her whole person a fresh perfume of sap, of verdure, of the open air. At this hour Rodolphe was still asleep. It was like a spring morning bursting into his room.

The golden curtains along the windows let a heavy, whitish light filter into the room. Emma would find her way gropingly, with blinking eyes, the drops of dew hanging from her hair, making a topaz halo around her face. Rodolphe, laughing, would draw her to him and press her to his breast.

Then she inspected the room, opened the drawers of the tables, combed her hair with his comb, and looked at herself in his shaving mirror. Often she put between her teeth the big pipe that lay on the bedtable, amongst lemons and pieces of sugar near the water bottle.

It took them a good quarter of an hour to say good-bye. Then

Emma cried: she would have wished never to leave Rodolphe. Something stronger than herself drew her to him; until, one day, when she arrived unexpectedly, he frowned as one put out.

"What is wrong?" she said. "Are you ill? tell me!"

He ended up declaring earnestly that her visits were too dangerous and that she was compromising herself.

X

Gradually Rodolphe's fears took possession of her. At first, love had intoxicated her, and she had thought of nothing beyond. But now that he was indispensable to her life, she feared losing the smallest part of his love or upsetting him in the least. When she came back from his house, she looked all about her, anxiously watching every form that passed in the horizon, and every village window from which she could be seen. She listened for steps, cries, the noise of the ploughs, and she stopped short, white, and trembling more than the aspen leaves swaying overhead.

One morning as she was thus returning, she suddenly thought she saw the long barrel of a carbine that seemed to be aimed at her. It stuck out sideways from the end of a small barrel half-buried in the grass on the edge of a ditch. Emma, half-fainting with terror, nevertheless walked on, and a man stepped out of the barrel like a Jack-in-the-box jumping out of his cage. He had gaiters buckled up to the knees, his cap pulled down over his eyes; his lips shivered in the cold and his nose was red. It was Captain Binet lying in ambush for wild ducks.

"You ought to have called out long ago!" he exclaimed. "When one sees a gun, one should always give warning."

The tax-collector was thus trying to hide his own fright, for a prefectorial order prohibited duck-hunting except in boats. Monsieur Binet, despite his respect for the laws, was breaking the law and he expected to see the village constable turn up any moment. But this anxiety whetted his pleasure, and, all alone in his barrel, he congratulated himself on his luck and his cleverness.

The sight of Emma seemed to relieve him of a great weight, and he at once opened the conversation.

"Pretty cold, isn't it; it's nippy!"

Emma didn't answer. He pursued:

"You're certainly off to an early start today."

"Yes," she stammered; "I am just coming from the nurse who is keeping my child."

"Ah, yes indeed, yes indeed. As for myself, I am here, just as you see me, since break of day; but the weather is so muggy, that unless one had the bird at the mouth of the gun . . ."

"Good day, Monsieur Binet," she interrupted, turning her back on him.

"Your servant, madame," he replied drily.

And he went back into his barrel.

Emma regretted having left the tax-collector so abruptly. No doubt he would jump to the worst conclusions. The story about the nurse was the weakest possible excuse, for every one at Yonville knew that the Bovary baby had been at home with her parents for a year. Besides, no one was living in this direction; this path led only to La Huchette. Binet, then, could not fail to guess where she came from, and he would not remain silent; he would talk, that was certain. She remained until evening racking her brain with every lie she could think up, but the image of that idiot with his game bag would not leave her.

Seeing her so gloomy, Charles proposed after dinner to take her to the pharmacist by way of distraction, and the first person she caught sight of in the shop was him again, the tax-collector! He was standing in front of the counter, lit up by the gleams of the red jar, saying:

"Could I have half an ounce of vitriol, please?"

"Justin," cried the pharmacist, "bring us the sulphuric acid."

Then to Emma, who was going up to Madame Homais' room, "Don't go up, it's not worth the trouble, she is just coming down. Why not warm yourself by the fire . . . Excuse me . . . Good day, doctor" (for the pharmacist much enjoyed pronouncing the word "doctor," as if addressing another by it reflected on himself some of the grandeur of the title). "Justin, take care not to upset the mortars! You'd better fetch some chairs from the little room; you know very well that the arm-chairs are not to be taken out of the drawing-room."

And he was just about to put his arm-chair back in its place when Binet asked him for half an ounce of sugar acid.

"Sugar acid!" said the pharmacist contemptuously, "never heard of it! There is no such thing. Perhaps it is Oxalic acid you want. It is Oxalic, isn't it?"

Binet explained that he wanted a corrosive to make himself some copper-water with which to remove rust from his hunting things. Emma shuddered. The pharmacist was saying:

"Indeed, the dampness we're having is certainly not propitious."

"Nevertheless," replied the tax-collector, with a sly look, "some people seem to like it." She was stifling.

"And give me . . ."

"Will he never go?" she thought.

"Half an ounce of resin and turpentine, four ounces of beeswax,

and three half ounces of animal charcoal, if you please, to clean the leather of my togs."

The druggist was beginning to cut the wax when Madame Homais appeared with Irma in her arms, Napoleon by her side, and Athalie following. She sat down on the velvet seat by the window, and the boy squatted down on a footstool, while his eldest sister hovered round the jujube box near her papa. The latter was filling funnels and corking phials, sticking on labels, making up parcels. Around him all were silent; only from time to time could one hear the weights jingling in the scales, and a few words of advice from the pharmacist to his apprentice.

"And how is your little girl?" Madame Homais asked suddenly.

"Silence!" exclaimed her husband, who was writing down some figures on a scratch pad.

"Why didn't you bring her?" she went on in a low voice.

"Hush! hush!" said Emma, pointing a finger at the pharmacist.

But Binet, quite absorbed in checking over his bill, had probably heard nothing. At last he went out. Then Emma, relieved, uttered a deep sigh.

"How heavily you are breathing!" said Madame Homais.

"It is so hot in here," she replied.

So the next day they agreed to arrange their rendezvous. Emma wanted to bribe her servant with a present, but it would be better to find some safe house at Yonville. Rodolphe promised to look for one.

All through the winter, three or four times a week, in the dead of night he came to the garden. Emma had on purpose taken away the key of the gate, letting Charles think it was lost.

To call her, Rodolphe threw a handful of sand at the shutters. She jumped up with a start; but sometimes he had to wait, for Charles had the habit of talking endlessly by the fireside.

She was wild with impatience; if her eyes could have done it, they would have hurled him out of the window. At last she would begin to undress, then take up a book, and go on reading very quietly as if the book amused her. But Charles, who was in bed, would call her to bed.

"Come, now, Emma," he said, "it is time."

"Yes, I am coming," she answered.

Then, as the candles shone in his eyes, he turned to the wall and fell asleep. She escaped, holding her breath, smiling, half undressed.

Rodolphe had a large cloak; he wrapped it around her, and putting his arm round her waist, he drew her without a word to the end of the garden.

It was in the arbour, on the same bench of half rotten sticks where formerly Léon had stared at her so amorously on the summer evenings. She never thought of him now.

The stars shone through the leafless jasmine branches. Behind them they heard the river flowing, and now and again on the bank the rustling of the dry reeds. Masses of deeper darkness stood out here and there in the night and sometimes, shaken with one single motion, they would rise up and sway like immense black waves pressing forward to engulf them. The cold of the nights made them clasp each other more tightly; the sighs of their lips seemed to them deeper; their eyes, that they could hardly see, larger; and in the midst of the silence words softly spoken would fall on their souls with a crystalline sound, that echoed in endless reverberations.

When the night was rainy, they took refuge in the consulting-room between the cart-shed and the stable. She would light one of the kitchen candles that she had hidden behind the books. Rodolphe settled down there as if at home. The sight of the library, of the desk, of the entire room, in fine, would arouse his mirth; and he could not refrain from making jokes at Charles' expense despite Emma's embarrassment. She would have liked to see him more serious, and even on occasions more dramatic; as, for example, when she thought she heard a noise of approaching steps in the alley.

"Some one is coming!" she said.

He blew out the light.

"Have you your pistols?"

"Why?"

"Why, to defend yourself," replied Emma.

"From your husband? Oh, the poor fellow!" And Rodolphe finished his sentence with a gesture that said, "I could crush him with a flip of my finger."

She was awed at his bravery, although she felt in it a sort of indecency and a naïve coarseness that scandalised her.

Rodolphe reflected a good deal on the pistol incident. If she had spoken in earnest, he thought it most ridiculous, even odious; for he had no reason whatever to hate the good Charles, not exactly being devoured by jealousy; and in this same connection, Emma had made him a solemn promise that he did not think in the best of taste.

Besides, she was becoming dreadfully sentimental. She had insisted on exchanging miniatures; handfuls of hair had been cut off, and now she was asking for a ring—a real wedding-ring, in token of eternal union. She often spoke to him of the evening chimes, of the "voices of nature." Then she talked to him of their respective mothers. Rodolphe's had died twenty years ago. Emma none the less

consoled him with conventional phrases, like those one would use with a bereaved child; sometimes she even said to him, gazing at the moon:

“I am sure that, from up there, both approve our love.”

But she was so pretty! He had possessed so few women of similar ingenuousness. This love without debauchery was a new experience for him, and, drawing him out of his lazy habits, caressed at once his pride and his sensuality. Although his bourgeois common sense disapproved of it, Emma's exaltations, deep down in his heart, enchanted him, since they were directed his way. Then, sure of her love, he no longer made an effort, and insensibly his manner changed.

No longer, did he, as before, find words so tender that they made her cry, nor passionate caresses that drove her into ecstasy; their great love, in which she had lived immersed, seemed to run out beneath her, like the water of a river absorbed by its own bed; and she could see the bottom. She would not believe it; she redoubled in tenderness, and Rodolphe concealed his indifference less and less.

She did not know if she regretted having yielded to him, or whether she did not wish, on the contrary, to love him even more. The humiliation of having given in turned into resentment, tempered by their voluptuous pleasures. It was not tenderness; it was like a continual seduction. He held her fully in his power; she almost feared him.

On the surface, however, things seemed calm enough, Rodolphe having carried out his adultery just as he had wanted; and at the end of six months, when the spring-time came, they were to one another like a married couple, tranquilly keeping up a domestic flame.

It was the time of year when old Rouault sent his turkey in remembrance of the setting of his leg. The present always arrived with a letter. Emma cut the string that tied it to the basket, and read the following lines:

MY DEAR CHILDREN,—I hope this will find you in good health, and that it will be as good as the others, for it seems to me a little more tender, if I may venture to say so, and heavier. But next time, for a change, I'll give you a turkeycock, unless you would prefer a capon; and send me back the hamper, if you please, with the two old ones. I have had an accident with sheds; the coverings flew off one windy night among the trees. The harvest has not been over-good either. Finally, I don't know when I shall come to see you. It is so difficult now to leave the house since I am alone, my poor Emma.

Here there was a break in the lines as if the old fellow had dropped his pen to dream a little while.

As for myself, I am very well, except for a cold I caught the other day at Yvetot, where I had gone to hire a shepherd, having got rid of mine because no cooking was good enough for his taste. We are to be pitied with rascals like him! Moreover, he was dishonest.

I heard from a peddler who had a tooth pulled out when he passed through your part of the country this winter, that Bovary was as usual working hard. That doesn't surprise me; and he showed me his tooth; we had some coffee together. I asked him if he had seen you, and he said no, but that he had seen two horses in the stables, from which I conclude that business is looking up. So much the better, my dear children, and may God send you every imaginable happiness!

It grieves me not yet to have seen my dear little granddaughter, Berthe Bovary. I have planted an Orleans plum-tree for her in the garden under your room, and I won't have it touched until we can make jam from it, that I will keep in the cupboard for her when she comes.

Good-bye, my dear children. I kiss you, my girl, you too, my son-in-law, and the little one on both cheeks. I am, with best compliments, your loving father.

THEODORE ROUAULT

She held the coarse paper in her fingers for some minutes. A continuous stream of spelling mistakes ran through the letter, and Emma followed the kindly thought that cackled right through it like a hen half hidden in a hedge of thorns. The writing had been dried with ashes from the hearth, for a little grey powder slipped from the letter on her dress, and she almost thought she saw her father bending over the hearth to take up the tongs. How long since she had been with him, sitting on the footstool in the chimney-corner, where she used to burn the end of a stick in the crackling flame of the sea-sedges! She remembered the summer evenings all full of sunshine. The colts whinnied when one passed by, and galloped, galloped . . . Under her window there was a beehive and at times, the bees wheeling round in the light, struck against her window like rebounding balls of gold. What happiness she had known at that time, what freedom, what hope! What a wealth of illusions! It was all gone now. She had lost them one by one, at every stage in the growth of her soul, in the succession of her conditions; maidenhood, marriage and love—shedding them along her path like a traveller who leaves something of his wealth at every inn along his road.

But who was it, then, who made her so unhappy? What extraordinary catastrophe had destroyed her life? And she raised her head, as if seeking around her for the cause of all that suffering.

An April sunray was dancing on the china in the shelves; the fire

burned; beneath her slippers she felt the softness of the carpet; the day was bright, the air warm, and she heard her child shouting with laughter.

In fact, the little girl was just then rolling on the lawn in the new-mown grass. She was lying flat on her stomach at the top of a rick. The maid was holding her by her skirt. Lestibouois was raking by her side, and every time he came near she bent forward, beating the air with both her arms.

"Bring her to me," said her mother, rushing over to kiss her. "How I love you, my poor child! How I love you!"

Then noticing that the tips of her ears were rather dirty, she rang at once for warm water, and washed her, changed her underwear, her stockings, her shoes, asked a thousand questions about her health, as if on the return from a long journey, and finally, kissing her again and crying a little, she gave her back to the maid, who was dumbfounded at this sudden outburst.

That evening Rodolphe found her more reserved than usual.

"It will blow over," he thought, "a passing whim . . ."

And he missed three successive rendezvous. When he did appear, her attitude was cold, almost contemptuous.

"Ah! you're wasting time, sweetheart!"

And he pretended not to notice her melancholy sighs, nor the handkerchief she pulled out.

Then Emma knew what it was to repent!

She even wondered why she hated Charles; wouldn't it have been better trying to love him? But he offered little hold for these re-awakened sentiments, so she remained rather embarrassed with her sacrificial intentions until the pharmacist provided her with a timely opportunity.

XI

He had recently read a paper praising a new method for curing club-foot, and since he was a partisan of progress, he conceived the patriotic idea that Yonville should show its pioneering spirit by having some club-foot operations performed there.

"Look here," he told Emma, "what do we risk?" and he ticked off on his fingers the advantages of the attempt, "success practically assured, relief and better appearance for the patient, quick fame for the surgeon. Why, for example, should not your husband relieve poor Hippolyte of the 'Lion d'Or'? He is bound to tell all passing travellers about his cure, and then" (Homais lowered his voice and looked round him) "who is to prevent me from sending a short piece on the subject to the paper? And! My God! an article gets around . . . people talk about it . . . it snowballs! And who knows? who knows?"

After all, Bovary might very well succeed. Emma had no reason to suppose he lacked skill, it would be a satisfaction for her to have urged him to a step by which his reputation and fortune would be increased! She only longed to lean on something more solid than love.

Pressed by her and the pharmacist, Charles allowed himself to be persuaded. He sent to Rouen for Dr. Duval's volume, and every evening, with his head between his hands, he embarked on his reading assignment.

While he struggled with the *equinus*, *varus* and *valgus*—that is to say, *katastrephopody*, *endostrephopody*, and *exostrephopody*, or in other words, the various deviations of the foot, to the inside, outside, or downwards, as well as with *hypostrephopody* and *anastrephopody* or torsion below and contraction above,—Monsieur Homais was trying out all possible arguments on the stable boy in order to persuade him to submit to the operation.

"At the very most you'll feel a slight pain, a small prick, like a little blood letting, less than the extraction of certain corns."

Hippolyte thought it over, rolling his stupid eyes.

"Anyway," continued the pharmacist, "it is none of my business. I am telling you this for your own sake! out of pure humanity! I would like to see you freed from that hideous caudication as well as that swaying in your lumbar region which, whatever you say, must considerably interfere with the proper performance of your work."

Then Homais represented to him how much more dashing and nimble he would feel afterwards, and even hinted that he would be more likely to please the women; and the stable boy broke into a stupid grin. Then he attacked him through his vanity:

"Come on, act like a man! Think what would have happened if you had been called into the army, and had to fight under our national banner! . . . Ah! Hippolyte!"

And Homais left him, declaring that he could not understand such blindness, such obstinacy, in refusing the benefits of science.

The poor wretch finally gave in, for it was like a conspiracy. Binet, who never interfered with other people's business, Madame Lefrançois, Artémise, the neighbors, even the mayor, Monsieur Tuvaiche—every one tried to convince him by lecture and reproof; but what finally won him over was that it would cost him nothing. Bovary even undertook to provide the machine for the operation. This generosity was an idea of Emma's, and Charles consented to it, thinking in his heart of hearts that his wife was an angel.

So with the advice of the pharmacist, and after three fresh starts, he had a kind of box made by the carpenter, with the assistance of the locksmith; it weighed about eight pounds, for iron, wood, sheet-iron, leather, screws, and nuts had not been spared.

Yet, to know which of Hippolyte's tendons had to be cut, it was necessary first of all to find out what kind of club-foot he had.

His foot almost formed a straight line with the leg, which, however, did not prevent it from being turned in, so that it was an equinus combined with something of a varus, or else a slight varus with a strong tendency to equinus. But on the equine foot, wide indeed as a horse's hoof, with its horny skin, and large toes, whose black nails resembled the nails of a horse shoe, the cripple ran about like a deer from morn till night. He was constantly to be seen on the Square, jumping round the carts, thrusting his limping foot forwards. He seemed even stronger on that leg than the other. By dint of hard service it had acquired, as it were, moral qualities of patience and energy; and when he was given some heavy work to do, he would support himself on it in preference to the sound one.

Now, as it was an equinus, it was necessary to cut the Achilles tendon first; if need be, the anterior tibial muscle could be seen to afterwards to take care of the varus. For the doctor did not dare to risk both operations at once; he was already sufficiently worried for fear of injuring some important region that he did not know.

Neither Ambroise Paré, applying a ligature to an artery, for the first time since Celsus did it fifteen centuries before; nor Dupuytren, cutting open abscesses through a thick layer of brain; nor Gensoul on first removing the superior maxilla, had hearts that trembled, hands that shook, minds that strained as Monsieur Bovary's when he approached Hippolyte, his tenotomy knife between his fingers.³ Just as in a hospital, near by on a table lay a heap of lint, with waxed thread, many bandages—a pyramid of bandages—every bandage to be found at the pharmacy. It was Monsieur Homais who since morning had been organising all these preparations, as much to dazzle the multitude as to keep up his illusions. Charles pierced the skin; a dry crackling was heard. The tendon was cut, the operation over. Hippolyte could not believe his eyes: he bent over Bovary's hands to cover them with kisses.

"Come, be calm," said the pharmacist: "later on you will show your gratitude to your benefactor."

And he went down to report the result to five or six bystanders who were waiting in the yard, and who fancied that Hippolyte would reappear walking straight up. Then Charles, having strapped

3. Great figures across the history of surgery: The Roman Celsus, who lived in the early decades of the first millennium A.D., was the author of the treatise *On Medicine* and came to be known as "the Cicero of Medicine"; Paré (1509–1590), physician to the French royal court, was a pioneer of several modern surgical techniques and revived the classical practice of vascular ligation after amputation; Dupuytren (1777–1835), a celebrated professor who specialized in anatomy and surgery, attended Louis XVIII and Charles X; Gensoul (1797–1858), a specialist in maxillary surgery, won fame for some risky and successful operations.

his patient into the machine, went home, where Emma was anxiously waiting for him on the doorstep. She threw herself on his neck; they sat down at the table; he ate much, and at dessert he even wanted to take a cup of coffee, a luxury he only permitted himself on Sundays when there was company.

The evening was charming, full of shared conversation and common dreams. They talked about their future success, of the improvements to be made in their house; with his rising reputation, he saw his comforts increasing, his wife always loving him; and she was happy to refresh herself with a new sentiment, healthier and purer, and to feel at last some tenderness for this poor man who adored her. The thought of Rodolphe for one moment passed through her mind, but her eyes turned again to Charles; she even noticed with surprise that he had rather handsome teeth.

They were in bed when Monsieur Homais, sidestepping the cook, suddenly entered the room, holding in his hand a newly written sheet of paper. It was the article he intended for the *Fanal de Rouen*. He brought it to them to read.

"You read it," said Bovary.

He read:

"Braving the prejudices that still spread over the face of Europe like a net, the light nevertheless begins to penetrate into our country places. Thus on Tuesday our little town of Yonville found itself the scene of a surgical operation which was at the same time an act of loftiest philanthropy. Monsieur Bovary, one of our most distinguished practitioners . . ."

"Oh, that is too much! too much!" said Charles, choking with emotion.

—"But certainly not! far from it! . . . 'operated on a club-foot.' I have not used the scientific term, because you know in newspapers . . . not everyone would understand . . . the masses, after all, must . . ."

"Certainly," said Bovary; "please go on!"

"I proceed," said the pharmacist. "Monsieur Bovary, one of our most distinguished practitioners, performed an operation on a club-footed man, one Hippolyte Tautain, stable-man for the last twenty-five years at the hotel of the "Lion d'Or," kept by Widow Lefrançois, at the Place d'Armes. The novelty of the experiment and the general interest in the patient had attracted such a number of people that a crowd gathered on the threshold of the establishment. The operation, moreover, was performed as if by magic, and barely a few drops of blood appeared on the skin, as though to say that the rebellious tendon had at last given way under the efforts of the medical arts. The patient, strangely enough (we affirm it *de visu*) complained of no pain. His condition up to the present time leaves

nothing to be desired. Everything tends to show that his convalescence will be brief; and who knows if, at our next village festivity we shall not see our good Hippolyte appear in the midst of a bacchic dance, surrounded by a group of gay companions, and thus bear witness to all assembled, by his spirit and his capers, of his total recovery? Honor, then, to those generous men of science! Honor to those tireless spirits who consecrate their vigils to the improvement and relief of their kind! Honor to them! Hasn't the time come to cry out that the blind shall see, the deaf hear, the lame walk? What fanaticism formerly promised to a few elect, science now accomplishes for all men. We shall keep our readers informed as to the subsequent progression of this remarkable cure.'"

All this did not prevent Mère Lefrançois from coming five days later, scared out of her wits and shouting:

"Help! he is dying! I am going out of my mind!"

Charles rushed to the "Lion d'Or," and the pharmacist, who caught sight of him passing along the Square without a hat, left his shop. He arrived himself breathless, flushed, anxious, and asked from every one who was going up the stairs:

"What can be the matter with our interesting patient?"

The interesting patient was writhing, in dreadful convulsions, so violent that the contraption in which his foot was locked almost beat down the wall.

With many precautions, in order not to disturb the position of the limb, the box was removed, and an awful spectacle came into view. The outlines of the foot disappeared in such a swelling that the entire skin seemed about to burst; moreover, the leg was covered with bruises caused by the famous machine. Hippolyte had abundantly complained, but nobody had paid any attention to him; now they admitted he might have some grounds for protest and he was freed for a few hours. But hardly had the oedema somewhat gone down, that the two specialists thought fit to put back the limb in the machine, strapping it even tighter to speed up matters. At last, three days after, when Hippolyte could not stand it any longer, they once more removed the machine, and were much surprised at the result they saw. A livid tumescence spread over the entire leg, and a black liquid oozed from several blisters. Things had taken a turn for the worse. Hippolyte was getting bored, and Mère Lefrançois had him installed in the little room near the kitchen, so that he might at least have some distraction.

But the tax-collector, who dined there every day, complained bitterly of such companionship. Then Hippolyte was removed to the billiard-room.

He lay there moaning under his heavy blankets, pale and unshaven, with sunken eyes; from time to time he rubbed his sweat-

ing head over the fly-covered pillow. Madame Bovary came to see him. She brought him linen for his poultices; she comforted, and encouraged him. Besides, he did not want for company, especially on market days, when farmers around him were hitting the billiard balls around and fencing with the cues while they drank, sang and brawled.

"How are things?" they would say, clapping him on the shoulder. "Ah! not so well from what we hear. But that's your fault. You should do this! do that!"

And then they told him stories of people who had all been cured by other means. Then by way of consolation they added:

"You pamper yourself too much! You should get up; you coddle yourself like a king. Just the same, old boy, you do smell pretty awful!"

Gangrene was indeed spreading higher and higher. It made Bovary ill to think of it. He came every hour, every moment. Hippolyte looked at him with terrified eyes and sobbed:

"When will I be cured?—Oh, please save me! . . . How unhappy I am! . . . How unhappy I am!"

And the doctor left him, prescribing a strict diet.

"Don't listen to him," said Mère Lefrançois. "Haven't they tortured you enough already? You'll grow still weaker. Here! swallow this."

And she gave him some strong broth, a slice of mutton, a piece of bacon, and sometimes small glasses of brandy, that he had not the strength to put to his lips.

The abbé Bournisien, hearing that he was growing worse, asked to see him. He began by pitying his sufferings, declaring at the same time that he ought to rejoice since it was the will of the Lord, and hasten to reconcile himself with Heaven.

"For," said the ecclesiastic in a paternal tone, "you rather neglected your duties; you were rarely seen at divine worship. How many years is it since you approached the holy table? I understand that your work, that the whirl of the world may have distracted you from your salvation. But now the time has come. Yet don't despair. I have known great sinners, who, about to appear before God (you are not yet at this point I know), had implored His mercy, and who certainly died in a truly repenting frame of mind. Let us hope that, like them, you will set us a good example! Thus, as a precaution, what is to prevent you from saying morning and evening a Hail Mary and an Our Father? Yes, do that, for my sake, to oblige me. That won't cost you anything. Will you promise me?"

The poor devil promised. The curé came back day after day. He chatted with the landlady, and even told anecdotes interspersed with jokes and puns that Hippolyte did not understand. Then, as

soon as he could, he would return to religious considerations, putting on an appropriate expression.

His zeal seemed to bring results, for the club-foot soon manifested a desire to go on a pilgrimage to Bon-Secours if he were cured; to which Monsieur Bournisien replied that he saw no objection; two precautions were better than one; moreover, it certainly could do no harm.

The pharmacist was incensed by what he called the priest's machinations; they were prejudicial, he said, to Hippolyte's convalescence, and he kept repeating to Madame Lefrançois, "Leave him alone! leave him alone! You're ruining his morale with your mysticism."

But the good woman would no longer listen to him; she blamed him for being the cause of it all. In sheer rebellion, she hung near the patient's bedside a well-filled basin of holy water and a sprig of boxwood.

Religion, however, seemed no more able than surgery to bring relief and the irresistible putrefaction kept spreading from the foot to the groin. It was all very well to vary the potions and change the poultices; the muscles each day rotted more and more; Charles replied by an affirmative nod of the head when Mère Lefrançois asked him if she could not, as a last resort, send for Monsieur Canivet, a famous surgeon from Neufchâtel.

Charles' fifty-year old colleague, a doctor of medicine with a well established practice and a solid self confidence, did not refrain from laughing disdainfully when he had uncovered the leg, gangrened to the knee. Then having flatly declared that it must be amputated, he went off to the pharmacist's to rail at the asses who could have reduced a poor man to such a state. Shaking Monsieur Homais by his coat-button, he shouted for everyone to hear:

"That is what you get from listening to the fads from Paris! What will they come up with next, these gentlemen from the capital! It is like strabismus, chloroform, lithotrity, monstrosities the Government ought to prohibit. But they want to be clever and cram you full of remedies without troubling about the consequences. We are not so clever out here, not we! We are no specialists, no cure-alls, no fancy talkers! We are practitioners; we cure people, and we wouldn't dream of operating on someone who is in perfect health. Straighten club-feet! As if one could straighten club-feet indeed! It is as if one wished to make a hunchback straight!"

Homais suffered as he listened to this discourse, and he concealed his discomfort beneath a courtier's smile; for he needed to humour Monsieur Canivet, whose prescriptions sometimes came as far as Yonville. So he did not take up the defence of Bovary; he did not even make a single remark, and, renouncing his principles, he sacrificed his dignity to the more serious interests of his business.

This thigh amputation by Doctor Canivet was a great event in the village. On that day all the inhabitants got up earlier, and the Grande Rue, crowded as it was, had something lugubrious about it, as though one were preparing for an execution. At the grocers they discussed Hippolyte's illness; the shops did no business, and Madame Tuvache, the mayor's wife, did not stir from her window, such was her impatience to see the surgeon arrive.

He came in his gig, which he drove himself. The springs of the right side had all given way beneath his corpulence and the carriage tilted a little as it rolled along, revealing on the cushion near him a large case covered in red sheep-leather, whose three brass clasps shone grandly.

Like a whirlwind, the doctor entered the porch of the Lion d'Or and, shouting loudly, he ordered to unharness. Then he went into the stable to see that his horse was eating his oats all right; for on arriving at a patient's he first of all looked after his mare and his gig. The habit made people say, "Ah, that Monsieur Canivet, what a character!" but he was the more esteemed for his composure. The universe as a whole might have been blown apart, and he would not have homaged the least of his habits.

Homais introduced himself.

"I count on you," said the doctor. "Are you ready? Come along!"

But the pharmacist blushing confessed that he was too sensitive to witness such an operation.

"When one is a simple spectator," he said, "the imagination, you know, is easily impressed. And then, my nerves are so . . ."

"Bah!" interrupted Canivet; "on the contrary, you seem like the apoplectic type to me. But I am not surprised, for you gentlemen pharmacists are always poking about your kitchens, which must end by spoiling your constitutions. Now just look at me. I get up every day at four o'clock; I shave with cold water (and am never cold). I don't wear flannel underwear, and I never catch cold; my carcass is good enough! I take things in my stride, philosophically, as they come my way. That is why I am not squeamish like you, and it doesn't matter to me whether I carve up a Christian or the first fowl that comes my way. Habit, you'll say . . . mere habit! . . ."

Then, without any consideration for Hippolyte, who was sweating with agony between his sheets, these gentlemen began a conversation, in which the druggist compared the coolness of a surgeon to that of a general; and this comparison was pleasing to Canivet, who held forth on the demands of his art. He looked upon it as a sacred office, although the ordinary practitioners dishonored it. At last, coming back to the patient, he examined the bandages brought by Homais, the same that had appeared for the club-foot, and asked for some one to hold the limb for him. Lestiboudois

was sent for, and Monsieur Canivet having turned up his sleeves, passed into the billiard-room, while the druggist stayed with Artémise and the landlady, both whiter than their aprons, and with ears strained towards the door.

Meanwhile, Bovary didn't dare to stir from his house.

He kept downstairs in the sitting-room by the side of the fireless chimney, his chin on his breast, his hands clasped, his eyes staring. "What a misfortune," he thought, "what a disappointment!" Yet, he had taken all possible precautions. Luck must have been against him. All the same, if Hippolyte died later on, he would be considered the murderer. And how would he defend himself against the questions his patients were bound to ask him during his calls? Maybe, after all, he had made some slip. He thought and thought, but nothing came. The most famous surgeons also made mistakes. But no one would ever believe that; on the contrary, people would laugh, jeer! The news would spread as far as Neufchâtel, as Rouen, everywhere! Who could say if his colleagues would not write against him? Polemics would ensue; he would have to answer in the papers. Hippolyte might even prosecute him. He saw himself dishonored, ruined, lost; and his imagination, assailed by numberless hypotheses, tossed amongst them like an empty cask dragged out to sea and pitched about by the waves.

Emma, opposite, watched him; she did not share his humiliation; she felt another—that of having imagined that such a man could have any worth, as if twenty times already she had not sufficiently perceived his mediocrity.

Charles was pacing the room. His boots creaked on the floor.

"Sit down," she said; "you irritate me!"

He sat down again.

How was it that she—she, who was so intelligent—could have allowed herself to be deceived again? Moreover, what madness had driven her to ruin her life by continual sacrifices? She recalled all her instincts of luxury, all the privations of her soul, the sordidness of marriage, of the household, her dreams sinking into the mire like wounded swallows; all that she had longed for, all that she had denied herself, all that she might have had! And for what? for what?

In the midst of the silence that hung over the village a heart-rending cry pierced the air. Bovary turned white as a sheet. She knit her brows with a nervous gesture, then returned to her thought. And it was for him, for this creature, for this man, who understood nothing, who felt nothing! For he sat there as if nothing had happened, not even suspecting that the ridicule of his name would henceforth sully hers as well as his. She had made efforts to love him, and she had repented with tears for having yielded to another!

"But it was perhaps a valgus after all!" exclaimed Bovary suddenly, interrupting his meditations.

At the unexpected shock of this phrase falling on her thought like a leaden bullet on a silver plate, Emma shuddered and raised her head in an effort to find out what he meant to say; and they gazed at one another in silence, almost amazed to see each other, so far sundered were they by their respective states of consciousness. Charles gazed at her with the dull look of a drunken man, while he listened motionless to the last cries of the sufferer, following each other in long-drawn modulations, broken by sharp spasms like the far-off howling of some beast being slaughtered. Emma bit her wan lips, and rolling between her fingers a piece of wood she had peeled from the coral-tree, fixed on Charles the burning glance of her eyes like two arrows of fire about to dart forth. Everything in him irritated her now; his face, his dress, all the things he did not say, his whole person, in short, his existence. She repented of her past virtue as of a crime, and what still remained of it crumbled away beneath the furious blows of her pride. She revelled in all the evil ironies of triumphant adultery. The memory of her lover came back to her with irresistible, dizzying attractions; she threw her whole soul towards this image, carried by renewed passion; and Charles seemed to her as removed from her life, as eternally absent, as incongruous and annihilated, as if he were dying under her very eyes.

There was a sound of steps on the pavement. Charles looked up, and through the lowered blinds he saw Dr. Canivet standing in broad sunshine at the corner of the market, wiping his brow with his handkerchief. Homais, behind him, was carrying a large red bag in his hand, and both were going towards the pharmacy.

Then with a feeling of sudden tenderness and discouragement Charles turned to his wife and said:

"Oh, kiss me, my dear!"

"Don't touch me!" she cried, flushed with anger.

"What is it? what is it?" he repeated, in utter bewilderment. "Don't be upset! calm down! You know that I love you . . . come! . . ."

"Stop it!" she cried with a terrible look.

And rushing from the room, Emma closed the door so violently that the barometer fell from the wall and smashed on the floor.

Charles sank back into his arm-chair thoroughly shaken, wondering what could have come over her, imagining it might be some nervous disease, weeping, and vaguely feeling something fatal and incomprehensible was whirling around him.

When Rodolphe came to the garden that evening, he found his mistress waiting for him at the foot of the steps on the lowest stair. They threw their arms round one another, and all their rancor melted like snow beneath the warmth of that kiss.

XII

Their love resumed its course. Often in the middle of the day, Emma would suddenly write to him, then beckon Justin through the window; he quickly untied his apron and flew to La Huchette. Rodolphe would come; she had to tell him again how bored she was, that her husband was odious, her life dreadful.

"What do you expect me to do about it?" he asked one day impatiently.

"Ah, if only you wanted . . ."

She was sitting on the floor between his knees, her hair loosened, staring in a void.

"Wanted what?" said Rodolphe.

She sighed.

"We would go and live elsewhere . . . anywhere . . ."

"Are you out of your mind!" he said laughing. "How could we?"

She mentioned it again; he pretended not to understand, and changed the subject. What he did not understand was all this worry about so simple an affair as love. But she had a motive, a reason that gave added grounds to her attachment.

Her tenderness, in fact, grew daily as her repulsion toward her husband increased. The more she yielded to the one, the more she loathed the other. Never did Charles seem so unattractive, slow-witted, clumsy and vulgar as when she met him after her rendezvous with Rodolphe. Then while playing the part of the virtuous wife, she would burn with passion at the thought of his head, the black curl falling over the sun-tanned brow; of his figure, both elegant and strong, of the man so experienced in his thought, so impetuous in his desires! It was for him that she filed her nails with a sculptor's care, that there was never enough cold-cream for her skin, nor patchouli for her handkerchiefs. She loaded herself with bracelets, rings, and necklaces. When she expected him, she filled her two large blue glass vases with roses, and prepared herself and her room like a courtesan receiving a prince. The servant was kept busy steadily laundering her linen, and all day Félicité did not stir from the kitchen, where little Justin, who often kept her company, watched her at work.

With his elbows on the long board on which she was ironing, he greedily watched all these women's garments spread out about him, the dimity petticoats, the fichus, the collars, and the drawers with running strings, wide at the hips and narrowing below.

"What is that for?" asked the young boy, passing his hand over the crinoline or the hooks and eyes.

"Why, haven't you ever seen anything?" Félicité answered laughing. "As if your mistress, Madame Homais, didn't wear the same."

"Oh, well, Madame Homais . . ."

And he added thoughtfully,

"Is she a lady like Madame?"

But Félicité grew impatient of seeing him hanging round her. She was six years older than he, and Theodore, Monsieur Guillain's servant, was beginning to pay court to her.

"Leave me alone," she said, moving her pot of starch. "You'd better be off and pound almonds; you are always snooping around women. Before you bother with such things, naughty boy, wait till you've got a beard to your chin."

"Oh, don't be cross! I'll go and clean her boots."

And he hurriedly took down Emma's boots from the shelf all coated with mud—the mud of the rendezvous—that crumbled into powder beneath his fingers, and that he watched as it gently rose in a ray of sunlight.

"How scared you are of spoiling them!" said the maid, who wasn't so particular when she cleaned them herself, because if the boots looked slightly worn Madame would give them to her.

Emma kept a number in her cupboard that she squandered one after the other, without Charles allowing himself the slightest observation.

He also spent three hundred francs for a wooden leg that she thought had to be given to Hippolyte. The top was covered with cork, and it had spring joints, a complicated mechanism, covered over by black trowsers ending in a patent-leather boot. But Hippolyte didn't dare use such a handsome leg every day, and he begged Madame Bovary to get him another more convenient one. The doctor, of course, had to pay for this purchase as well.

So little by little the stable-boy returned to work. One saw him running about the village as before, and when Charles heard from afar the tap of the wooden leg on the pavement, he quickly went in another direction.

It was Monsieur Lheureux, the shopkeeper, who had ordered the wooden leg. This provided him with an excuse for visiting Emma. He chatted with her about the new goods from Paris, about a thousand feminine trifles, made himself very obliging and never asked for his money. Emma yielded to this lazy mode of satisfying all her caprices. When she wanted to give Rodolphe a handsome riding-crop from an umbrella store in Rouen, Monsieur Lheureux placed it on her table the very next week.

But the next day he called on her with a bill for two hundred and seventy francs, not counting the centimes. Emma was much embarrassed; all the drawers of the writing-table were empty; they owed over a fortnight's wages to Lestiboudois, six months to the maid, and there were several other bills. Bovary was impatiently

waiting to hear from Monsieur Derozeray who was in the habit of settling every year about Midsummer.

She succeeded at first in putting off Lheureux. At last he lost patience; he was being sued; he was short of capital and unless he could collect on some of his accounts, he would be forced to take back all the goods she had received.

"Oh, very well, take them!" said Emma.

"I was only joking," he replied; "the only thing I regret is the riding crop. Well, I'll have to ask Monsieur to return it to me."

"No, no!" she said.

"Ah! I've got you!" thought Lheureux.

And, certain of his discovery, he went out muttering to himself and with his usual low whistle . . .

"Good! we shall see! we shall see!"

She was wondering how to handle the situation when the maid entered and put on the mantelpiece a small roll of blue paper "with the compliments of Monsieur Derozerays'." Emma grasped it, tore it open. It contained fifteen napoleons: the account paid in full. Hearing Charles on the stairs, she threw the money to the back of her drawer, and took out the key.

Three days later, Lheureux returned.

"I have a suggestion to make," he said. "If, instead of the sum, agreed on, you would take . . ."

"Here it is," she said handing him fourteen napoleons.

The shopkeeper was taken aback. Then, to conceal his disappointment, he was profuse in apologies and offers of service, all of which Emma declined; she remained a few moments fingering in the pocket of her apron the two five-franc pieces of change he had returned to her. She told herself she would economize in order to pay back later . . . "Bah!" she thought, "he'll forget all about it."

Besides the riding-crop with its silver-gilt top, Rodolphe had received a signet with the motto *Amor nel cor*,⁴ furthermore, a scarf for a muffler, and, finally, a cigar-case exactly like the Viscount's, that Charles had formerly picked up in the road, and that Emma had kept. These presents, however, humiliated him; he refused several; she insisted, and he ended by obeying, thinking her tyrannical and over-exacting.

Then she had strange ideas.

"When midnight strikes," she said, "you must think of me."

4. The motto is old Italian for "love in my heart." After the novel's publication, Flaubert's former lover, Louise Colet, gave this name to a poem published in *Le Monde Illustré*, of January 29, 1859, that tells of a woman who spends her last penny on a signet engraved with the motto. She presents it to her lover, who nevertheless remains indifferent and cynical.

And if he confessed that he had not thought of her, there were floods of reproaches that always ended with the eternal question:

"Do you love me?"

"Why, of course I love you," he answered.

"A great deal?"

"Certainly!"

"You haven't loved any others?"

"Did you think you'd got a virgin?" he exclaimed laughing.

Emma cried, and he tried to console her, adorning his protestations with puns.

"Oh," she went on, "I love you! I love you so that I could not live without you, do you see? There are times when I long to see you again, when I am torn by all the anger of love. I ask myself, where is he? Perhaps he is talking to other women. They smile upon him; he approaches. Oh no; no one else pleases you. There are some more beautiful, but I love you best. I know how to love best. I am your servant, your concubine! You are my king, my idol! You are good, you are beautiful, you are clever, you are strong!"

He had so often heard these things said that they did not strike him as original. Emma was like all his mistresses; and the charm of novelty, gradually falling away like a garment, laid bare the eternal monotony of passion, that has always the same shape and the same language. He was unable to see, this man so full of experience, the variety of feelings hidden within the same expressions. Since libertine or venal lips had murmured similar phrases, he only faintly believed in the candor of Emma's; he thought one should beware of exaggerated declarations which only serve to cloak a tepid love; as though the abundance of one's soul did not sometimes overflow with empty metaphors, since no one ever has been able to give the exact measure of his needs, his concepts, or his sorrows. The human tongue is like a cracked cauldron on which we beat out tunes to set a bear dancing when we would make the stars weep with our melodies.

But with the superiority of critical insight of the person who holds back his emotions in any engagement, Rodolphe perceived that there were other pleasures to be exploited in this love. He discarded all modesty as inconvenient. He treated her without consideration. And he made her into something at once malleable and corrupt. It was an idiotic sort of attachment, full of admiration on his side and voluptuousness on hers, a beatitude which left her numb; and her soul sunk deep into this intoxication and drowned in it, all shrivelled up, like the duke of Clarence in his butt of malmsey.

Solely as a result of her amorous practices, Madame Bovary began to change in appearance. Her glances were bolder, her speech

freer; she even went as far as to go out walking with Rodolphe, a cigarette in her mouth, "just to scandalize the town"; finally, those who had doubted no longer when they saw her descend one day from the *Hirondelle* wearing a tight-fitting waistcoat cut like a man's.⁵ And Madame Bovary senior who, after a frightful scene with her husband, had come to seek refuge with her son, was not the least scandalized lady in town. Many other things displeased her too: first of all, Charles had not followed her advice in banning novels from the house; then, the "tone" of the house upset her; she allowed herself to make observations, and there were arguments, especially, on one occasion, concerning Felicité.

The previous evening, while crossing the corridor, Madame Bovary senior had come upon her in the company of a man of about forty wearing a brown collar, who on hearing footsteps, had quickly fled from the kitchen. Emma had burst out laughing; but the good woman was furious, declaring that anyone who took morality seriously ought to keep an eye on their servant's behavior.

"What kind of society do you come from?" asked the daughter-in-law, with so impertinent a look that Madame Bovary asked her if she were not perhaps defending her own case.

"Get out!" said the young woman, rising in fury.

"Emma! . . . Mother! . . ." cried Charles, trying to reconcile them.

But both had fled in their exasperation. Emma was stamping her feet as she repeated:

"Oh! what manners! What a peasant!"

He ran to his mother; she was beside herself. She stammered:

"How insolent she is! and how flighty! worse perhaps!"

And she was ready to leave at once if the other did not apologise. So Charles went back again to his wife and implored her to give way; he threw himself at her feet; finally, she said:

"Very well! I'll go to her."

And she actually held out her hand to her mother-in-law with the dignity of a marquise as she said:

"Excuse me, madame."

Then, having returned to her room, she threw herself flat on her bed and cried there like a child, her face buried in the pillow.

She and Rodolphe had agreed that in the event of anything extraordinary occurring, she should fasten a small piece of white paper to the blind, so that if by chance he happened to be in Yonville, he could hurry to the lane behind the house. Emma made the signal; she had been waiting three-quarters of an hour when she sud-

5. In smoking in public and flirting with masculine garb, Emma imitates George Sand, the most famous and widely read novelist of the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Flaubert admired Sand's work and was to become good friends with her in the mid-1860s.

denly caught sight of Rodolphe at the corner of the square. She felt tempted to open the window and call him, but he had already disappeared. She fell back in despair.

Soon, however, it seemed to her that someone was walking on the pavement. It was he, no doubt. She went downstairs, crossed the yard. He was there outside. She threw herself into his arms.

"Watch out!" he said.

"Ah! if only you knew!" she replied.

And she began telling him everything, hurriedly, disjointedly, exaggerating the facts, inventing many, and with so many digressions that he understood nothing at all.

"Come now, my poor angel, be brave, console yourself, be patient!"

"But I have been patient; I have suffered for four years. A love like ours ought to show itself in the face of heaven. They torture me! I can bear it no longer! Save me!"

She clung to Rodolphe. Her eyes, full of tears, flashed like flames beneath a wave; her panting made her breast rise and fall; never had she seemed more lovely, so much so that he lost his head and said:

"What do you want me to do?"

"Take me away," she cried, "carry me off! . . . I beg you!"

She pressed her lips against his mouth, as if to capture the unhopd for consent the moment it was breathed forth in a kiss.

"But . . ." Rodolphe began.

"What?"

"Your little girl!"

She reflected a few moments, then replied:

"We'll take her with us, there is no other way!"

"What a woman!" he said to himself, watching her as she went. For she had run into the garden. Some one was calling her.

On the following days the elder Madame Bovary was much surprised at the change in her daughter-in-law. Emma, in fact, was showing herself more docile, and even carried her deference to the point of asking for a recipe for pickles.

Was it the better to deceive them both? Or did she wish by a sort of voluptuous stoicism to feel the more profoundly the bitterness of the things she was about to leave? But she paid no heed to them; on the contrary, she lived as lost in the anticipated delight of her coming happiness. It was an eternal subject for conversation with Rodolphe. She leant on his shoulder murmuring:

"Think, we will soon be in the mail-coach! Can you imagine? Is it possible? It seems to me that the moment the carriage will start, it will be as if we were rising in a balloon, as if we were setting out for the clouds. Do you know that I count the hours? . . . Don't you?"

Never had Madame Bovary been so beautiful as at this period; she had that indefinable beauty that results from joy, from enthusiasm, from success, and that expresses the harmony between temperament and circumstances. Her cravings, her sorrows, her sensuous pleasures and her ever-young illusions had slowly brought her to full maturity, and she blossomed forth in the fulness of her being, like a flower feeding on manure, on rain, wind and sunshine. Her half-closed eyelids seemed perfectly shaped for the long languid glances that escaped from them; her breathing dilated the fine nostrils and raised the fleshy corners of her mouth, shaded in the light by a slight black down. Some artist skilled in corruption seemed to have devised the shape of her hair as it fell on her neck, coiled in a heavy mass, casually reassembled after being loosened daily in adultery. Her voice now took more mellow inflections, her figure also; something subtle and penetrating escaped even from the folds of her gown and from the line of her foot. Charles thought her exquisite and altogether irresistible, as when they were first married.

When he came home in the middle of the night, he did not dare to wake her. The porcelain night-light threw a round trembling gleam upon the ceiling, and the drawn curtains of the little cot formed as it were a white hut standing out in the shade by the bedside. Charles looked at them. He seemed to hear the light breathing of his child. She would grow big now; every season would bring rapid progress. He already saw her coming from school as the day drew in, laughing, with ink-stains on her jacket, and carrying her basket on her arm. Then she would have to be sent to a boarding-school; that would cost much; how was it to be done? He kept thinking about it. He thought of hiring a small farm in the neighborhood, that he would supervise every morning on his way to his patients. He would not spend what he brought in; he would put it in the savings-bank. Then he would invest in some stocks, he didn't know which; besides, his practice would increase; he counted on it, for he wanted Berthe to be well-educated, to be accomplished, to learn to play the piano. Ah! how pretty she would be later on when she was fifteen, when, resembling her mother, she would, like her, wear large straw hats in the summer-time; from a distance they would be taken for two sisters. He pictured her to himself working in the evening by their side beneath the light of the lamp; she would embroider him slippers; she would look after the house; she would fill all the home with her charm and her gaiety. At last, they would think of her marriage; they would find her some good young fellow with a steady business; he would make her happy; this would last for ever.

Emma was not asleep; she pretended to be; and while he dozed off by her side she awakened to other dreams.

To the gallop of four horses she was carried away for a week towards a new land, from where they would never return. They went on and on, their arms entwined, without speaking a word. Often from the top of a mountain there suddenly appeared some splendid city with domes, and bridges, and ships, forests of citron trees, and cathedrals of white marble, their pointed steeples crowned with storks' nests. The horses slowed down to a walk because of the wide pavement, and on the ground there were bouquets of flowers, offered by women dressed in red. They heard the chiming of bells, the neighing of mules, together with the murmur of guitars and the noise of fountains, whose rising spray refreshed heaps of fruit arranged like a pyramid at the foot of pale statues that smiled beneath playing waters. And then, one night they came to a fishing village, where brown nets were drying in the wind along the cliffs and in front of the huts. It was there that they would stay; they would live in a low, flat-roofed house, shaded by a palm-tree, in the heart of a gulf, by the sea. They would row in gondolas, swing in hammocks, and their existence would be easy and free as their wide silk gowns, warm and star-spangled as the nights they would contemplate. However, in the immensity of this future that she conjured up, nothing specific stood out; the days, all magnificent, resembled each other like waves; and the vision swayed in the horizon, infinite, harmonised, azure, and bathed in sunshine. But the child began to cough in her cot or Bovary snored more loudly, and Emma did not fall asleep till morning, when the dawn whitened the windows, and when little Justin was already in the square taking down the shutters of the pharmacy.

She had sent for Monsieur Lheureux, and had said to him:

"I want a cloak—a large lined cloak with a deep collar."

"You are going on a journey?" he asked.

"No; but . . . never mind. I count on you to get it in a hurry."

He bowed.

"Besides, I shall want," she went on, "a trunk . . . not too heavy . . . a handy size."

"Yes, yes, I understand. About three feet by a foot and a half, as they are being made just now."

"And a travelling bag."

"No question about it," thought Lheureux, "she is up to something."

"And," said Madame Bovary, taking her watch from her belt, "take this; you can pay yourself out of it."

But the shopkeeper protested that it was not necessary; as if he didn't know and trust her. She was being childish!

She insisted, however, on his taking at least the chain, and

Lheureux had already put it in his pocket and was going, when she called him back.

"You will leave everything at your place. As to the cloak"—she seemed to be reflecting—"do not bring it either; you can give me the maker's address, and tell him to have it ready for me."

It was the next month that they were to run away. She was to leave Yonville as if she was going on some business to Rouen. Rodolphe would have booked the seats, obtained the passports, and even have written to Paris in order to have the whole mail-coach reserved for them as far as Marseilles, where they would buy a carriage, and go on from there straight by the Genoa road. She would have sent her luggage to Lheureux, from where it would be taken directly to the *Hirondelle*, so that no one would have any suspicion. And in all this there never was any allusion to the child. Rodolphe avoided the subject; it may be that he had forgotten about it.

He wished to have two more weeks before him to arrange some affairs; then at the end of a week he wanted two more; then he said he was ill; next he went on a journey. The month of August passed, and, after all these delays, they decided that it was to be irrevocably fixed for the 4th September—a Monday.

At last the Saturday before arrived.

Rodolphe came in the evening earlier than usual.

"Is everything ready?" she asked him.

"Yes."

Then they walked round a garden-bed, and sat down near the terrace on the kerb-stone of the wall.

"You are sad," said Emma.

"No; why?"

And yet he looked at her strangely, though with tenderness.

"Is it because you are going away?" she went on; "because you are leaving behind what is dear to you, your own life? I can understand that . . . But I have nothing in the world! You are everything I have, and I'll be everything to you. I'll be your family, your country; I'll look after you, I'll love you."

"How sweet you are!" he said, taking her in his arms.

"Am I really?" she said with a voluptuous laugh. "Do you love me? Swear it then!"

"Do I love you? Do I? But I adore you, my love!"

The moon, full and purple-colored, was rising right out of the earth at the end of the meadow. It rose quickly between the branches of the poplar trees, partly hidden as by a tattered black curtain. Then it appeared dazzling white, lighting up the empty sky; slowing down, it let fall upon the river a great stain that broke up

into an infinity of stars; and the silver sheen seemed to writhe through the very depths like a headless serpent covered with luminous scales; it also resembled some monster candelabra from which sparkling diamonds fell like molten drops. The soft night was about them; masses of shadow filled the branches. Emma, her eyes half closed, breathed in with deep sighs the fresh wind that was blowing. They did not speak, caught as they were in their dream. The tenderness of the old days came back to their hearts, full and silent as the flowing river, with the soft perfume of the syringas, and threw across their memories shadows more immense and more sombre than those of the still willows that lengthened out over the grass. Often some night-animal, hedgehog or weasel, setting out on the hunt, disturbed the lovers, or sometimes they heard a ripe peach fall by itself from the tree.

"Ah! what a lovely night!" said Rodolphe.

"We shall have others," replied Emma.

Then, as if speaking to herself:

"Yes, it will be good to travel. And yet, why should my heart be so heavy? Is it dread of the unknown? The weight of old habits? . . . Or else? No, it is the excess of happiness. How weak I am! You must forgive me!"

"There is still time!" he cried. "Think! You may regret it later!"

"Never!" she cried impetuously.

And, drawing closer to him:

"What ill could come to me? There is no desert, no precipice, no ocean I would not traverse with you. The longer we live together the more it will be like an embrace, every day closer, more complete. There will be nothing to trouble us, no cares, no obstacle. We shall be alone, all to ourselves forever . . . Say something, answer me!"

At regular intervals he answered, "Yes . . . Yes . . ." She had passed her hands through his hair, and she repeated in a childlike voice through her tears:

"Rodolphe! Rodolphe! . . . Sweet little Rodolphe!"

Midnight struck.

"Midnight!" she said. "Come, it is to-morrow. One more day!"

He rose to go; and as if the movement he made had been the signal for their flight, Emma suddenly seemed gay:

"You have the passports?"

"Yes."

"You are forgetting nothing?"

"No."

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely."

"You'll be waiting for me at the Hotel de Provence, won't you? . . . at noon?"

He nodded.

"Till to-morrow then!" said Emma in a last caress; and she watched him go.

He did not turn round. She ran after him, and, leaning over the water's edge between the bushes:

"Till to-morrow!" she cried.

He was already on the other side of the river and walking fast across the meadow.

After a few moments Rodolphe stopped; and when he saw her with her white gown gradually fade away in the shade like a ghost, his heart beat so wildly that he had to support himself against a tree.

"What a fool I am!" he said, swearing a dreadful oath. "All the same, she was the prettiest mistress ever."

And immediately Emma's beauty, with all the pleasures of their love, came back to him. For a moment he weakened, but then he rebelled against her.

"For, after all," he exclaimed, gesticulating, "I can't exile myself, and with a child on my hands to boot!"

He was saying these things to strengthen his determination.

"And besides, the worries, the cost! No, no, a thousand times no! It would have been too stupid."

XIII

No sooner was Rodolphe at home than he sat down quickly at his desk under the stag's head that hung as a trophy on the wall. But when he had the pen between his fingers, he could think of nothing, so that, resting on his elbows, he began to reflect. Emma seemed to him to have receded into a far-off past, as if the resolution he had taken had suddenly placed an immeasurable distance between them.

In order to recapture something of her presence, he fetched from the cupboard at the bedside an old Rheims cookie-box, in which he usually kept his love letters. An odor of dry dust and withered roses emanated from it. First he saw a handkerchief stained with pale drops. It was a handkerchief of hers. Once when they were walking her nose had bled; he had forgotten it. Near it, almost too large for the box, was Emma's miniature: her dress seemed pretentious to him, and her languishing look in the worst possible taste. Then, from looking at this image and recalling the memory of the original, Emma's features little by little grew confused in his remembrance,

as if the living and the painted face, rubbing one against the other, had erased each other. Finally, he read some of her letters; they were full of explanations relating to their journey, short, technical, and urgent, like business notes. He wanted to see the long ones again, those of old times. In order to find them at the bottom of the box, Rodolphe disturbed all the others, and mechanically began rummaging among this mass of papers and things, finding pell-mell bouquets, garters, a black mask, pins, and hair . . . lots of hair! Some dark, some fair, some, catching in the hinges of the box, even broke when he opened it.

Following his memories, he examined the writing and the style of the letters, as varied as their spelling. They were tender or jovial, facetious, melancholy; there were some that asked for love, others that asked for money. A word recalled faces to him, certain gestures, the sound of a voice; sometimes, however, he remembered nothing at all.

All these women, crowding into his consciousness, rather shrank in size, levelled down by the uniformity of his feeling. Seizing the letters at random, he amused himself for a while by letting them cascade from his right into his left hand. At last, bored and weary, Rodolphe took back the box to the cupboard, saying to himself:

“What a lot of nonsense!”

Which summed up his opinion; for pleasures, like schoolboys in a school courtyard, had so trampled upon his heart that no green thing was left; whatever entered there, more heedless than children, did not even, like them, leave a name carved upon the wall.

“Come,” he said, “let’s go.”

He wrote:

Courage, Emma! you must be brave! I don’t want to be the one to ruin your life . . .

“After all, that’s true,” thought Rodolphe. “I am acting in her interest; I am honest.”

Have you carefully weighed your resolution? Do you know to what an abyss I was dragging you, poor angel? No, you don’t, I assure you. You were coming confident and fearless, believing in a future happiness . . . Ah! the wretched creatures we are! We nearly lost our minds!

Rodolphe paused to think of some good excuse.

“If I told her that I lost all my money? No! Besides, that would stop nothing. It would all start again later on. As if one could make women like that listen to reason!”

He thought for a moment, then added:

I shall not forget you, believe me; and I shall forever have a profound devotion for you; but some day, sooner or later, this ardour (such is the fate of human things) would doubtlessly have diminished. Weariness would have been unavoidable, and who knows if I would not even have had the atrocious pain of witnessing your remorse, of sharing it myself, since I would have been its cause? The mere idea of the grief that would come to you tortures me, Emma. Forget me! Why did I ever know you? Why were you so beautiful? Is it my fault? God, no! only fate is to blame!

“That’s a word that always helps,” he said to himself.

Ah, if you had been one of those shallow women of which there are so many, I might, out of selfishness, have tried an experiment, in that case without danger for you. But your exquisite sensitivity, at once your charm and your torment, has prevented you from understanding, adorable woman that you are, the falseness of our future position. I myself had not fully realized this till now; I was living in the bliss of this ideal happiness as under the shade of a poisonous tree, without foreseeing the consequences.

“She may suspect that it is out of stinginess that I am giving her up . . . But never mind, let’s get this over with!”

This is a cruel world, Emma. Wherever we might have gone, it would have persecuted us. You would have had to put up with indiscreet questions, calumny, contempt, insult perhaps. Imagine you being insulted! It is unbearable! . . . I who would place you on a throne! I who bear with me your memory as a talisman! For I am going to punish myself by exile for all the ill I have done you. I am going away. I don’t know where, I am too close to madness to think. Farewell! Continue to be good! Remember the unfortunate man who caused your undoing. Teach my name to your child; let her repeat it in her prayers.

The wicks of the candles flickered. Rodolphe got up to close the window, and when he sat down again:

“I think that covers it. Ah, let me add this for fear she might pursue me here.”

I shall be far away when you read these sad lines, for I have wished to flee as quickly as possible to shun the temptation of seeing you again. No weakness! I shall return, and perhaps later on we shall be able to talk coldly of our past love. Adieu!

And there was a last “adieu” divided into two words: “A Dieu!” which he thought in very excellent taste.

"Now how am I to sign?" he asked himself. "'Yours devotedly?' No! 'Your friend?' Yes, that's it."

YOUR FRIEND.

He re-read his letter and thought it quite good.

"Poor little woman!" he thought tenderly. "She'll think me harder than a rock. There ought to have been some tears on this; but I can't cry; it isn't my fault." Then, having emptied some water into a glass, Rodolphe dipped his finger into it, and let a big drop fall on the paper, making a pale stain on the ink. Then looking for a seal, he came upon the one "*Amor nel cor.*"

"Hardly the right thing under the circumstances . . . But who cares?"

Whereupon he smoked three pipes and went to bed.

Upon arising the next morning—around two o'clock in the afternoon, for he had slept late—Rodolphe had a basket of apricots picked. He put his letter at the bottom under some vine leaves, and at once ordered Girard, his ploughman, to take it with care to Madame Bovary. They used to correspond this way before and he would send her fruit or game according to season.

"If she asks about me," he said, "tell her that I have gone on a journey. You must give the basket to her herself, into her own hands. Get going now, and be careful!"

Girard put on his new smock, knotted his handkerchief round the apricots, and, walking heavily in his hobnailed boots, quietly made his way to Yonville.

When he got to the house, Madame Bovary was arranging a bundle of linen on the kitchen-table with Félicité.

"Here," said the ploughboy, "is something for you from my master."

She was seized with apprehension, and as she sought in her pocket for some small change, she looked at the peasant with haggard eyes, while he himself stared at her with amazement, not understanding how such a small present could stir up such violent emotions. Finally he left. Félicité stayed. She could bear it no longer; she ran into the sitting room as if to take the apricots there, overturned the basket, tore away the leaves, found the letter, opened it, and, as if pursued by some fearful fire, Emma flew in terror to her room.

Charles was there; she saw him; he spoke to her; she heard nothing, and she ran quickly up the stairs, breathless, distraught, crazed, and ever holding this horrible piece of paper, that crackled between her fingers like a plate of sheet-iron. On the second floor she stopped before the closed attic-door.

Then she tried to calm herself; she recalled the letter; she must

finish it but she didn't dare. Where and how was she to read it? She would be seen!

"Here," she thought, "I'll be safe here."

Emma pushed open the door and went in.

The slates projected a heavy heat that gripped her temples, stifled her; she dragged herself to the closed window, drew back the bolt, and the dazzling sunlight burst in.

Opposite, beyond the roofs, the open country stretched as far as the eye could reach. Down below, underneath her, the village square was empty; the stones of the pavement glittered, the weathervocks on the houses stood motionless. At the corner of the street, from a lower story, rose a kind of humming with strident modulations. It was Binet turning.

She leant against the window-frame, and re-read the letter with angry sneers. But the more she concentrated on it, the more confused she grew. She could see him, hear him, feel his embrace; the throbbing of her heart, beating irregularly in her breast like the blows of a battering ram, grew faster and faster. She looked about her wishing that the earth might crumble. Why not end it all? What restrained her? She was free. She advanced, looked at the paving-stones, saying to herself, "Jump! jump!"

The ray of light reflected straight from below drew the weight of her body towards the abyss. The ground of the village square seemed to tilt over and climb up the walls, the floor to pitch forward like a tossing boat. She was right at the edge, almost hanging, surrounded by vast space. The blue of the sky invaded her, the air was whirling in her hollow head; she had but to yield, to let herself be taken; and the humming of the lathe never ceased, like an angry voice calling her.

"My wife! my wife!" cried Charles.

She stopped.

"Where have you gone? Come here!"

The thought that she had just escaped from death almost made her faint with terror. She closed her eyes; then she started at the touch of a hand on her sleeve; it was *Félicité*.

"Monsieur is waiting for you, madame; the soup is on the table."

And she had to go down! and sit at the table!

She tried to eat. The food choked her. Then she unfolded her napkin as if to examine the darns, and really tried to concentrate on this work, counting the stitches in the linen. Suddenly she remembered the letter. How had she lost it? Where could it be found? But she felt such weariness of spirit that she could not even invent a pretext for leaving the table. Then she became a coward; she was afraid of Charles; he knew all, that was certain! Just then, he said, in an odd tone:

"We are not likely to see Monsieur Rodolphe soon again, it seems."

"Who told you?" she said, shuddering.

"Who told me!" he replied, rather astonished at her abrupt tone. "Why, Girard, whom I met just now at the door of the Café Français. He has gone on a journey, or is about to go."

She could not suppress a sob.

"What is so surprising about that? He goes away like that from time to time for a change, and I certainly can't blame him. A bachelor, and rich as he is! And from what I hear, he isn't exactly starved for pleasures, our friend! he enjoys life. Monsieur Langlois told me . . ."

He stopped for propriety's sake because the maid had just come in.

She collected the apricots that were strewn over the sideboard and put them back in the basket. Charles, unaware that his wife had turned scarlet, had them brought to him, took one, and bit into it.

"Perfect!" he said; "have a taste!"

And he handed her the basket, which she gently put away from her.

"Smell them! Such perfume!" he insisted, moving it back and forth under her nose.

"I am choking," she exclaimed, leaping up.

By sheer willpower, she succeeded in forcing back the spasm.

"It is nothing," she said, "it is nothing! Just nerves. Sit down and eat."

For she dreaded most of all that he would question her, try to help and not leave her to herself.

Charles, to obey her, sat down again, and he spat the stones of the apricots into his hands, afterwards putting them on his plate.

Suddenly a blue tilbury passed across the square at a rapid trot. Emma uttered a cry and fell back rigid on the floor.

After many hesitations, Rodolphe had finally decided to set out for Rouen. Now, as from La Huchette to Buchy there is no other way than by Yonville, he had to go through the village, and Emma had recognised him by the rays of the lanterns, which like lightning flashed through the twilight.

The general commotion which broke out in the house brought the pharmacist over in a hurry. The table, with all the plates, had been knocked over; sauce, meat, knives, the salt, and cruet-stand were strewn over the room; Charles was calling for help; Berthe, scared, was crying; and Félicité, whose hands trembled, was unlacing her mistress, whose whole body shivered convulsively.

"I'll run to my laboratory for some aromatic vinegar," said the pharmacist.

Then as she opened her eyes on smelling the bottle:

"I thought so," he said, "this thing would resuscitate a corpse!"

"Speak to us," said Charles "try to recover! It is Charles, who loves you . . . Do you know me? Look, here is your little girl; kiss her, darling!"

The child stretched out her arms to cling to her mother's neck. But turning away her head, Emma said in a broken voice:

"No, no . . . I want no one!"

She fainted again. They carried her to her bed.

She lay there stretched at full length, her lips apart, her eyelids closed, her hands open, motionless, and white as a waxen image. Two streams of tears flowed from her eyes and fell slowly upon the pillow.

Charles stood at the back of the alcove, and the pharmacist, near him, maintained the meditative silence that is fitting on the serious occasions of life.

"Don't worry," he said, touching his elbow; "I think the paroxysm is past."

"Yes, she is resting a little now," answered Charles, watching her sleep. "Poor girl! poor girl! She has dropped off now!"

Then Homais asked how the accident had occurred. Charles answered that she had been taken ill suddenly while she was eating some apricots.

"Extraordinary!" continued the pharmacist. "It is quite possible that the apricots caused the syncope. Some natures are so sensitive to certain smells; it would even be a very fine question to study both from a pathological and physiological point of view. The priests know all about it; that's why they use aromatics in all their ceremonies. It is to stupefy the senses and to bring on ecstasies,—a thing, moreover, very easy in persons of the weaker sex, who are more sensitive than we are. Some are reported fainting at the smell of burnt horn, or fresh bread . . ."

"Be careful not to wake her!" warned Bovary.

But the pharmacist was not to be stopped. "Not only," he resumed, "are human beings subject to such anomalies, but animals also. You are of course not ignorant of the singularly aphrodisiac effect produced by the *Nepeta cataria*, vulgarly called catnip, on the feline race; and, on the other hand, to quote an example whose authenticity I can vouch for, Bridaux (one of my old schoolmates, at present established in the Rue Malpalu) owns a dog that falls into convulsions as soon as you hold out a snuff-box to him. He often performs the experiment before his friends at his summer-house in

Bois-Guillaume. Could you believe that a simple sternutative could cause such damage to a quadrupedal organism? Wouldn't you agree that it is extremely curious?"

"Yes," said Charles, who was not listening.

"It just goes to show," pursued the pharmacist, smiling with benign self-satisfaction, "the numberless irregularities of the nervous system. With regard to madame, I must say that she has always seemed extremely susceptible to me. And so I should by no means recommend to you, my dear friend, any of those so-called remedies that, under the pretence of attacking the symptoms, attack the constitution. No, no gratuitous medications! Diet, that is all; sedatives, emollients, dulcifiers. And then, don't you think we ought to stimulate the imagination?"

"In what way? How?" said Bovary.

"Ah, that is the problem. 'That is the question' (he said it in English) as I lately read in a newspaper."⁶

But Emma, awaking, cried out:

"The letter! Where is the letter?"

They thought she was delirious; and she was by midnight. Brain-fever had set in.

For forty-three days Charles did not leave her. He gave up all his patients; he no longer went to bed; he was constantly feeling her pulse, applying mustard plasters and cold-water compresses. He sent Justin as far as Neufchâtel for ice; the ice melted on the way; he sent him back again. He called Monsieur Canivet into consultation; he sent for Dr. Larivière, his old master, from Rouen; he was in despair. What alarmed him most was Emma's prostration, for she did not speak, did not listen, did not even seem to suffer—as if both her body and her soul were resting after all their tribulations.

About the middle of October she could sit up in bed supported by pillows. Charles wept when he saw her eat her first piece of bread and jam. Her strength returned; she got up for a few hours of an afternoon, and one day, when she felt better, he tried to take her, leaning on his arm, for a walk round the garden. The sand of the paths was disappearing beneath the dead leaves; she walked slowly, dragging her slippers, and leaning against Charles's shoulder. She smiled all the time.

They went thus to the end of the garden near the terrace. She drew herself up slowly, shading her eyes with her hand. She looked far off, as far as she could, but on the horizon were only great bonfires of grass smoking on the hills.

"You will tire yourself, darling!" said Bovary.

6. Homais here mistakenly attributes a celebrated phrase from *Hamlet* to a newspaper of his time.

And, pushing her gently to make her enter the arbour: "Sit down on this seat; you'll be comfortable."

"Oh! no; not there!" she said in a faltering voice.

She was seized with giddiness, and that evening, she suffered a relapse, less specific in character, it is true, and with more complex symptoms. At times it was her heart that troubled her, then her head or her limbs; she had vomitings, in which Charles thought he detected the first signs of cancer.

And, on top of all this, the poor fellow had money troubles!

XIV

To begin with, he did not know how to reimburse Monsieur Homais for all the drugs he had supplied and although, as a doctor, he could have forgone paying for them, he blushed at the thought of such an obligation. Then the expenses of the household, now that the maid was in charge, became staggering. Bills flooded the house; the tradesmen grumbled; Monsieur Lheureux especially harassed him. At the height of Emma's illness, he had taken advantage of the situation to increase his bill; he hurriedly brought the cloak, the travelling-bag, two trunks instead of one, and a number of other things. Charles protested in vain; the shopkeeper rudely replied that the merchandise had been ordered and that he had no intention of taking it back. Besides, it would interfere with madame's convalescence; the doctor had better think it over; in short, he was resolved to sue him rather than give up his rights and take it off his hands. Charles subsequently ordered them sent back to the shop. Félicité forgot and, having other things on his mind, Charles thought no more about it. Monsieur Lheureux did not desist and, alternating threats with whines, he finally forced Bovary into signing him a six months' promissory note. But hardly had he signed the note than a bold idea occurred to him: he meant to borrow a thousand francs from Lheureux. So, with an embarrassed air, he asked if he could get them, adding that it would be for a year, at any interest. Lheureux ran off to his shop, brought back the money, and dictated another note, by which Bovary undertook to pay to his order on the 1st of September next the sum of one thousand and seventy francs, which, with the hundred and eighty already agreed to, made just twelve hundred and fifty. He was thus lending at six per cent in addition to one-fourth for commission; and since the merchandise brought him a good third profit at least, he stood to make one hundred and thirty francs in twelve months. He hoped that the business would not stop there; that the notes would not be paid on time and would have to be renewed, and that his puny little investment, thriving in the doctor's care like a patient in a

rest home, would return to him one day considerably plumper, fat enough to burst the bag.

All of Lheureux's enterprises were thriving. He got the franchise for supplying the Neufchâtel hospital with cider; Monsieur Guillaumin promised him some shares in the turf-bogs of Gaumesnil, and he dreamt of establishing a new coach service between Argueil and Rouen, which no doubt would not be long in putting the ramshackle van of the "Lion d'Or" out of business. Travelling faster, at a cheaper rate, and carrying more luggage, it would concentrate into his hands all of Yonville's business.

Charles often wondered how he would ever be able to pay back so much money next year. He tried to think of solutions, such as applying to his father or selling something. But his father would be deaf, and he—he had nothing to sell. He foresaw such difficulties that he quickly dismissed so disagreeable a subject of meditation from his mind. He reproached himself with forgetting Emma, as if, all his thoughts belonging to this woman, it was robbing her of something not to be constantly thinking of her.

It was a severe winter. Madame Bovary's convalescence was slow. On good days they wheeled her arm-chair to the window that overlooked the square, for she now disliked the garden, and the blinds on that side were always down. She wanted her horse to be sold; what she formerly liked now displeased her. The limit of her concerns seemed to be her own health. She stayed in bed taking light meals, rang for the maid to inquire about her tea or merely to chat. The snow on the market-roof threw a white, still light into the room; then the rain began to fall; and every day Emma would wait with a kind of anxiety for the inevitable return of some trifling event that was of little or no concern to her. The most important was the arrival of the *Hirondelle* in the evening. Then the innkeeper would shout and other voices answered, while Hippolyte's lantern, as he took down the luggage from the roof, was like a star in the darkness. At noontime, Charles came home; then he left again; next she took some broth, and towards five o'clock, as night fell, the children coming back from school, dragging their wooden shoes along the pavement, beat with their rulers against the clapper of the shutters.

Around this time of day, Monsieur Bournisien came to see her. He inquired after her health, gave her news, exhorted her to religion in a playful, gossipy tone that was not without charm. The mere sight of his cassock comforted her.

Once, at the height of her illness, she thought she was about to die and asked for communion; and while they were making the preparations in her room for the sacrament, while they were clear-

ing the night table of its medicine bottles and turning it into an altar, and while Félicité was strewing dahlia flowers on the floor, Emma felt some power passing over her that freed her from her pains, from all perception, from all feeling. Her body, relieved, no longer thought; another life was beginning; it seemed to her that her being, mounting toward God, would be annihilated in that love like a burning incense that melts into vapour. The bed-clothes were sprinkled with holy water, the priest drew the white host from the holy pyx and she fainted with celestial joy as she advanced her lips to accept the body of the Savior presented to her. The curtains of the alcove floated gently round her like clouds, and the rays of the two tapers burning on the night table seemed to shine like dazzling halos. Then she let her head fall back, fancying she heard in space the music of seraphic harps, and perceived in an azure sky, on a golden throne in the midst of saints holding green palms, God the Father, resplendent with majesty, who ordered to earth angels with wings of fire to carry her away in their arms.

This splendid vision dwelt in her memory as the most beautiful thing that it was possible to dream, so that now she strove to recall her sensation; it was still with her, albeit in a less overpowering manner, but with the same profound sweetness. Her soul, tortured by pride, at length found rest in Christian humility, and, tasting the joy of weakness, she saw within herself the destruction of her will opening wide the gates for heavenly grace to conquer her. She realised the existence of a bliss that could replace happiness, another love beyond all loves, without pause and without end, that would grow forever! Amid the illusions of her hope, she saw a state of purity floating above the earth, mingling with heaven. She wanted to become a saint. She bought rosaries and wore holy medals; she wished to have in her room, by the side of her bed, a reliquary set in emeralds that she might kiss it every evening.

The priest was delighted with her new state of mind, although he couldn't help worrying that Emma's excessive fervor might lead to heresy, to extravagance. But not being much versed in these matters once they went beyond a certain point he wrote to Monsieur Boulard, the bishop's bookseller, to send him "something first rate for a lady with a very distinguished mind." With as much concern as if he were shipping kitchen ware to savages, the bookseller made a random package of whatever happened to be current in the religious booktrade at the time. It contained little question and answer manuals, pamphlets written in the brusque tone of Joseph de Maistre, pseudo-novels in rose-coloured bindings and a sugary style, manufactured by sentimental seminarists or penitent blue-stockings. There were titles such as "Consider carefully: the Man of

the World at the Feet of the Virgin Mary, by Monsieur de * * * , decorated with many Orders"; "The Errors of Voltaire, for the Use of the Young," &c.

Madame Bovary's mind was not yet sufficiently clear to apply herself seriously to anything; moreover, she began this reading in too great a hurry. She grew provoked at the doctrines of religion; the arrogance of the polemic writings displeased her by their ferocious attacks on people she did not know; and the secular stories, sprinkled with religious seasoning, seemed to her written in such ignorance of the world, that they rather led her away from the truths she wanted to see confirmed. Nevertheless, she persevered; and when the volume slipped from her hands, she fancied herself seized with the finest Catholic melancholy ever conceived by an ethereal soul.

As for the memory of Rodolphe, she had locked it away in the deepest recesses of her heart, and it remained there solemn and motionless as a pharaoh's mummy in a catacomb. A fragrance escaped from this embalmed love, that, penetrating through everything, perfumed with tenderness the immaculate atmosphere in which she longed to live. When she knelt on her Gothic prie-Dieu, she addressed to the Lord the same suave words that she had murmured formerly to her lover in the outpourings of adultery. She was searching for faith; but no delights descended from the heavens, and she arose with aching limbs and the vague feeling that she was being cheated.

Yet she thought this search all the more admirable, and in the pride of her devoutness Emma compared herself to those grand ladies of long ago whose glory she had dreamed of over a portrait of La Vallière, and who, trailing with so much majesty the lace-trimmed trains of their long gowns, retired into solitude to shed at the feet of Christ the tears of hearts that life had wounded.

Then she indulged in excessive charity. She sewed clothes for the poor, she sent wood to women in childbirth; and on coming home one day, Charles found three tramps eating soup in the kitchen. Her little girl, whom her husband had sent back to the nurse during her illness, returned home. She wanted to teach her to read; even Berthe's crying no longer irritated her. She was resigned, universally tolerant. Her speech was full of elevated expressions. She would say:

"Is your stomach-ache any better, my angel?"

The elder Madame Bovary couldn't find fault with anything except perhaps this mania of knitting jackets for orphans instead of mending her own dishtowels; but, harassed with domestic quarrels, the good woman took pleasure in this quiet house, and she even stayed there till after Easter, to escape the sarcasms of old Bovary, who never failed to order a big pork sausage on Good Friday.

Besides the companionship of her mother-in-law, who strengthened her resolutions somewhat by the rigor of her judgment and her stern appearance, Emma almost every day had other visitors: Madame Langlois, Madame Caron, Madame Dubreuil, Madame Tuvaiche, and regularly from two to five o'clock the sterling Madame Homais who, for her part, had never believed any of the gossip about her neighbor. The Homais children also came to see her, accompanied by Justin. He went up with them to her bedroom, and remained standing near the door without daring to move or to utter a word. Often enough Madame Bovary, taking no heed of him, would start dressing. She began by taking out her comb and tossing her head, in a brusque gesture, and when for the first time the poor boy saw this mass of hair fall in ringlets to her knees, it was as if he entered suddenly into a new and strange world, whose splendour terrified him.

Emma probably did not notice his silent attentions or his timidity. She had no inkling that love, which presumably had left her life forever, was pulsating right there, under that coarse shirt, in that adolescent heart open to the emanations of her beauty. Besides, she now wrapped all things in the same mood of indifference, she combined gentleness of speech with such haughty looks, affected such contradictory ways, that one could no longer distinguish selfishness from charity, or corruption from virtue. One evening, for example, she first got angry with the maid, who had asked to go out, and stammered as she tried to find some pretext; then suddenly:

"So you love him, don't you?" she said.

And without waiting for an answer from Félicité, who was blushing, she added sadly:

"All right! run along, and have a good time!"

In early spring she had the garden all changed around, over Bovary's objections; yet he was pleased to see her at last express some will of her own. She did so more and more as her strength returned. First, she found occasion to expel Mère Rollet, the nurse, who during her convalescence had taken to visiting the kitchen in the company of her two nurslings and her young boarder, whose appetite surpassed that of a cannibal. She cut down on the visits of the Homais family, gradually freed herself from the other visitors, and even went to church less assiduously, to the great approval of the pharmacist, who remarked to her:

"I suspect you were beginning to fall for the priest's sales talk!"

As before, Monsieur Bournisien would drop in every day after catechism class. He preferred to take the air in the "grove," as he called the arbour. This was the time when Charles came home. They were hot; some sweet cider was brought out, and they drank together to madame's complete recovery.

Binet was often there, that is to say, a little lower down against the terrace wall, fishing for crayfish. Bovary invited him to have a drink, and he proved to be a real expert on the uncorking of the stone bottles.

Looking around with utter self-satisfaction, first at his companions, then at the furthest confines of the landscape, he would say:

"You must first hold the bottle perpendicularly on the table, and after the strings are cut, press the cork upwards inch by inch, gently, very gently—the way they handle soda water in restaurants."

But during his demonstration the cider often spurted right into their faces, and the priest, laughing his thick laugh, would never fail to make his little joke:

"Its excellence certainly strikes the eye!"

He was undoubtedly a kindly fellow and one day he was not even scandalised at the pharmacist, who advised Charles to give madame some distraction by taking her to the theatre at Rouen to hear the illustrious tenor, Lagardy. Homais, surprised at this silence, wanted to know his opinion, and the priest declared that he considered music less dangerous for morals than literature.

But the pharmacist took up the defence of letters. The theatre, he contended, served to decry prejudices and, while pretending to amuse, it taught virtue.

"*Castigat ridendo mores*, Monsieur Bournisien!⁷ Look at most of Voltaire's tragedies: they contain a wealth of philosophical considerations that make them into a real school of morals and diplomacy for the people."

"I," said Binet, "once saw a play called the 'Gamin de Paris,'⁸ in which there is a really fine part of an old general. He settles the account of a rich young fellow who has seduced a working girl, and at the end . . ."

"Of course," pursued Homais, "there is bad literature as there is bad pharmacy, but to condemn in a lump the most important of the fine arts seems to me a stupidity, a Gothic aberration worthy of the abominable times that imprisoned Galileo."

"I know very well," objected the curé, "that there are good works, good authors. Still, the very fact of crowding people of different sexes into the same room, made to look enticing by displays of worldly pomp, these pagan disguises, the makeup, the lights, the effeminate voices, all this must, in the long-run, engender a certain mental libertinage, give rise to immodest thoughts and impure temptations. Such, at any rate, is the opinion of all the church fa-

7. *Castigat ridendo mores*: It corrects morals in laughing. This device attributed to the poet Jean-Baptiste Santeuil (1630–1697) was a commonplace of literary criticism during the Enlightenment and Romantic periods.

8. Paris street urchin.

thers. Moreover," he added, suddenly assuming a mystic tone of voice while he rolled a pinch of snuff between his fingers, "if the Church has condemned the theatre, she must be right; we must bow to her decrees."

"Why," asked the druggist, "should she excommunicate actors when formerly they used to take part openly in religious ceremonies? They would play right in the middle of the choir and perform a kind of farce called 'mystery plays' that frequently offended against the laws of decency."

The curé merely groaned and the pharmacist persisted:

"It's like in the Bible; you know . . . there are things in it . . . certain details . . . I'd call them downright daring . . . bordering on obscenity!"

And as Monsieur Bournisien signaled his annoyance:

"Ah! you'll admit that it is not a book to place in the hands of a young girl, and I wouldn't at all like it if *Athalie* . . ."

"But it is the Protestants, and not we," protested the other impatiently, "who recommend the Bible."

"All the same," said Homais. "I am surprised that in our days, in this century of enlightenment, any one should still persist in proscribing an intellectual relaxation that is inoffensive, morally uplifting, and sometimes even good for the health—isn't that right, doctor?"

"Quite," the doctor replied in a non-committal tone, either because, sharing the same ideas, he wished to offend no one, or else because he simply had no ideas on the subject.

The conversation seemed at an end when the pharmacist thought fit to try a parting shot.

"I've known priests who put on civilian clothes to go watch burlesque shows."

"Come, come!" said the curé.

"Ah yes, I've known some!"

And, separating the words, he repeated:

"I—have—known—some!"

"Well, they did wrong," said Bournisien, prepared to listen to anything with resignation.

"And they didn't stop at that, either!" persisted the pharmacist.

"That's enough! . . ." exclaimed the priest, looking so fierce that the other thought safe to retreat.

"I only mean to say," he replied in a much less aggressive tone, "that tolerance is the surest way to draw people to religion."

"That is true! that is true!" conceded the priest, sitting down again.

But he stayed only a few minutes. Hardly had he left than Monsieur Homais said to the doctor:

"That's what I call a good fight! See how I found his weak spot? I didn't give him much of a chance. . . . Now take my advice. Take madame to the theatre, if only to get for once the better of one of these rooks! If someone could keep the store in my absence, I'd go with you. But hurry! Lagardy is only going to give one performance; he's going to play in England for a tremendous fee. From what I hear, he's quite a character. He's simply loaded with money! He travels with three mistresses and a cook. All these great artists burn the candle at both ends; they need to lead a dissolute life to stir the imagination of the public. But they die at the poorhouse, because they don't have the sense to save their money when it comes in. Well, enjoy your dinner! See you to-morrow."

This theatre idea quickly grew in Bovary's mind; he at once communicated it to his wife, who at first refused, alleging the fatigue, the worry, the expense; but, for once, Charles did not give in, so sure was he that this occasion would do her good. He saw nothing to prevent it: his mother had sent three hundred francs he no longer counted on, the current bills were far from staggering and Lheureux's notes were not due for such a long time that he could dismiss them from his mind. Besides, imagining that she was refusing out of consideration for him, he insisted all the more, until she finally consented. The next day at eight o'clock they set out in the *Hirondelle*.

The pharmacist, who had nothing whatever to keep him at Yonville but fancied himself to be indispensable, sighed with envy as he saw them go.

"Well, a pleasant journey!" he said to them; "happy mortals that you are!"

Then addressing himself to Emma, who was wearing a blue silk gown with four flounces:

"You are prettier than ever. You'll make quite an impression in Rouen."

The diligence stopped at the "Croix-Rouge" on the Place Beauvoisine. It was a typical provincial inn, with large stables and small bedrooms and chickens in the courtyard, picking at the oats under the muddy gigs of travelling salesmen;—a fine old place, with worm-eaten balconies that creak in the wind on winter nights, always crowded, noisy and full of food, its black tables stained with coffee and brandy, the thick windows yellowed by flies, the napkins spotted with cheap red wine. Like farmboys dressed in Sunday-clothes, the place still reeks of the country; it has a café on the street and a vegetable-garden on the back. Charles at once set out on his errands. He confused stage-boxes and gallery, orchestra seats and regular boxes, asked for explanations which he did not understand, was sent from the box-office to the manager, came back to

the inn, returned to the theatre and ended up by crossing the full length of the town, from theatre to outer boulevard, several times.

Madame bought herself a hat, gloves, and a bouquet. Monsieur worried greatly about missing the beginning, and, without having had time to swallow a plate of soup, they arrived at the gates of the theatre well before opening time.

XV

The crowd was lined up against the wall, evenly distributed on both sides of the entrance rails. At the corner of the neighbouring streets huge bills, printed in Gothic letters, announced "Lucie de Lammermoor-Lagardy-Opera &c."⁹ The weather was fine, the people hot; sweat trickled among fancy coiffures and pocket handkerchiefs were mopping red foreheads; now and then a warm wind that blew from the river gently stirred the edges of the canvas awnings hanging from the doors of the cafés. A little lower down, however, one was refreshed by a current of icy air that smelt of tallow, leather, and oil, breathed forth from the Rue des Charrettes with its huge, dark warehouses resounding with the noise of rolling barrels.

For fear of seeming ridiculous, Emma first wanted to take a little stroll in the harbor, and Bovary carefully kept clutching the tickets in his trouser pockets, pressed against his stomach.

Her heart began to beat as soon as she reached the entrance hall. She involuntarily smiled with vanity on seeing the crowd rushing to the right by the other corridor while she went up the staircase to the reserved seats. She was as pleased as a child to push the large tapestried door open with her finger; she breathed deeply the dusty smell of the lobbies, and when she was seated in her box she drew herself up with the self-assurance of a duchess.

The theatre was beginning to fill; opera-glasses were taken from their cases, and the subscribers greeted and bowed as they spotted each other at a distance. They sought relief from the pressures of commerce in the arts, but, unable to take their minds off business matters, they still talked about cotton, spirits of wine, or indigo. The placid and meek heads of the old men, with their pale whitish hair and complexion, resembled silver medals tarnished by lead fumes. The young beaux were strutting about in the orchestra, exhibiting their pink or apple-green cravats under their gaping waistcoats; sitting above them, Madame Bovary admired how they leant the tight-drawn palm of their yellow gloves on the golden knobs of their canes.

9. In 1835, Donzetti composed an opera with a libretto by Salvatore Cammarano based on Walter Scott's historical novel, *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819), about a love that brings the heroine into a sentimental conflict with the wishes of her family.

Now the lights of the orchestra were lit; the chandelier, let down from the ceiling, threw the sudden gaiety of its sparkling crystals over the theatre; then the musicians began to file in; and first there was the protracted hubbub of roaring cellos, squeaking violins, blaring trumpets and piping flutes. But three knocks were heard on the stage, a rolling of drums began, the brass instruments played some chords, and the curtain rose, discovering a country-scene.

It was the cross-roads of a wood, with a fountain on the left, shaded by an oak tree. Peasants and lords with tartans over their shoulders were singing a hunting-song in chorus; a captain suddenly appeared, who evoked the spirit of evil by lifting both his arms to heaven. Another followed; they departed, and the hunters started afresh.

She felt herself carried back to the reading of her youth, into the midst of Walter Scott. She seemed to hear through the mist the sound of the Scotch bagpipes re-echoing over the moors. Her remembrance of the novel helping her to understand the libretto, she followed the story phrase by phrase, while the burst of music dispersed the fleeting thoughts that came back to her. She gave herself up to the flow of the melodies, and felt all her being vibrate as if the violin bows were being drawn over her nerves. Her eyes could hardly take in all the costumes, the scenery, the actors, the painted trees that shook whenever someone walked, and the velvet caps, cloaks, swords—all those imaginary things that vibrated in the music as in the atmosphere of another world. But a young woman stepped forward, throwing a purse to a squire in green. She was left alone on the stage, and the flute was heard like the murmur of a fountain or the warbling of birds. Lucie bravely attacked her cavatina in G major. She begged for love, longed for wings. Emma, too, would have liked to flee away from life, locked in a passionate embrace. Suddenly Edgar Lagardy appeared.

He had that splendid pallor that gives something of the majesty of marble to the ardent races of the South. His vigorous form was tightly clad in a brown-colored doublet; a small chiselled dagger swung against his left thigh, and he rolled languid eyes while flashing his white teeth. They said that a Polish princess having heard him sing one night on the beach at Biarritz, where he used to be a boatsman, had fallen in love with him. She had lost her entire fortune for his sake. He had deserted her for other women, and this sentimental fame did not fail to enhance his artistic reputation. A skilled ham actor, he never forgot to have a phrase on his seductiveness and his sensitive soul inserted in the accounts about him. He had a fine voice, colossal aplomb, more temperament than intelligence, more pathos than lyric feeling; all this made for an

admirable charlatan type, in which there was something of the hairdresser as well as of the bullfighter.

From the first scene he brought down the house. He pressed Lucie in his arms, he left her, he came back, he seemed desperate; he had outbursts of rage, then elegiac gurglings of infinite sweetness, and tones like sobs and kisses escaped from his bare throat. Emma bent forward to see him, scratching the velvet of the box with her nails. Her heart filled with these melodious lamentations that were accompanied by the lugubrious moanings of the double-bases, like the cries of the drowning in the tumult of a tempest. She recognised all the intoxication and the anguish that had brought her close to death. The voice of the prima donna seemed to echo her own conscience, and the whole fictional story seemed to capture something of her own life. But no one on earth had loved her with such love. He had not wept like Edgar that last moonlit night when they had said "Till tomorrow! Till tomorrow! . . ." The theatre rang with cheers; they repeated the entire stretto; the lovers spoke of the flowers on their tomb, of vows, exile, fate, hopes; and when they uttered the final farewell, Emma gave a sharp cry that mingled with the vibrations of the last chords.

"But why," asked Bovary, "is that lord torturing her like that?"

"No, no!" she answered; "he is her lover!"

"Yet he vows vengeance on her family, while the other one who came on before said, 'I love Lucie and she loves me!' Besides, he went off with her father arm in arm. For he certainly is her father, isn't he—the ugly little man with a cock's feather in his hat?"

Despite Emma's explanations, as soon as the recitative duet began in which Gilbert lays bare his abominable machinations to his master Ashton, Charles, seeing the false engagement ring that is to deceive Lucie, thought it was a love-gift sent by Edgar. He confessed, moreover, that he did not understand the story because of the music, which interfered very much with the words.

"What does it matter?" said Emma. "Do be quiet!"

"Yes, but you know," he went on, leaning against her shoulder, "I like to understand things."

"Be quiet! be quiet!" she cried impatiently.

Lucie came on, half supported by her women, a wreath of orange blossoms in her hair, and paler than the white satin of her gown. Emma dreamed of her marriage day; she saw herself at home again among the fields in the little path as they walked to the church. Why didn't she, like this woman, resist and implore? Instead, she had walked joyously and unwittingly towards the abyss . . . Ah! if in the freshness of her beauty, before the degradation of marriage and the disillusion of adultery, she could have anchored her life upon

some great, strong heart! Virtue, affection, sensuous pleasure and duty would have combined to give her eternal bliss. But such happiness, she realized, was a lie, a mockery to taunt desire. She knew now how small the passions were that art magnified. So, striving for detachment, Emma resolved to see in this reproduction of her sorrows a mere formal fiction for the entertainment of the eye, and she smiled inwardly in scornful pity when from behind the velvet curtains at the back of the stage a man appeared in a black cloak.

His large Spanish hat fell at a gesture he made, and immediately the instruments and the singers began the sextet. Edgar, flashing with fury, dominated all the others with his clearer voice; Ashton hurled homicidal provocations at him in deep notes; Lucie uttered her shrill lament; Arthur sang modulated asides in a middle register and the deep basso of the minister pealed forth like an organ, while the female voices re-echoed his words in a delightful chorus. They were lined up in one single gesticulating row, breathing forth anger, vengeance, jealousy, terror, mercy and surprise all at once from their open mouths. The outraged lover brandished his naked sword; his lace ruff rose and fell jerkily with the movements of his chest, and he walked from right to left with long strides, clanking against the boards the silver-gilt spurs of his soft, flaring boots. She thought that he must have inexhaustible supplies of love in him to lavish it upon the crowd with such effusion. All her attempts at critical detachment were swept away by the poetic power of the acting, and, drawn to the man by the illusion of the part, she tried to imagine his life—extraordinary, magnificent, notorious, the life that would have been hers if fate had willed it. If only they had met! He would have loved her, they would have travelled together through all the kingdoms of Europe from capital to capital, sharing in his success and in his hardships, picking up the flowers thrown to him, mending his clothes. Every night, hidden behind the golden lattice of her box, she would have drunk in eagerly the expansions of this soul that would have sung for her alone; from the stage, even as he acted, he would have looked at her. A mad idea took possession of her: he was looking at her right now! She longed to run to his arms, to take refuge in his strength, as in the incarnation of love itself, and to say to him, to cry out, "Take me away! carry me with you! Let us leave! All my passion and all my dreams are yours!"

The curtain fell.

The smell of gas mingled with the people's breath and the waving fans made the air even more suffocating. Emma wanted to go out; the crowd filled the corridors, and she fell back in her armchair with palpitations that choked her. Charles, fearing that she would faint, ran to the refreshment-room to get a glass of orgeat.¹

1. A drink whose base was a syrup flavored with almonds.

He had great difficulty in getting back to his seat, for as he was holding the glass in his hands, his elbows bumped into someone at every step; he even spilt three-fourths on the shoulders of a Rouen lady in short sleeves, who feeling the cold liquid running down her back, started to scream like a peacock, as if she were being murdered. Her mill-owner husband lashed out at his clumsiness, and while she used her handkerchief to wipe off the stains from her handsome cherry-colored taffeta gown, he angrily muttered about indemnity, costs, reimbursement. Charles was quite out of breath when he finally reached his wife:

"I thought I'd never make it. What a crowd! . . . What a crowd!"

And he added:

"Just guess whom I met up there! Monsieur Léon!"

"Léon?"

"Himself! He's coming along to pay his respects."

And as he finished these words the ex-clerk of Yonville entered the box.

He held out his hand with the casual ease of a gentleman; and Madame Bovary extended hers, yielding no doubt to the pressure of a stronger will. She had not felt it since that spring evening when the rain fell upon the green leaves, and they had said good-bye while standing near the window. But soon recalling herself to the necessities of the situation, she managed to shake off the torpor of her memories, and began stammering a few hurried words.

"Ah! good evening . . . What, you here?"

"Silence!" cried a voice from the orchestra, for the third act was beginning.

"So you are at Rouen?"

"Yes."

"And since when?"

"Be quiet! Throw them out!"

People were looking at them; they fell silent.

But from that moment she listened no more; and the chorus of the guests, the scene between Ashton and his servant, the grand duet in D major, all became more distant, as if the instruments had grown less sonorous and the characters more remote. She remembered the card games at the pharmacist, the walk to the nurse, the poetry readings in the arbour, the tête-à-têtes by the fire-side—all the sadness of their love, so calm and so protracted, so discreet, so tender, and that she had nevertheless forgotten. And why had he come back? What combination of circumstances had brought him back into her life? He was standing behind her, leaning with his shoulder against the wall of the box; now and again she felt herself shudder as she felt the warmth of his breath on her hair.

"Do you find this amusing?" he said, bending over her so closely that the end of his moustache brushed her cheek.

She replied flippantly:

"Heavens, no! not particularly."

Then he suggested that they leave the theatre and have an ice somewhere.

"Oh, not yet; let us stay," said Bovary. "Her hair's undone; this is going to be tragic."

But the madness scene did not interest Emma, and she thought the singer was overacting.

"She screams too loud," she said, turning to Charles who was listening.

"Yes . . . perhaps . . . a little," he replied, torn between his genuine enjoyment and his respect for his wife's opinion.

Then Léon sighed:

"Don't you find it hot . . ."

"Unbearably so! Yes!"

"Don't you feel well?" Bovary inquired.

"Yes, I am stifling; let's go."

Monsieur Léon draped her long lace shawl carefully about her shoulders, and the three of them left and sat down near the harbor, on the terrace of a café. First they spoke of her illness, although Emma interrupted Charles from time to time, for fear, she said, of boring Monsieur Léon; and the latter told them that he had come to spend two years in a big Rouen law firm, in order to gain some experience of how business is conducted in Normandy—so different from Paris. Then he inquired after Berthe, the Homais, Mère Lefrançois, and as they had, in the husband's presence, nothing more to say to one another, the conversation soon came to an end.

People coming out of the theatre walked along the pavement, humming or shouting at the top of their voices, "*O bel ange, ma Lucie!*" Then Léon, playing the dilettante, began to talk music. He had seen Tamburini, Rubini, Persiani, Grisi, and, compared with them, Lagardy, despite his grand outbursts, was nowhere.

"Yet," interrupted Charles, who was slowly sipping his rumsherbet, "they say that he is quite admirable in the last act. I regret leaving before the end, just when I was beginning to enjoy myself."

"Why," said the clerk, "he will soon give another performance."

But Charles replied that they had to leave the next day. "Unless," he added, turning to his wife, "you'd like to stay by yourself, my darling?"

And changing his tactics at the unexpected opportunity that presented itself to his hopes, the young man sang the praises of Lagardy in the last aria. It was really superb, sublime. Then Charles insisted:

"You'll come back on Sunday. Come, make up your mind. If you

feel that this is doing you the least bit of good, you shouldn't hesitate to stay."

The adjoining tables, however, were emptying; a waiter came and stood discreetly near them. Charles, who understood, took out his purse; the clerk held back his arm, and made a point of leaving two extra pieces of silver that he made chink on the marble.

"I am really sorry," said Bovary, "for all the money you are . . ."

The other silenced him with a gesture of affable disdain and, taking his hat, said:

"So, we are agreed, to-morrow at six o'clock?"

Charles explained once more that he could not absent himself longer, but that nothing prevented Emma . . .

"But," she stammered, with a strange smile, "I don't know if I ought . . ."

"Well, you must think it over. Sleep over it and we'll see in the morning."

Then, to Léon, who was walking along with them:

"Now that you are in our part of the world, I hope you'll come and have dinner with us from time to time."

The clerk declared he would not fail to do so, being obliged, moreover, to go to Yonville on some business for his office. And they parted before the passage Saint-Herbland just as the cathedral struck half-past eleven.

Part Three

I

Monsieur Léon, while studying law, had been a fairly assiduous customer at the Chaumière, a dance-hall where he was particularly successful with the grisettes who thought him distinguished looking. He was the best-mannered of the students; he wore his hair neither too long nor too short, didn't spend all his quarter's money on the first day of the month, and kept on good terms with his professors. As for excesses, he had always abstained from them, as much from cowardice as from refinement.

Often when he stayed in his room to read, or else when sitting in the evening under the linden-trees of the Luxembourg, he let his law-code fall to the ground, and the memory of Emma came back to him. But gradually this feeling grew weaker, and other desires took the upperhand, although the original passion still acted through them. For Léon did not lose all hope; there was for him, as it were, a vague promise floating in the future, like a golden fruit suspended from some fantastic tree.

Then, seeing her again after three years of absence, his passion reawakened. He must, he thought, finally make up his mind to possess her. Moreover, his timidity had worn off in the gay company of his student days, and he returned to the provinces in utter contempt of whoever had not set foot on the asphalt of the boulevards. In the presence of a genuine Parisienne, in the house of some famous physician surrounded by honors and luxury, the poor clerk would no doubt have trembled like a child; but here, on the quais of Rouen, with the wife of a small country-doctor, he felt at his ease, sure to shine. Self-confidence depends on environment: one does not speak in the same tone in the drawing room as in the kitchen; and the wealthy woman seems to have about her, to guard her virtue, all her bank-notes, like an armour, in the lining of her corset.

On leaving the Bovarys the night before, Léon had followed them through the streets at a distance; when he saw them enter the Croix-Rouge, he returned home and spent the night planning his strategy.

So the next afternoon about five o'clock he walked into the kitchen of the inn, pale and apprehensive, driven by a coward's resolution that stops at nothing.

"Monsieur isn't in," a servant told him.

This seemed to him a good omen. He went upstairs.

She didn't seem surprised at his arrival; on the contrary, she apologized for having failed to tell him where they were staying.

"Oh, I guessed it!" said Léon.

He pretended he had found her by chance, guided by instinct. When he saw her smile, he tried to repair his blunder by telling her he had spent the morning looking for her in all the hotels in the town.

"So you have made up your mind to stay?" he added.

"Yes," she said, "and I shouldn't have. One should avoid getting used to inaccessible pleasures when one is burdened by so many responsibilities . . ."

"Oh, I can imagine . . ."

"No, you can't, you are not a woman."

But men too had their trials, and the conversation started off by some philosophical considerations. Emma expatiated on the frailty of earthly affections, and the eternal isolation that stifles the human heart.

To show off, or in a naive imitation of this melancholy which stirred his own, the young man declared that he had been dreadfully despondent. He was bored by the law, attracted by other vocations and his mother had never ceased to harass him in all her letters. As they talked, they stated the reasons for their respective

unhappiness with more precision and they felt a shared exaltation in this growing confidence. But they sometimes stopped short of revealing their thought in full, and then sought to invent a phrase that might nevertheless express it. She did not confess her passion for another; he did not say that he had forgotten her.

Perhaps he no longer remembered the suppers with girls after masked balls; and no doubt she did not recollect the rendezvous of old when she ran across the fields in the morning to her lover's house. The noises of the town hardly reached them, and the room seemed small, as if to bring them even closer together in their solitude. Emma, in a dimity dressing gown, leant her chignon against the back of the old arm-chair; the yellow wall-paper formed, as it were, a golden background behind her, and her bare head was reflected in the mirror with the white parting in the middle, the tip of her ears peeping out from the folds of her hair.

"How bad of me!" she said, "you must forgive me for boring you with my eternal complaints."

"No, never, never!"

"If only you knew," she went on, raising to the ceiling her beautiful eyes, in which a tear was trembling, "if only you knew all I dreamed!"

"So did I! Oh, I too have suffered! Often I went out; I went away. I left, dragging myself along the quays, seeking distraction amid the din of the crowd without being able to banish the heaviness that weighed upon me. In an engraver's shop on the boulevard I found an Italian print of one of the Muses. She is draped in a tunic, and she is looking at the moon, with forget-me-nots in her flowing hair. Something continually drove me there, I would stay for hour after hour."

Then, in a trembling voice:

"She looked a little like you."

Madame Bovary turned away her head that he might not see the irrepressible smile she felt rising to her lips.

"Often," he went on, "I wrote you letters that I tore up."

She did not answer. He continued;

"I sometimes fancied that some chance would bring you. I thought I recognised you at street-corners, and I ran after carriages when I saw a shawl or a veil like yours flutter in the window . . ."

She seemed resolved to let him speak without interruption. With arms crossed and her head lowered, she stared at the rosettes on her slippers, and from time to time moved her toes under the satin.

At last she sighed.

"But what I find worst of all is to drag out, as I do, a useless existence. If our pains could be of use to some one, we should find consolation in the thought of the sacrifice."

He started off in praise of virtue, duty, and silent immolation, having himself an incredible longing for self-sacrifice that he could not satisfy.

"What I would like," she said "is to work in a hospital as a nursing Sister."

"Unfortunately," he replied, "no such holy vocations are open to men, and I can think of no profession . . . except perhaps a doctor's . . ."

With a slight shrug of the shoulders, Emma interrupted him to speak of her illness, which had almost killed her. How she regretted her cure! if she had died, she would not now be suffering. Léon was quick to express his own longing for "the quiet of the tomb"; one night, he had even made his will, asking to be buried in that beautiful coverlet with velvet stripes he had received from her. For this was how they would have wished to be, each setting up an ideal to which they were now trying to adapt their past life. Besides, speech is like a rolling mill that always stretches the sentiment it expresses.

But this made-up story of the coverlet made her ask:

"Why?"

"Why?" He hesitated.

"Because I loved you so!"

And congratulating himself at having surmounted the obstacle, Léon watched her face out of the corner of his eye.

It was like the sky when a gust of wind sweeps the clouds away. The mass of darkening sad thoughts lifted from her blue eyes; her whole face shone.

He waited. At last she replied:

"I always suspected it."

Then they went over all the trifling events of that far-off existence, of which the joys and sorrows had just been conjured up by that one word. He remembered the clematis arbor, the dresses she had worn, the furniture of her room, the entire house.

"And our poor cactuses, where are they?"

"The cold killed them this winter."

"How often did I think of them! I see them again as they looked when on summer mornings the sun shone on your blinds, and I saw your two bare arms among the flowers.

"Poor friend!" she said, holding out her hand.

Léon swiftly pressed his lips to it. Then, when he had taken a deep breath:

"In those days, you were like an incomprehensible power to me which held me captive. Once, for instance, I came to see you, but you probably don't remember."

"I do," she said; "go on."

"You were downstairs in the hall, ready to go out, standing on the last stair: you were wearing a hat with small blue flowers; and without being invited, in spite of myself, I went with you. But I grew more and more conscious of my folly every moment, and I kept walking by your side, not daring to follow you completely but unable to leave. When you went into a shop, I waited in the street, and I watched you through the window taking off your gloves and counting the change on the counter. Then you rang at Madame Tuvache's; you were let in, and I stood like an idiot in front of the great heavy door that had closed after you."

Madame Bovary, as she listened to him, wondered that she was so old. All these things reappearing before her seemed to expand her existence; it was like some sentimental immensity to which she returned; and from time to time she said in a low voice, her eyes half closed:

"Yes, it is true . . . it is true . . ."

They heard eight o'clock strike on the different towers that surround the Place Beauvoisine, a neighborhood of schools, churches, and large empty private dwellings. They no longer spoke, but as they looked upon each other, they felt their heads whirl, as if waves of sound had escaped from their fixed glances. They were hand in hand now, and the past, the future, reminiscences and dreams, all were confounded in the sweetness of this ecstasy. Night was darkening over the walls, leaving visible only, half hidden in the shade, the coarse colors of four bills representing scenes from *La Tour de Nesle*,¹ with Spanish and French captions underneath. Through the sash-window they could see a patch of sky between the pointed roofs.

She rose to light two wax-candles on the chest of drawers, then she sat down again.

"Well . . . ?" said Léon.

"Well . . . ?" she replied.

He was wondering how to resume the interrupted conversation, when she said to him:

"How is it that no one until now has ever expressed such sentiments to me?"

The clerk retorted that idealistic natures rarely found understanding. But he had loved her from the very first moment; the thought of their possible happiness filled him with despair. If only they had met earlier, by some stroke of chance, they would have been forever bound together.

"I have sometimes thought of it," she went on.

1. A lurid melodrama (1832) by Alexandre Dumas the elder and Frédéric Gaillardé, conjuring the perversities of female desire.

"What a dream!" murmured Léon.

And fingering gently the blue border of her long white belt, he added,

"Who prevents us from starting all over again?"

"No, my friend," she replied; "I am too old . . . You are too young . . . forget me! Others will love you . . . you will love them."

"Not as I love you!"

"What a child you are! Come, let us be sensible, I want it."

She told him again that their love was impossible, that they must remain, as before, like brother and sister to each other.

Was she speaking seriously? No doubt Emma did not herself know, absorbed as she was by the charm of the seduction and the necessity of defending herself; looking tenderly at the young man, she gently repulsed the timid caresses that his trembling hands attempted.

"Ah! forgive me!" he cried, drawing back.

Emma was seized with a vague fear at this shyness, more dangerous to her than the boldness of Rodolphe when he advanced to her open-armed. No man had ever seemed to her so beautiful. His demeanor suggested an exquisite candor. He lowered his long curling eyelashes. The soft skin of his cheek was flushed, she thought, with desire for her, and Emma felt an invincible longing to press her lips to it. Then, leaning towards the clock as if to see the time:

"How late it is!" she exclaimed. "How we have been chattering!"

He understood the hint and took up his hat.

"You made me forget about the opera! And poor Bovary who left me here especially for that! Monsieur Lormeaux, of the Rue Grand-Pont, was to take me and his wife."

And there would be no other opportunity, as she was to leave the next day.

"Really?" said Léon.

"Yes."

"But I must see you again," he went on. "I had something to tell you . . ."

"What?"

"Something . . . important, serious. I cannot possibly let you go like this. If only you knew . . . Listen to me . . . Haven't you understood? Can't you guess?"

"You made yourself very clear," said Emma.

"Ah! you can jest! But you shouldn't. Have mercy, and allow me to see you again . . . only once . . . one single time."

"Well . . ."

She stopped; then, as if changing her mind:

"But not here!"

"Wherever you say."

"Will you . . ."

She seemed to think; then suddenly:

"To-morrow at eleven o'clock in the cathedral."

"I shall be there," he cried, seizing her hands, which she withdrew.

And as they were both standing up, he behind and Emma with lowered head, he stooped over her and pressed long kisses on her neck.

"You are crazy, you are crazy!" she cried between bursts of laughter, as the kisses multiplied.

Then bending his head over her shoulder, he seemed to beg the consent of her eyes, but when they met his, they seemed icy and distant.

Léon took three paces backwards. He stopped on the threshold; then he whispered in a trembling voice:

"Till to-morrow."

She answered with a nod, and vanished like a bird into the next room.

In the evening Emma wrote the clerk an interminable letter, in which she cancelled the rendezvous; all was over between them; they must not, for the sake of their happiness, meet again. But when the letter was finished, as she did not know Léon's address, she was puzzled.

"I'll give it to him myself," she said; "he'll come."

The next morning, humming a tune while he stood on his balcony by the open window, Léon polished his shoes with special care. He put on white trousers, silken socks, a green coat, emptied all the scent he had into his handkerchief, then having had his hair curled, he uncurled it again, in order to give it a more natural elegance.

"It is still too early," he thought, looking at the barber's cuckoo-clock, that pointed to the hour of nine.

He read an old fashion journal, went out, smoked a cigar, walked up three streets, thought the time had come and walked slowly towards the porch of Notre Dame.

It was a beautiful summer morning. Silver sparkled in the window of the jeweler's store and the light, falling obliquely on the cathedral, threw shimmering reflections on the edges of the grey stones; a flock of birds fluttered in the grey sky round the trefoiled turrets; the square, resounding with cries, was fragrant with the flowers that bordered the pavement, roses, jasmynes, carnations, narcissus, and tuberoses, unevenly spaced out between moist grasses, catnip, and chickweed for the birds; the fountains gurgled in the center, and under large umbrellas, amidst heaps of piled up melons, bare-headed flower vendors wrapped bunches of violets in pieces of paper.

The young man took one. It was the first time that he had bought flowers for a woman, and his breast, as he smelt them, swelled with pride, as if this homage that he meant for another had been reflected upon himself.

But he was afraid of being seen and resolutely entered the church.

The vergier was just then standing on the threshold in the middle of the left doorway, under the figure of Salomé dancing, known in Rouen as the "dancing Marianne." He wore a feather cap, a rapier dangled against his leg and he looked more majestic than a cardinal, as shining as a pyx.

He came towards Léon, and, with the bland benign smile of a priest when questioning a child, asked:

"I gather that Monsieur is a visitor in this town? Would Monsieur care to be shown the church?"

"No!" said Léon.

And he first went round the lower aisles. Then he went out to look at the Place. Emma was not coming yet, so he returned as far as the choir.

The nave was reflected in the full fonts together with the base of the arches and some fragments of the stained glass windows. But the reflections of the painted glass, broken by the marble rim, were continued farther on upon the pavement, like a many-coloured carpet. The broad daylight from outside entered the church in three enormous rays through the three opened portals. From time to time a sacristan crossed the far end of the church, making the sidewise genuflection of a hurried worshipper in the direction of the altar. The crystal lustres hung motionless. In the choir a silver lamp was burning, and from the side chapels and dark places of the church sounds like sighs arose, together with the clang of a closing grating that echoed under the lofty vaults.

Léon walked solemnly alongside the walls. Life had never seemed so good to him. She would soon appear, charming and agitated, looking back to see if anyone was watching her—with her flounced dress, her gold eyeglass, her delicate shoes, with all sorts of elegant trifles that he had never been allowed to taste, and with the ineffable seduction of yielding virtue. The church was set around her like a huge boudoir; the arches bent down to shelter in their darkness the avowal of her love; the windows shone resplendent to light up her face, and the censers would burn that she might appear like an angel amid sweet-smelling clouds.

Meanwhile, she did not come. He sat down on a chair, and his eyes fell upon a blue stained window representing boatmen carrying baskets. He looked at it long, attentively, and he counted the scales of the fishes and the button-holes of the doublets, while his thoughts wandered off in search of Emma.

The verger, left to himself, resented the presence of someone who dared to admire the cathedral without his assistance. He considered this a shocking way to behave, robbing him of his due, close to committing sacrilege.

There was a rustle of silk on the pavement, the edge of a hat, a hooded cape—it was she! Léon rose and ran to meet her.

Emma was pale. She walked hurriedly.

“Read this!” she said, holding out a piece of paper to him. “Oh, no!”

And she abruptly withdrew her hand to enter the chapel of the Virgin, where, kneeling on a chair, she began to pray.

The young man was irritated by this display of piety; then he nevertheless felt a certain charm in seeing her thus lost in devotions in the middle of a rendezvous, like an Andalusian marquise; then he grew bored, for she seemed to go on for ever.

Emma prayed, or rather tried to pray, hoping that some sudden resolution might descend to her from heaven; and to draw down divine aid she filled her eyes with the splendors of the tabernacle. She breathed in the perfumes of the full-blown flowers in the large vases, and listened to the stillness of the church—a stillness that only heightened the tumult in her own heart.

She rose, and they were about to leave, when the verger quickly approached:

“Madame is perhaps a stranger here? Madame would like to visit the church?”

“Oh, no!” the clerk cried.

“Why not?” she said.

For, with her expiring virtue, she clung to the Virgin, the sculptures, the tombs—to anything.

Then, in order to do things right, the verger took them to the entrance near the square, where, pointing out with his cane a large circle of black stones, without inscription or carving:

“This,” he said majestically, “is the circumference of the beautiful bell of Ambroise. It weighed forty thousand pounds. There was not its equal in all Europe. The workman who cast it died of joy . . .”

“Let’s go,” said Léon.

The old man started off again; then, having got back to the chapel of the Virgin, he waved his arm in a theatrical gesture of demonstration, and, prouder than a country squire showing his orchard, he announced:

“This simple stone covers Pierre de Brézé, lord of Varenne and of Brissac, grand marshal of Poitou, and governor of Normandy, who died at the battle of Montlhéry on the 16th of July, 1465.”

Léon was furiously biting his lips of impatience.

“And on the right, this gentleman in full armor, on the prancing

horse, is his grandson, Louis de Brézé, lord of Breval and of Montchauvet, Count de Maulevrier, Baron de Mauny, chamberlain to the king, Knight of the Order, and also governor of Normandy; he died on the 23rd of July, 1531—a Sunday, as the inscription specifies; and below, this figure, about to descend into the tomb, portrays the same person. How could one conceive of a better way to depict the void of human destiny?"

Madame Bovary lifted her eyeglass. Motionless, Léon watched her without even trying to protest, to make a gesture, so discouraged was he by this double display of idle talk and indifference.

Nothing could stop the guide:

"Near him, this kneeling woman who weeps is his spouse, Diane de Poitiers, comtesse de Brézé, duchesse de Valentinois, born in 1499, died in 1566, and to the left, the one with the child is the Holy Virgin. Now if you turn to this side, you will see the tombs of the Ambroise. They were both cardinals and archbishops of Rouen. That one was minister under Louis XII. He did a great deal for the cathedral. In his will he left thirty thousand gold crowns for the poor."

And without ceasing to talk, he pushed them into a chapel crowded with wooden railings; he pushed some aside and discovered a kind of wooden block that looked vaguely like a poorly carved statue.

"It seems hard to believe," he sighed sadly, "but this used to adorn the tomb of Richard Coeur de Lion, King of England and Duke of Normandy. It was the Calvinists, Monsieur, who reduced it to this condition. They were mean enough to bury it in the earth, under the episcopal throne of Monseigneur the bishop. You can see from here the door by which Monseigneur passes to his house. Let's move on to the gargoyles windows."

But Léon hastily extracted some silver coins from his pocket and seized Emma's arm. The verger stood dumbfounded, not able to understand this untimely munificence when there were still so many things for the stranger to see. He called after him:

"Monsieur! The steeple! the steeple!"

"No, thank you!" said Léon.

"You are missing the best! It is four hundred and forty feet high, nine less than the great pyramid of Egypt. It is all cast iron, it . . ."

Léon was fleeing, for it seemed to him that his love, that for nearly two hours had been frozen in the church like the stones, would now vanish like a vapor through that sort of truncated funnel, rectangular cage or open chimney that rises so grotesquely from the cathedral like the extravagant brainchild of some fantastic roofer.

"But where are we going?" she said.

He pushed on without answering, and Madame Bovary was already dipping her finger in the holy water when behind them they heard a panting breath interrupted by the regular sound of a tapping cane. Léon turned around.

"Monsieur!"

"What is it?"

And he recognised the verger, holding under his arms and bracing against his stomach some twenty large volumes, all of them works on the cathedral.

"Idiot!" muttered Léon, rushing out of the church.

A boy was playing on the sidewalk:

"Go and get me a cab!"

The child bounded off like a ball by the rue des Quatre-Vents; then they were alone a few minutes, face to face, and a little embarrassed.

"Oh Léon! Truly . . . I don't know . . . if I should . . ."

She simpered. Then, in a serious tone:

"It's very improper, you know, it isn't done."

"Everybody does it in Paris!" replied the clerk.

This, like a decisive argument, entirely convinced her. She had made up her mind.

But no cab arrived. Léon shuddered at the thought that she might return into the church. At last the cab appeared.

"At least, you should go out by the northern gate," cried the verger, who was left alone on the threshold, "and look at the Resurrection, the Last Judgment, Paradise, King David, and the damned burning in the flames of Hell!"

"Where to, sir?" asked the coachman.

"Anywhere!" said Léon, pushing Emma into the cab.

And the lumbering machine set out.

It went down the Rue Grand-Pont, crossed the Place des Arts, the Quai Napoleon, the Pont Neuf, and stopped short before the statue of Pierre Corneille.

"Go on," cried a voice that came from within.

The cab went on again, and as soon as it reached the Carrefour Lafayette, set off down-hill, and entered the railroad station at a gallop.

"No, straight on!" cried the same voice.

The cab came out by the gate, and soon having reached the Mall, trotted quietly beneath the elm-trees. The coachman wiped his brow, put his leather hat between his knees, and drove his carriage beyond the side alley by the meadow to the margin of the waters.

It went along by the river, along the towing-path paved with sharp pebbles, and for a long while in the direction of Oysel, beyond the islands.

But suddenly it turned sideways across Quatremares, Sotteville, La Grande-Chaussée, the Rue d'Elbeuf, and made its third halt in front of the Jardin des Plantes.

"Get on, will you?" cried the voice more furiously.

And at once resuming its course, it passed by Saint-Sever, by the Quai des Curandiers, the Quai aux Meules, once more over the bridge, by the Place du Champ-de-Mars, and behind the hospital gardens, where old men in black coats were walking in the sun along the ivy-covered terraces. It went up the Boulevard Bouvreuil, along the Boulevard Cauchoise, then the whole of Mont-Riboudet to the Deville hills.

It came back; and then, without any fixed plan or direction, wandered about at random. The cab was seen at Saint-Pol, at Lescure, at Mont Gargan, at La Rouge-Marc and Place du Gaillard-bois; in the Rue Maladrerie, Rue Dinanderie, before Saint-Romain, Saint-Vivien, Saint-Maclou, Saint-Nicaise—in front of the Customs, at the Basse-Vieille-Tour, the "Trois Pipes," and the Cimetière Monumental. From time to time the coachman on his seat cast despairing glances at the passing cafés. He could not understand what furious locomotive urge prevented these people from ever coming to a stop. Time and again he would try, but exclamations of anger would at once burst forth behind him. Then he would whip his two sweating nags, but he no longer bothered dodging bumps in the road; the cab would hook on to things on all sides but he couldn't have cared less, demoralized as he was, almost weeping with thirst, fatigue and despair.

Near the harbor, among the trucks and the barrels, and along the street corners and the sidewalks, bourgeois stared in wonder at this thing unheard of in the provinces: a cab with all blinds drawn that reappeared incessantly, more tightly sealed than a tomb and tossed around like a ship on the waves.

One time, around noon, in the open country, just as the sun beat most fiercely against the old plated lanterns, a bare hand appeared under the yellow canvas curtain, and threw out some scraps of paper that scattered in the wind, alighting further off like white butterflies on a field of red clover all in bloom.

Then, at about six o'clock the carriage stopped in a back street of the Beauvoisine Quarter, and a woman got out, walking with her veil down and without looking back.

II

On reaching the inn, Madame Bovary was surprised not to see the stage coach. Hivert had waited for her fifty-three minutes, but finally left without her.

Nothing forced her to go, but she had promised to return that same evening. Moreover, Charles expected her, and in her heart she felt already that cowardly docility that is for some women at once the chastisement and atonement of adultery.

She packed her bag quickly, paid her bill, took a cab in the yard, hurrying on the driver, urging him on, every moment inquiring about time and distance traversed. He succeeded in catching up with the *Hirondelle* as it neared the first houses of Quincampoix.

Hardly was she seated in her corner than she closed her eyes, and opened them at the foot of the hill, when from afar she recognized Félicité, who was on the look-out in front of the blacksmith's. Hivert pulled up his horses, and the maid, reaching up to the window, said in a tone of mystery:

"Madame, you must go at once to Monsieur Homais. It's for something urgent."

The village was silent as usual. At the corner of the streets little pink mounds lay smoking in the air, for this was the time for jam making, and every one at Yonville prepared his supply on the same day. But in front of the pharmacist's shop one might admire a far larger heap; it surpassed the others with the superiority that a laboratory must have over domestic ovens, a general need over individual fancy.

She went in. The big arm chair had fallen over and even the *Fanal de Rouen* lay on the ground, outspread between two pestles. She pushed open the door of the hall, and in the middle of the kitchen, amid brown jars full of picked currants, powdered and lump sugar, scales on the table and pans on the fire, she saw assembled all the Homais, big and little, with aprons reaching to their chins, and holding forks in their hands. Justin was standing with bowed head, and the pharmacist was screaming:

"Who told you to go fetch it in the Capharnaüm?"

"What is it? What is the matter?"

"What is it?" replied the pharmacist. "We are making jelly; it is cooking; but it threatens to boil over because there is too much juice, and I ask for another pan. Then this one here, out of laziness, goes to my laboratory, and dares to take the key to the Capharnaüm from the nail!"

This name had been given to a small room under the eaves, crammed with the tools and the goods of his trade. He often spent long hours there alone, labelling, decanting, and packaging. He looked upon it not as a simple store-room, but as a veritable sanctuary from where the creations of his own hands were to set forth: pills, lotions and potions that would spread far and wide his rising fame. No one in the world was allowed to set foot there, and he revered it to the point of sweeping it himself. If the pharmacy,

open to all comers, was the stage where he displayed his pride, the Capharnaüm was the refuge where in selfish concentration, Homais indulged in his most relished pursuits. Therefore, Justin's thoughtlessness seemed to him a monstrous piece of irreverence, and, his face redder than the currants, he continued:

"Yes, the key to the Capharnaüm! The key that locks up the acids and caustic alkalis! To go and get a spare pan! a pan with a lid! and that I shall perhaps never use! Everything is of importance in the delicate operations of our art! One must maintain the proper distinctions, and not employ for nearly domestic purposes what is destined for pharmaceutical science! It is as if one were to carve a fowl with a scalpel; as if a magistrate . . ."

"Quiet down," Madame Homais was saying.

And Athalie, pulling at his coat, cried:

"Papa! papa!"

"No, leave me alone!" the pharmacist cried, "leave me alone! I tell you, I might as well be running a grocery store. Just keep at it, don't mind me and break everything to pieces! Smash the test-tubes, let the leeches loose, burn the marshmallows, put pickles in the medical jars, tear up the bandages!"

"I thought you wanted to . . ."

"In a moment. . . Do you know what risks you took? Didn't you see something in the corner, on the left, on the third shelf? Speak! Answer me! Say something!"

"I . . . don't . . . know . . ." stammered the boy.

"Ah! you don't know! Well, I do! You saw a bottle of blue glass sealed with yellow wax, that contains a white powder carefully marked *Dangerous!* And do you know what is in it? Arsenic! And you go and touch it! You take a pan that stands right next to it!"

"Right next to it!" cried Madame Homais, clasping her hands. "Arsenic! You might have poisoned us all."

And the children began to scream as if they already felt dreadful stomach pains.

"Or poison a patient!" continued the pharmacist. "Do you want to see me dragged into court like a common criminal? or taken to the scaffold? As if you didn't know how careful one has to be in handling chemicals, even I who spent my life doing nothing else. Often I am horrified when I think of my responsibility; the Government persecutes us, and the absurd legislation that rules us is a veritable Damocles' sword suspended over our heads."

Emma gave up trying to find out what they wanted her for, and the pharmacist continued without pausing for breath:

"That is how you thank us for the many kindnesses we have shown you! That is how you reward me for the truly paternal care that I lavish on you! Where would you be if I hadn't taken you in

hand? What would you be doing? Who provides you with food, education, clothes, and all the means to rise to a respectable level in society? But if you want to get there, you'll have to learn to pull hard at the oars—get callouses on your hands, as they saying goes *Fabricando fit faber, age quod agis.*"²

He was so exasperated he quoted Latin. He would have used Chinese or Greenlandic had he known them, for he was rocked by one of these crises in which the soul reveals all it contains, just as the storm lays bare the ocean from the seaweed on the shore down to the sand on its deepest bottom.

And he went on:

"I am beginning to regret that I ever took you in charge! I would have done a lot better if I'd let you wallow in poverty and filth, where you were born. The best you can hope for is to be a cow-hand. You are not fit to be a scientist! You hardly know how to stick on a label! And there you are, dwelling with me snug as a parson, living in clover, taking your ease!"

Emma turned in despair to Madame Homais:

"I was told to come . . ."

"Heavens!" the lady exclaimed in a mournful tone. "How am I to tell you? . . . Such a misfortune!"

She could not finish. The pharmacist was thundering:

"Empty it! Clean it! Take it back! And hurry!"

And seizing Justin by the collar of his apron, he shook him so vigorously that a book fell out of his pocket. The boy stooped, but Homais was the quicker, and, having picked up the volume, he stared at it with bulging eyes and open mouth.

"Conjugal . . . love!" he said, slowly separating the two words. "Ah! very good! very good! very pretty! And with illustrations! . . . Truly, this is too much!"

Madame Homais drew near.

"No, don't touch it!"

The children wanted to look at the pictures.

"Leave the room," he said imperiously.

They went out.

First he walked up and down, with the open book in his hand, rolling his eyes, choking, fuming, apoplectic. Then he came straight

2. *Fabricando fit faber age quod agis*, forging makes the smith do what you do, a well-known proverb at the time. For an example of contemporary usage, see, for example, the *Système des contradictions économiques ou Philosophie de la Misère* (1847), by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, whose liberal version of socialism would be to Homais's taste, and which, since the events in Yonville play themselves out in the 1840s, Homais might even have been reading. In chapter 4, Proudhon criticizes the effect of the mind/body division on labor, writing "*Fit fabricando faber*: of all systems of education the most absurd is that which separates intelligence from activity, and divides man into two impossible entities, theorizer and automaton" from *The System of Economical Contradictions or, The Philosophy of Misery*, trans. Benjamin R. Tucker (Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, 1888), 175.

to his apprentice, and, planting himself in front of him with folded arms:

"So you are blessed with all the vices under the sun, you little wretch? Watch out! you are following a dangerous path! . . . Did it never occur to you that this infamous book might fall into the hands of my children, kindle a spark in their minds, tarnish the purity of Athalie, corrupt Napoleon! He is close to being a man. Are you quite sure, at least, that they have not read it? Can you certify to me . . ."

"But, Monsieur," said Emma, "you wished to tell me . . ."

"Oh yes, madame . . . your father-in-law is dead."

Indeed, the elder Bovary had suddenly died from a stroke the evening before, as he got up from the table; overanxious to spare Emma's sensitive nerves, Charles had asked Monsieur Homais to break the horrible news to her as carefully as possible.

Homais had meditated at length over his speech; he had rounded, polished it, given it the proper cadence; it was a masterpiece of prudence and transitions, of subtle turns and delicacy; but anger had got the better of rhetoric.

Emma, abandoning all hope to learn any further details, left the pharmacy; for Monsieur Homais had resumed his vituperations. He was growing calmer, however, and was now grumbling in a paternal tone whilst he fanned himself with his skull-cap.

"It is not that I entirely disapprove of the book. The author was a doctor! It contains scientific information that a man might well want to know; I'd go as far as saying that he ought to know. But later . . . later! You should at least wait till you are yourself full-grown, and your character formed.

When Emma knocked at the door, Charles, who was waiting for her, came forward with open arms and said in a tearful voice:

"Ah! my dear wife. . . ."

And he leant over gently to kiss her. But at the contact of his lips the memory of the other returned; she passed her hand over her face and shuddered.

Yet, she answered:

"Yes, I know . . . I know . . ."

He showed her the letter in which his mother told the event without any sentimental hypocrisy. Her only regret was that her husband had not received the consolation of religion; he had died at Doudeville, in the street, at the door of a café after a patriotic dinner with some ex-officers.

Emma gave him back the letter; then at dinner, for appearance's sake, she affected a lack of appetite. But as he urged her to try, she resolutely began eating, while Charles opposite her sat motionless and dejected.

Now and then he raised his head and gave her a long, distressed look. Once he sighed:

"I'd have liked to see him again!"

She was silent. At last, realizing that she must say something:

"How old was your father?" she asked.

"Fifty-eight."

"Ah!"

And that was all.

A quarter of an hour later, he added: "My poor mother! what will become of her now?"

She made a gesture of ignorance.

Seeing her so taciturn, Charles imagined her much affected, and forced himself to say nothing, not to reawaken this sorrow which moved him. And, shaking off his own:

"Did you enjoy yourself yesterday?" he asked.

"Yes."

When the cloth was removed, Bovary did not rise, nor did Emma; and as she looked at him, the monotony of the spectacle drove little by little all pity from her heart. He seemed to her paltry, weak, a nonentity—a sorry creature in every way. How to get rid of him? What an interminable evening! She felt a stupor invading her, as if from opium fumes.

They heard the sharp noise of a wooden leg on the boards of the entrance hall. It was Hippolyte bringing back Emma's luggage.

To put them down, he had to bring around his wooden stump painfully in a quarter circle.

"He doesn't even seem to remember," she thought, looking at the poor devil, whose coarse red hair was wet with perspiration.

Bovary was searching for a coin at the bottom of his purse; he did not seem to realise how humiliating the man's presence was for him, standing there as the living embodiment of his hopeless inepititude.

"Oh, you have a pretty bouquet," he said, noticing Léon's violets on the mantelpiece.

"Yes," she replied indifferently; "it's a bouquet I bought just now . . . from a beggar-woman."

Charles picked up the flowers and, bathing his tear-stained eyes in their freshness, he delicately sniffed their perfume. She took them quickly from his hand and put them in a glass of water.

The next day the elder Madame Bovary arrived. She and her son spent much time weeping. Pretending to be busy in the house, Emma managed to stay by herself.

The following day, they had to discuss together the arrangements for the period of mourning. They went and sat down with their workboxes by the waterside under the arbor.

Charles was thinking of his father, and was surprised to feel so much affection for this man, whom up till now he thought he cared little about. The older Madame Bovary was thinking of her husband. The worst days of the past seemed enviable to her. All was forgotten beneath the instinctive regret of such a long habit, and from time to time, while sewing, a big tear rolled down her nose and hung suspended there a moment.

Emma was thinking that it was scarcely forty-eight hours since they had been together, far from the world, lost in ecstasy, and not having eyes enough to gaze upon each other. She tried to recall the slightest details of that past day. But the presence of her husband and mother-in-law bothered her. She would have liked to stop hearing and seeing, in order to keep intact the stillness of her love; but, try as she would, the memory would vanish under the impact of outer sensations.

She was removing the lining of a dress, and the strips were scattered around her. Mother Bovary, without looking up, kept her scissors busy, and Charles, in his felt slippers and his old brown coat that he used as a dressing gown, sat in silence with both hands in his pockets; near them Berthe, in a little white apron, was raking the sandwalks with her spade.

Suddenly they saw Monsieur Lheureux, the storekeeper, come in through the gate.

He came to offer his services "on this sad occasion." Emma replied that none were needed, but the shopkeeper wouldn't take no for an answer.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but I should like to have a word in private."

Then, in a low voice, he added:

"It is about this little matter . . . you know . . ." Charles turned crimson.

"Oh yes . . . of course."

And, in his confusion, he turned to his wife:

"Darling, could you perhaps . . . ?"

She seemed to understand him, for she rose; and Charles said to his mother:

"Nothing important. Some household trifle, I suppose."

Fearing her reproaches, he didn't want her to know about the note.

As soon as they were alone, Monsieur Lheureux began by congratulating Emma outspokenly on the inheritance, then talked of this and that, the fruit trees, the harvest, his own health which had endless ups and downs. He had to work like a devil and, regardless of what people thought, didn't make enough to buy butter for his bread.

Emma let him talk. She had been so dreadfully bored, these last two days!

"And so you're quite well again?" he went on. "Believe me, your husband was in quite a state. He's a good fellow, though we did have a little misunderstanding."

She asked what the misunderstanding was about, for Charles had told her nothing of the dispute about the goods supplied to her.

"As if you didn't know!" exclaimed Lheureux. "It was about your little caprice . . . the trunks."

He had drawn his hat over his eyes, and, with his hands behind his back, smiling and whistling, he looked straight at her in an unbearable manner. Did he suspect anything? She was lost in all kinds of apprehensions. Finally he said:

"We made it up, and I've come to propose still another arrangement."

He offered to renew the note Bovary had signed. The doctor, of course, would do as he pleased; he was not to trouble himself, especially just now, when he would have a lot to attend to.

"It seems to me he'd do well to turn it all over to some one else,—to you for example. With a power of attorney it could be easily managed, and then the two of us could have our little business transactions together . . ."

She did not understand. He did not insist, and brought the conversation back to his trade; it was impossible that Madame didn't need anything. He would send her a black *barège*, twelve yards, just enough to make a dress.³

"The one you've on is good enough for the house, but you want another for calls. I saw that the very moment that I came in. I've got a quick eye for these things!"

He did not send the material, he brought it. Then he came again to take her measurements; he came again on other pretexts, always trying to make himself agreeable, useful, like a vassal serving his master, as Homais might have put it, and never failing to drop a hint about the power of attorney. He never mentioned the note. She didn't think of it; although Charles doubtlessly had mentioned something at the beginning of her convalescence, so many emotions had passed through her head that she no longer remembered it. Besides, she made it a point never to bring up any money questions. Charles' mother seemed surprised at this, and attributed the change in her ways to the religious sentiments she had contracted during her illness.

But as soon as she left, Emma greatly astounded Bovary by her practical good sense. They would have to make inquiries, look into

3. *Barège* is a fine, sheer weave of fabric. Its French name reflects the historical status of Paris as the capital of the international fashion industry.

the mortgages, decide whether it would be more advantageous to sell by auction or by other means.

She quoted legal jargon at random, and grand words such as "order," "the future," "foresight." She constantly exaggerated the difficulties of settling his father's affairs; at last, one day she showed him the rough draft of a power of attorney to manage and administer his business, arrange all notes, sign and endorse all bills, pay all sums, etc. She had profited by Lheureux's lessons.

Charles naively asked her where this paper came from.

"From Master Guillaumin."

And with the utmost coolness she added:

"I don't trust him overmuch. Notaries have such a bad reputation. Perhaps we ought to consult . . . But the only person we know . . . There is no one."

"Unless perhaps Léon . . ." replied Charles, who was thinking.

But it was difficult to explain matters by letter. Then she offered to make the journey. He refused. She insisted. It was quite a contest of mutual consideration. At last she exclaimed, in a childish tone of mock-rebellion:

"No, enough, I will!"

"How good you are!" he said, kissing her on the forehead.

The next morning she set out in the *Hirondelle* for Rouen to consult Monsieur Léon, and she stayed there three days.

III

They were three full, exquisite, magnificent days—a true honeymoon. They stayed at the Hôtel-de-Boulogne, on the harbor; and they lived there behind drawn blinds and closed doors, with flowers on the floor, and iced fruit syrups that were brought them early in the morning.

Towards evening they took a covered boat and went to dine on one of the islands.

At this time of the day, one could hear the caulking irons sound against the hulls in the dockyard. Tar smoke rose up between the trees and large oily patches floated on the water, undulating unevenly in the purple sunlight like surfaces of Florentine bronze.

They drifted down among moored ships whose long slanting cables grazed lightly the top of their boat.

The sounds of the city gradually faded in the distance, the rattling of carriages, the tumult of voices, the yelping of dogs on the decks of barges. She loosened her hat and they landed on their island.

They sat down in the low-ceilinged room of a tavern with black fishing-nets hanging across the door. They ate fried smelts, cream

and cherries. They lay down upon the grass, kissed behind the poplar trees; like two Robinson Crusoes, they would gladly have lived forever in this spot; in their bliss, it seemed to them the most magnificent place on earth. It was not the first time that they had seen trees, a blue sky, meadows; or heard the water flow and the wind blow in the branches. But they had never really felt any of this; it was as if nature had not existed before, or had only begun to be beautiful since the gratification of their desires.

At nightfall they returned. The boat glided along the shores of the islands. They stayed below, hidden in darkness, without saying a word. The square-tipped oars sounded against the iron oar-locks; in the stillness, they seemed to mark time like the beat of a metronome, while the rope that trailed behind never ceased its gentle splash against the water.

One night the moon rose, and they did not fail to make fine phrases about how melancholical and poetic it appeared to them. She even began to sing:

One night, do you remember,
We were sailing . . .

Her thin musical voice died away over the water; Léon could hear the wind-borne trills pass by him like a fluttering of wings.

She faced him, leaning against the wall of the cabin while the moon shone through the open blinds. Her black dress, falling around her like a fan, made her seem more slender, taller. Her head was raised, her hands clasped, her eyes turned towards heaven. At times the shadow of the willows hid her completely; then she reappeared suddenly, like a vision in the moonlight.

Léon, on the floor by her side, found under his hand a ribbon of scarlet silk.

The boatman looked at it, and said at last:

"Perhaps it belongs to the party I took out the other day. They were a jolly bunch of ladies and gentlemen, with cakes, champagne, trumpets—everything in style! There was one especially, a tall handsome man with small moustaches, who was the life of the party. They kept asking him 'Come on, Adolphe—or Dodolphe, or something like that—tell us a story . . .'"

She shuddered.

"Don't you feel well?" Léon inquired, coming closer.

"Oh, it's nothing! Just a chill from the cold night air."

"He's another one who seems to have no trouble finding women," the old sailor added softly, intending to pay Léon a compliment.

Then, spitting on his hands, he took the oars again.

Yet the time to part had come. The farewells were sad. He was to send his letters to Mère Rollet, and she gave him such precise in-

structions about a double envelope that he was much impressed with her shrewdness in love matters.

"So you can guarantee me that everything is in order?" she said with her last kiss.

"Yes, certainly."

"But why," he thought afterwards as he came back through the streets alone, "is she so very anxious to get this power of attorney?"

IV

Léon soon put on superior airs with his friends, avoided their company, and completely neglected his work.

He waited for her letters, read and re-read them. He wrote to her. He called her to mind with all the strength of his desires and of his memories. Instead of lessening with absence, his longing to see her kept growing to the point where, one Saturday morning he escaped from his office.

When, from the summit of the hill, he saw in the valley below the church-spire with its metal flag swinging in the wind, he felt that delight mingled with triumphant vanity and selfish benevolence that millionaires must experience when they come back to their native village.

He went prowling around round her house. A light was burning in the kitchen. He watched for her shadow behind the curtains, but nothing appeared.

Mère Lefrançois, on seeing him, uttered many exclamations. She thought he had grown taller and thinner, while Artémise, on the contrary, thought him stouter and darker.

He ate in the little dining-room, as in the past, but alone, without the tax collector; for Binet, tired of waiting for the *Hirondelle*, had definitely moved his meal an hour earlier. Now he dined punctually at five, which didn't keep him from complaining that the rickety old carriage was late.

Léon finally made up his mind, and knocked at the doctor's door. Madame was in her room, and did not come down for a quarter of an hour. The doctor seemed delighted to see him, but he never left the house that evening, nor the next day.

He saw her alone in the evening, very late, behind the garden in the lane;—in the lane, as with the other one! It was a stormy night, and they talked under an umbrella by lightning flashes.

They couldn't bear the thought of parting.

"I'd rather die!" said Emma.

She seized his arm convulsively, and wept.

"Good bye! When shall I see you again?"

They came back again to embrace once more, and it was then

that she promised him to find soon, no matter how, some assured way of meeting in freedom at least once a week. Emma was certain to find a way. She was generally in a hopeful frame of mind: the inheritance money was bound to come in soon.

On the strength of it she bought a pair of yellow curtains with large stripes for her room; Monsieur Lheureux had recommended them as a particularly good buy. She dreamt of getting a carpet, and Lheureux, declaring that it wasn't that much of an investment after all, politely undertook to supply her with one. She could no longer do without his services. Twenty times a day she sent for him, and he at once interrupted whatever he was doing, without a murmur. Neither could people understand why Mère Rollet ate at her house every day, and even paid her private visits.

It was about this time, in the early part of the winter, that a sudden urge to make music seemed to come over her.

One evening when Charles was listening to her, she began the same piece four times over, each time with much vexation, while he, totally oblivious to her mistakes, exclaimed:

"Bravo! . . . Very good! . . . Don't stop. Keep going!"

"Oh, no. It's awful! My fingers are much too rusty!"

The next day he begged her to play for him again.

"Very well, if you wish."

And Charles had to confess that she had slipped a little. She played wrong notes and blundered; then, stopping short:

"Ah! it's no use. I ought to take some lessons, but . . ."

Biting her lip, she added:

"Twenty francs a lesson, that's too expensive!"

"Maybe it is . . . a little," said Charles with a stupid giggle. "But it seems to me that one might be able to do it for less; for there are artists of little reputation, who are often better than the celebrities."

"Find them!" said Emma.

The next day on coming home, he gave her a sly look, and finally could no longer repress what he had to say:

"How stubborn you can be at times! I went to Barfuchères today. Well, Madame Liégard assured me that her three daughters, who go to school at Miséricorde, take lessons at fifty sous apiece, and that from an excellent teacher!"

She shrugged her shoulders and did not open her piano again.

But whenever she passed in front of it (provided Bovary was present), she sighed:

"Ah! my poor piano!"

And whenever someone came to call, she did not fail to inform them that she had given up music, and could not begin again now for important reasons. People would commiserate. What a pity! She

had so much talent! They even spoke to Bovary about it. They put him to shame, especially the pharmacist.

"You are wrong. One should never let any natural faculties lie fallow. Besides, just think, my good friend, that by inducing madame to study, you are economizing on the subsequent musical education of your child. For my own part, I think that mothers ought themselves to instruct their children. It's an idea of Rousseau's, still rather new perhaps, but bound to win out sooner or later, like vaccination and breast-feeding."

So Charles returned once more to this question of the piano. Emma replied bitterly that it would be better to sell it. Poor piano! It had given his vanity so many satisfactions that to see it go was for Bovary, in an undefinable manner, like Emma's partial suicide.

"If you really want it . . ." he said, "a lesson from time to time wouldn't ruin us after all."

"But lessons," she replied, "are only of use if one persists."

And this is how she managed to obtain her husband's permission to go to town once a week to see her lover. At the end of a month she was even considered to have made considerable progress.

V

She went on Thursdays. She got up and dressed silently, in order not to awaken Charles, who would have reproached her for getting ready too early. Then she walked up and down, stood at the windows, and looked out over the Square. The early dawn was broadening between the pillars of the market, and the pharmacy, still boarded up, showed in the pale light of the dawn the large letters of the signboard.

When the clock pointed to a quarter past seven, she went to the "Lion d'Or," where a yawning Artémise unlocked the door for her. She would poke the fire in Madame's honor, and Emma remained alone in the kitchen. Now and again she went out. Hivert was leisurely harnessing his horses while listening to the Mère Lefrançois who, sticking her head and night cap through a window, was instructing him on his errands and giving him explanations that would have bewildered any one else. Emma tapped her boots on the cobblestones of the yard.

At last, when he had eaten his soup, put on his cloak, lighted his pipe, and grasped his whip, he calmly took his place on the seat.

The *Hirondelle* started at a slow trot, and for about a mile stopped time and again to pick up waiting passengers along the roadside, before their house-gates. Those who had booked seats the night before kept it waiting; some even were still in bed in their houses. Hivert called, shouted, swore; then he got down from his

seat and knocked loudly at the doors. The wind blew through the cracked windows.

Gradually, the four benches filled up. The carriage rolled off; rows of apple-trees followed one upon another, and the road between its two long ditches, full of yellow water, rose, constantly narrowing towards the horizon.

Emma knew every inch of the road: after a certain meadow there was a sign post, then a barn or roadmender's hut. Sometimes, in hope of being surprised, she would close her eyes, but she never lost a clear sense of the distance still to be covered.

At last the brick houses began to follow one another more closely, the earth resounded beneath the wheels, the *Hirondelle* glided between the gardens, revealing through an occasional opening, statues, a summer pavillion, trimmed yew trees, a swing. Then all at once, the city came into sight.

Sloping down like an amphitheatre, and drowned in the fog, it overflowed unevenly beyond its bridges. Then the open country mounted again in a monotonous sweep until it touched in the distance the elusive line of the pale sky. Seen thus from above, the whole landscape seemed frozen, like a picture; the anchored ships were massed in one corner, the river curved round the foot of the green hills, and the oblong islands looked like giant fishes lying motionless on the water. The factory chimneys belched forth immense plumes of brown smoke, their tips carried off in the wind. One heard the rumbling of the foundries, mingled with the clear chimes of the churches, dimly outlined in the fog. The leafless trees on the boulevards seemed violet thickets in the midst of the houses, and the roofs, shining from the rain, threw back unequal reflections, according to the heights of the various districts. From time to time a gust of wind would drive the clouds towards the slopes of Saint Catherine, like aerial waves breaking silently against a cliff.

Something seemed to emanate from this mass of human lives that left her dizzy; her heart swelled as though the hundred and twenty thousand souls palpitating there had all at once wafted to her the passions with which her imagination had endowed them. Her love grew in the presence of this vastness, and filled with the tumult of the vague murmuring which rose from below. She poured it out, onto the squares, the avenues, the streets; and the old Norman city spread out before her like some incredible capital, a Babylon into which she was about to enter. She lifted the window with both hands to lean out, drinking in the breeze; the three horses galloped, the stones grated in the mud, the diligence rocked, and Hivert, from afar, hailed the carts on the road, while the well-to-do residents of Bois Guillaume sedately descended the hill to town in their little family carriages.

The coach made a stop at the city gates; Emma undid her overshoes, put on other gloves, rearranged her shawl, and some twenty paces farther she descended from the *Hirondelle*.

The town was beginning to awake. Shop-boys in caps were polishing the front windows of the stores, and women, with baskets balanced on their hips, would stand on the street corners calling out from time to time some sonorous cry. She walked with downcast eyes, close to the walls, and smiling with pleasure beneath her lowered black veil.

For fear of being seen, she did not usually take the most direct road. She would plunge into dark alleys, and emerge, all in a sweat, near the little fountain at the beginning of the Rue Nationale. This was the quarter of the theatres, cabarets, and prostitutes. Often, a cart loaded with shaking scenery passed close by her. Waiters in aprons were sprinkling sand on the flagstones between green shrubs. There was a smell of absinthe, cigars and oysters.

She turned a corner; she recognized him by his curling hair that escaped from beneath his hat.

Léon kept on walking ahead of her along the sidewalk. She followed him into the hotel. He went up, opened the door, entered—What an embrace!

Then, after the kisses, the words rushed forth. They told each other the sorrows of the week, the forebodings, the anxiety for the letters; but now everything was forgotten; they gazed at each other with voluptuous laughs, and tender names.

The bed was a large one, made of mahogany and shaped like a boat. The red silk curtains which hung from the ceiling, were gathered together too low, close to the lyre-shaped headboards;—and nothing in the world was so lovely as her brown hair and white skin set off against that deep crimson color, when with a gesture of modesty, she closed her arms and hid her face in her hands.

The warm room, with its subdued carpet, its frivolous ornaments and its soft light, seemed made for the intimacies of passion. The curtain-rods, ending in arrows, the brass pegs and the great balls of the andirons would suddenly light up if a ray of sunlight entered. On the chimney, between the candelabra there were two of those pink shells in which one hears the murmur of the sea when one holds them against one's ear.

How they loved that room, so full of gaiety, despite its somewhat faded splendor! They always found the furniture arranged the same way, and sometimes hairpins, that she had forgotten the Thursday before, under the pedestal of the clock. They lunched by the fire-side on a little round table, inlaid with rosewood. Emma carved, put bits on his plate while playing all sorts of coquettish tricks; she would laugh a ringing libertine laugh when the froth from the

champagne overflowed the fragile glass onto the rings of her fingers. They were so completely lost in the possession of each other that they thought themselves in their own house, that they would go on living there until separated by death, like an eternally young married couple. They said "our room," "our carpet," she even said "my slippers," referring to the gift Léon had bought to satisfy a whim of hers. They were rose-colored satin, bordered with swans-down. When she sat on his lap, her leg, which was then too short, hung in the air, and the dainty shoe having no back, was held on only by the toes of her bare foot.

He savored for the first time the inexpressible delights of feminine refinement. He had never encountered this grace of language, this direction in dress, these poses of a weary dove. He admired the exaltation of her soul and the lace on her petticoat. Besides, was she not a "woman of the world," and a married woman! In short a real mistress!

According to her changing moods, in turn meditative and gay, talkative and silent, passionate and languorous, she awakened in him a thousand desires, called up instincts or memories. She was the mistress of all the novels, the heroine of all the dramas, the vague "she" of all the volumes of verse. On her shoulders, he rediscovered the amber color of the *Odalisque au Bain*;⁴ her waist was long like the feudal chatelaines; she resembled Musset's *Femme Pâle de Barcelone*.⁵ Above all, she was his Angel.

It often seemed to him that his soul, fleeing toward her, broke like a wave against the contours of her head, and was drawn irresistibly down into the whiteness of her breast.

He knelt on the ground before her; and resting his elbows on her lap, he would gaze at her smilingly, his face uplifted.

She bent over him, and murmured, as if choking with intoxication:

"Oh! don't move! don't speak! Look at me! There is something so tender that comes from your eyes. It does me so much good!"

She called him child.

"Do you love me, child?"

And she never heard his reply, his lips always rose so fast to find her mouth.

There was a little bronze cupid on the clock, who simpered as he held up his arms under a golden garland. They had laughed at it many a time, but when they had to part everything seemed serious.

Motionless, they looked at each other and kept repeating:

4. Evocation of a series of paintings by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres that even Ingres himself was parodying as a type by the time the novel appeared.

5. The Romantic poet, Alfred de Musset, epitomizes for Flaubert the Romantic view of love that he is questioning.

"Till Thursday! . . . Till Thursday! . . ."

Suddenly she would take his head between her hands and kiss him quickly on the forehead while crying "Adieu" and rush down the stairs.

She went next to a hairdresser in the Rue de la Comédie to have her hair arranged. Night would be falling; they lit the gas in the shop.

She heard the bell in the theatre calling the actors to the performance; and she saw white-faced men and women in faded dresses pass by on the other side of the street and enter in at the stage door.

It was hot in the little low-ceilinged room with its stove humming amidst the wigs and pomades. The smell of the tongs together with the oily hands that were manipulating her hair, would soon stupefy her and she would begin to doze a bit in her dressing gown. Often, as he did her hair, the man offered her tickets for a masked ball.

Then she left! She remounted the streets; reached the Croix Rouge, retrieved her overshoes which she had hidden under the bench that morning, and settled into her place among the impatient passengers. The other passengers got out at the foot of the hill in order to spare the horses. She remained alone in the carriage.

At every turn, they could see more and more of the city below, forming a luminous mist above the mass of houses. Emma knelt on the cushions, and let her eyes wander over the dazzling light. She sobbed, called to Léon, sent him tender words and kisses which were lost in the wind.

There was a wretched creature on the hillside, who would wander about with his stick right in the midst of the carriages. A mass of rags covered his shoulders, and an old staved-in beaver hat, shaped like a basin, hid his face; but when he took it off he revealed two gaping bloody orbits in the place of eyelids. The flesh hung in red strips; and from them flowed a liquid which congealed into green scales reaching down to his nose with its black nostrils, which kept sniffing convulsively. To speak to you he threw back his head with an idiotic laugh;—then his blueish eyeballs, rolling round and round, would rub against the open wound near the temples.

He sang a little song as he followed the carriages:

Often the warmth of a summer day
Makes a young girl dream her heart away.

And all the rest was about birds and sunshine and green leaves.

Sometimes he would appear behind Emma, his head bare. She would draw back with a cry. Hivert liked to tease him. He would advise him to get a booth at the Saint Romain fair, or else ask him, laughing, how his girl friend was.

Often the coach was already in motion when his hat would be thrust violently in at the window, while he clung with his other arm to the footboard, between the spattering of the wheels. His voice, at first weak and quavering, would grow sharp. It lingered into the night like an inarticulate lament of some vague despair; and, heard through the jingling of the horses' bells, the murmuring of the trees, and the rumble of the empty coach, it had something so distant and sad that it filled Emma with dread. It went to the very depths of her soul, like a whirlwind in an abyss, and carried her away to a boundless realm of melancholy. But Hivert, noticing a weight behind, would lash out savagely at the blind man with his whip. The thong lashed his wounds and he fell back into the mud with a shriek.

The passengers in the *Hirondelle* would all finally drop off to sleep, some with their mouths open, others their chins pressed against their chests, leaning on their neighbor's shoulder, or with their arm passed through the strap, all the time swaying regularly with the jolting of the carriage; and the sight of the lantern, that was swinging back and forth outside and reflecting on the rumps of the shaft horses, penetrated into the coach through the chocolate colored curtains, throwing blood-red shadows over all those motionless beings within. Emma, drunk with grief, shivered under her coat and felt her feet grow colder and colder, with death in her soul.

Charles at home would be waiting for her; the *Hirondelle* was always late on Thursdays. Madame arrived at last! She scarcely kissed the child. The dinner was not ready, no matter! She excused the cook. The girl now seemed allowed to do just as she liked.

Often her husband, noting her pallor, asked if she were unwell.

"No," said Emma.

"But," he replied, "you seem so strange this evening."

"Oh, it's nothing! nothing!"

There were even days when she had no sooner come in than she went up to her room; and Justin, who would happen to be there, moved about noiselessly, more adroit at helping her than the best of maids. He put the matches ready, the candlestick, a book, arranged her nightgown, turned back the bedclothes.

"All right," she'd say "that's fine, get going!"

For he stood there, his hands hanging down and his eyes wide open, as if enmeshed in the innumerable threads of a sudden reverie.

The following day was frightful, and those that came after still more unbearable, because of her impatience to once again seize her happiness,—this fierce lust, enflamed by recent memories, which on the seventh day would erupt freely within Léon's em-

braces. His own passion was manifested by continual expressions of wonder and gratitude. Emma tasted this love discreetly, and with all her being, nourished it by every tender device she knew, and trembled a little that some day it might be lost.

She often said to him, with a sweet melancholy in her voice:

"Ah! you too, you will leave me! You will marry! You will be like all the others."

He asked:

"What others?"

"Why, like all men," she replied.

Then added, repulsing him with a languid movement:

"You are all of you wretches!"

One day, as they were talking philosophically of earthly disillusion she happened to mention (in order to provoke his jealousy, or perhaps through some irresistible urge to confide in him) that in the past, before she knew him, she had loved someone else. "Not like you," she went on quickly, swearing on the head of her child "that nothing had happened."

The young man believed her, but none the less questioned her to find out what kind of a man *He* was.

"He was a ship's captain, my dear."

Was this not preventing any inquiry, and, at the same time, assuming a higher ground because of the aura of fascination which is supposed to surround a man who must have been of warlike nature and accustomed to receive homage?

The clerk then felt the lowliness of his position; he longed for epaulettes, crosses, titles. These things would please her; he suspected as much from her extravagant habits.

However, Emma never mentioned a number of her most extravagant ideas, such as her desire to have a blue tilbury to drive into Rouen, drawn by an English horse and driven by a groom in turned down boots. It was Justin who had inspired her with this whim, by begging her to take him into service as footman; and if the privation of it did not lessen the pleasure of her arrival at each of their weekly rendezvous, it certainly augmented the bitterness of the return.

Often, when they were talking together of Paris, she would end by murmuring.

"Ah, how happy we could be living there."

"Are we not happy?" the young man would gently ask, passing his hands over her hair.

"Yes, that is true," she said. "I am mad: kiss me!"

To her husband she was more charming than ever. She made him pistachio-creams and played him waltzes after dinner. He thought himself the most fortunate of men, and Emma was without uneasiness, when, suddenly one evening:

"It is Mademoiselle Lempereur, isn't it, who gives you lessons?"

"Yes."

"Well, I saw her just now," Charles went on, "at Madame Lié-gard's. I spoke to her about you; and she doesn't know you."

This was like a thunderbolt. However, she replied quite naturally:

"She must have forgotten my name."

"But perhaps," said the doctor, "there are several Demoiselles Lempereur at Rouen who are music teachers."

"Possibly!"

Then she added quickly:

"Nevertheless, I have her receipts, here! Look."

And she went to the writing-table, ransacked all the drawers, mixed up the papers, and at last lost her head so completely that Charles earnestly begged her not to take so much trouble about those wretched receipts.

"Oh! I will find them," she said.

And, in fact, on the following Friday, as Charles was putting on one of his boots in the dark closet where his clothes were kept, he felt a piece of paper between the leather and his sock. He took it out and read:

"Received, for three months' lessons and several pieces of music the sum of sixty-three francs.—FELICIE LEMPEREUR, professor of music."

"How the devil did it get into my boots?"

"It must," she replied, "have fallen from the old box of bills that is on the edge of the shelf."

From that moment on, her existence was one long tissue of lies, in which she wrapped her love as under a veil in order to hide it. It became a need, an obsession, a delight, to such a point that, if she claimed to have walked on the right side of the street the previous day, one could be sure she had walked on the left.

One morning, when she had gone, as usual, rather lightly clothed, it suddenly began to snow, and as Charles was watching the weather from the window, he caught sight of Monsieur Bournisien in the chaise of Monsieur Tuvache, who was driving him to Rouen. Then he went down to give the priest a thick shawl that he was to hand over to Emma as soon as he reached the Croix-Rouge. When he got to the inn, Monsieur Bournisien asked for the wife of the Yonville doctor. The landlady replied that she very rarely came to her establishment. So that evening, when he recognized Madame Bovary in the *Hirondelle*, the curé told her his dilemma, without, however, appearing to attach much importance to it, for he began praising a preacher who was doing wonders at the Cathedral, and whom all the ladies were rushing to hear.

Still, even if he had not asked for any explanations, others, later

on, might prove less discreet. So she thought it would be a good idea to get out of the coach at the Croix-Rouge each time she came so that the good folk of her village seeing her on the stairs would not become suspicious.

One day, however, Monsieur Lheureux met her coming out of the Hôtel de Boulogne on Léon's arm; and she was frightened, thinking he would gossip. He was not such a fool.

But three days after he came to her room, shut the door, and said:

"I must have some money."

She declared she could not give him any. Lheureux began to moan, reminding her of all the favors he had done her.

In fact, of the two bills signed by Charles, Emma up to the present had paid only one. As to the second, the shopkeeper, at her request, had consented to replace it by another, which again had been renewed for a long date. Then he drew from his pocket a list of goods not paid for; to wit, the curtains, the carpet, the material for the arm-chairs, several dresses, and diverse articles of dress, totaling in all a sum of about two thousand francs.

She hung her head; he continued:

"But if you haven't any ready money, you do have some property."

And he called to her attention a miserable little shack situated at Barneville, near Aumale, that brought in almost nothing. It had formerly been part of a small farm sold by Monsieur Bovary senior; for Lheureux knew everything, even down to the number of acres and the names of the neighbors.

"If I were in your place," he said, "I'd get it off my hands, and have some money left over."

She pointed out the difficulty of finding a buyer; he said he thought he could find one; but she asked him how she should manage to sell it.

"Haven't you your power of attorney?" he replied.

The phrase came to her like a breath of fresh air. "Leave me the bill," said Emma.

"Oh, it isn't worth while," answered Lheureux.

He came back the following week boasting that after having gone to a great deal of trouble, he had finally tracked down a certain man named Langlois, who had had his eye on the property for a long time but had never mentioned a price.

"Never mind the price!" she cried.

On the contrary, he said, they must take their time and sound the fellow out. The affair was certainly worth the trouble of a trip, and, as she could not undertake it, he offered to go to the place and bargain with Langlois. On his return he announced that the purchaser proposed four thousand francs.

Emma's heart rose at this news.

"Frankly," he added, "that's a good price."

She drew half the sum at once, and when she was about to pay her account the shopkeeper said:

"It grieves me, it really does, to see you give up such a considerable sum of money as that all at once." She stared at the bank notes and began to dream of the countless rendezvous with Léon that those two thousand francs represented.

"What! What do you mean!" she stammered.

"Oh!" he went on, laughing good-naturedly, "one puts anything one likes on receipts. Don't you think I know what household affairs are?"

And he looked at her fixedly, while in his hand he held two long papers which he kept sliding between his nails. At last, opening his billfold, he spread out on the table four bills to order, each for a thousand francs.

"Sign these," he said, "and keep it all!"

She cried out, scandalized.

"But if I give you the balance," replied Monsieur Lheureux impudently, "isn't that doing you a service?"

And taking a pen he wrote at the bottom of the account, "Received from Madame Bovary four thousand francs."

"What is there to worry about, since in six months you'll draw the arrears for your cottage, and I don't make the last bill due till after you've been paid?"

Emma was becoming somewhat confused in her calculations and her ears rang as though gold pieces were bursting out of their bags and tinkling onto the floor all around her. At last Lheureux explained that he had a very good friend named Vinçart, a banker in Rouen, who would discount these four bills. Then he himself would hand over to madame the remainder after the actual debt was paid.

But instead of two thousand francs he brought her only eighteen hundred, for his friend Vinçart (which was "only fair") had deducted two hundred francs for commission and discount.

Then he carelessly asked for a receipt.

"You understand . . . in business . . . sometimes . . . And with the date, please don't forget the date."

A whole horizon of new possibilities now opened up before Emma. She was wise enough to set aside three thousand francs, with which the first three bills were paid when they fell due; but the fourth happened to arrive at the house on a Thursday, and a stunned Charles patiently awaited his wife's return for an explanation.

If she had not told him about this note, it was only to spare him

such domestic worries; she sat on his lap, caressed him, cooed at him, gave a long enumeration of all the indispensable things that had been got on credit.

"Really, you must confess, considering the number of things, it isn't too expensive."

Charles, at his wit's end, soon had recourse to the eternal Lheureux, who promised to arrange everything if Charles would sign two more notes, one of which was for seven hundred francs and would be payable in three months. To take care of this he wrote his mother a pathetic letter. Instead of sending a reply she came herself; and when Emma wanted to know whether he had got anything out of her:

"Yes," he replied; "but she wants to see the account."

The next morning at daybreak Emma ran to Lheureux to beg him to make out another account for not more than a thousand francs: for to show the one for four thousand it would be necessary to say that she had paid two-thirds, and confess, consequently, the sale of the property, for the transaction had been well handled by the shopkeeper and only came to light later on.

Despite the low price of each article, Madame Bovary senior of course thought the expenditure extravagant.

"Couldn't you do without a carpet? Why did you re-cover the arm-chairs? In my time there was a single arm-chair in a house, for elderly persons,—at any rate it was so at my mother's, who was a respectable woman, I assure you.—Everybody can't be rich! No fortune can hold out against waste! I should be ashamed to pamper myself as you do! And yet I am old. I need looking after . . . and look at this! Look at this! alterations! frills and finery! What is that! silk for lining at two francs; . . . when you get jaconet for ten sous, or even for eight which does just as well!"

Emma lying on a lounge, replied as calmly as she could "Ah! Madame, enough! enough! . . ."

The other went on lecturing her, predicting they would end in the workhouse. But it was Bovary's fault. Luckily he had promised to destroy that power of attorney.

"What?"

"Ah! he swore he would," went on the good woman.

Emma opened the window, called Charles, and the poor fellow was obliged to confess the promise torn from him by his mother.

Emma disappeared, then came back quickly, and majestically handed her a large sheet of paper.

"Thank you," said the old woman. And she threw the power of attorney into the fire.

Emma began to laugh, a strident, piercing, continuous laugh; she had an attack of hysterics.

"Oh! my God!" cried Charles. "Ah! You are in the wrong too! You come here and make scenes with her! . . ."

His mother, shrugging her shoulders, declared it was "all put on."

But Charles, rebelling for the first time, took his wife's part, so that Madame Bovary senior said she would leave. She went the very next day, and on the threshold, as he was trying to detain her, she replied:

"No, no! You love her better than me, and you are right. It is natural. Take care of yourself! . . . for I'm not likely to be back again soon to 'make scenes' as you say."

Charles nevertheless was very crestfallen before Emma, who did not hide the resentment she still felt at his want of confidence, and it needed many prayers before she would consent to another power of attorney. He even accompanied her to Monsieur Guillaumin to have a second one, just like the other, drawn up.

"I know how it is," said the notary; "a man of science can't be worried with the practical details of life."

And Charles felt relieved by this comfortable reflection, which gave his weakness the flattering appearance of higher preoccupation.

How exalted she was the following Thursday at the hotel in their room with Léon! She laughed, cried, sang, sent for sherbets, wanted to smoke cigarettes, seemed to him wild and extravagant, but adorable, superb.

He did not know what combination of forces within her was driving her to throw herself so recklessly after the pleasures of life. She became irritable, greedy, voluptuous. She walked boldly through the streets with him, her head high, unconcerned, she said, about being compromised. At times, however, Emma shuddered at the sudden thought of meeting Rodolphe, for it seemed to her that although they were separated forever, she was not completely free from the power he held over her.

One night she did not return to Yonville at all. Charles lost his head with anxiety, and little Berthe refusing to go to bed without her mamma, sobbed as though her heart would break. Justin had gone out searching the road at random. Monsieur Homais even had left his pharmacy.

At last, at eleven o'clock, able to bear it no longer, Charles harnessed his chaise, jumped in, whipped up his horse, and reached the Croix-Rouge about two o'clock in the morning. No one there! He thought that the clerk had perhaps seen her; but where did he live? Happily, Charles remembered his employer's address, and rushed off there.

Day was breaking, and he could make out some letters over the door; he knocked. Some one, without opening the door, shouted

out the required information and added a generous number of insults concerning people who disturb others in the middle of the night.

The house inhabited by the clerk had neither bell, knocker, nor porter. Charles beat on the shutters with his fists. A policeman happened to pass by; he felt nervous and left.

"What a fool I am," he said. "M. Lormeaux must have asked her to stay to dinner."

The Lormeaux no longer lived in Rouen.

"She probably stayed to look after Madame Dubreuil. Oh, but Madame Dubreuil has been dead these ten months . . . Then where can she be?"

An idea occurred to him. At a café he asked for a Directory, and hurriedly looked for the name of Mademoiselle Lempereur, who turned out to live at No. 74 Rue de la Renelle-des-Marquinières.

As he was turning into the street, Emma herself appeared at the other end of it; he threw himself upon her rather than embraced her, crying:

"What kept you yesterday?"

"I was not well."

"What! . . . Where! . . . How! . . ."

She passed her hand over her forehead and answered.

"At Mlle. Lempereur's."

"I was sure of it! I was just on my way there."

"Oh!" said Emma. "It's not worth while now. She just stepped out a minute ago; don't get so excited. I will never feel free, you understand, if the slightest delay is going to make you lose your head like this."

This was a sort of permission that she gave herself, so as to get perfect freedom in her escapades. And she took full and free advantage of it. Whenever she was seized with the desire to see Léon, she would set out upon any pretext whatever, and if he were not expecting her that day, she would go to fetch him at his office.

It was a great delight at first, but soon he no longer concealed the truth, which was, that his master complained very much about these interruptions.

"Oh, who cares!" she said, "come along."

And he slipped out.

She wanted him to dress all in black, and grow a pointed beard, to look like the portraits of Louis XIII. She asked to see his rooms and found them lacking in taste. This embarrassed him but she paid no attention; she then advised him to buy curtains like hers, and when he objected to the expense:

"Ah! ah! you hold onto your pennies!" she said laughing.

Each time Léon had to tell her everything that he had done since

their last meeting. She asked him for some verses—some verses “for herself,” a “love poem” in honor of her. But he never succeeded in getting a rhyme for the second verse; and at last ended by copying a sonnet from a Keepsake.

He did this less from vanity, than simply out of a desire to please her. He never questioned her ideas; he accepted all her tastes; he was becoming her mistress rather than she his. She had tender words and kisses that thrilled his soul. Where could she have learnt this corruption so deep and well masked as to be almost unseizable?

VI

On his trips to see her, Léon often dined at the pharmacist's, and he felt obliged out of politeness to invite him in turn.

“With pleasure!” Monsieur Homais had replied; “besides, I must recharge my mind a bit, for I am getting rusty here. We'll go to the theatre, to the restaurant. We'll do the town.”

“Oh, my dear!” tenderly murmured Madame Homais, alarmed at the vague perils he was preparing to brave.

“Well, what? Do you think I'm not sufficiently ruining my health living here amid the continual emanations of the pharmacy? But there! That's just like a woman! They are jealous of science, and then are opposed to our taking the most legitimate distractions. No matter! Count upon me. One of these days I shall turn up at Rouen, and we'll paint the town together.”

The pharmacist would formerly have taken good care not to use such an expression, but he was cultivating a flippant Parisian manner which he thought very stylish; and, like his neighbor, Madame Bovary, he questioned the clerk avidly about life in the capital; he even used slang in order to impress . . . the “bourgeois,” saying “flip,” “cool,” “sweet,” “neat-o,” and “I must break it up,” for “I must leave.”

So one Thursday Emma was surprised to meet Monsieur Homais in the kitchen of the “Lion d'Or,” wearing a traveller's costume, that is to say, wrapped in an old cloak which no one knew he had, while he carried a valise in one hand and the foot-warmer of his establishment in the other. He had confided his intentions to no one, for fear of causing the public anxiety by his absence.

The prospect of seeing again the scenes of his youth no doubt excited him for he never stopped talking during the whole trip; the coach had barely stopped when he leaped out in search of Léon; and in vain the clerk struggled to free himself. M. Homais dragged him off to the flashy Café de la Normandie, where he entered majestically, without taking off his hat, for he thought it highly provincial to uncover in any public place.

Emma waited for Léon three quarters of an hour. At last she ran to his office, and, lost in all sorts of conjectures, accusing him of indifference, and reproaching herself for her weakness, she spent the afternoon, her face pressed against the window-panes.

At two o'clock they were still at table opposite each other. The large room was emptying; the stove-pipe, in the shape of a palm-tree, spread its gilt leaves over the white ceiling; and near them, just outside the window, in the full sun, a little fountain gurgled into a white basin, where, among the watercress and asparagus, sluggish lobsters stretched out their claws towards a heap of quail lying on their sides.

Homais relished it all. He was more intoxicated by the luxury than by the fine food and drink, but nevertheless, the Pommard wine began to go to his head, and by the time the "omelette au rhum" appeared, he began expounding scandalous theories on women. What attracted him above all else, was "chic." He adored an elegant outfit and hairdo in a well-furnished apartment, and when it came to their physical proportions, he didn't mind them on the plump side.

Léon watched the clock in despair. The pharmacist went on drinking, eating, and talking.

"You must be completely deprived here in Rouen," he said suddenly. "But when the object of your affections doesn't live far away."

And, when the other blushed:

"Come now, be frank. Can you deny that at Yonville . . ."

The young man began to stammer.

"At Madame Bovary's, can you deny that you were courting . . ."

"Whom do you mean?"

"The maid!"

He was not joking; but vanity getting the better of his judgment, Léon protested indignantly in spite of himself. Besides, he only liked dark women.

"I approve of your taste," said the pharmacist; "they have more temperament."

And whispering into his friend's ear, he pointed out the symptoms by which one could detect temperament in a woman. He even launched into an ethnographic digression: the German was romantic, the French woman licentious, the Italian passionate.

"And black women?" asked the clerk.

"They are for artistic tastes!" said Homais. "Waiter! Two demi-tasses!"

"Shall we go?" asked Léon, at last reaching the end of his patience.

"Yes," said Homais in English.

But before leaving he wanted to see the proprietor of the estab-

ishment and made him a few compliments. Then the young man, to be alone, alleged he had some business engagement.

"Ah! I will escort you," said Homais.

And all the while he was walking through the streets with him he talked of his wife, his children, of their future, and of his business; told him in what a dilapidated condition he had found it, and to what a state of perfection he had now raised it.

When they arrived in front of the Hôtel de Boulogne, Léon left him abruptly, ran up the stairs, and found his mistress almost hysterical.

On hearing the name of the pharmacist, she flew into a passion. Nevertheless, he kept overwhelming her with good reasons; it wasn't his fault; didn't she know Homais? Could she believe that he would prefer his company? But she turned away; he held her back, and falling on his knees, he encircled her waist with his arm, in a pose at once languorous, passionate, and imploring.

She stood there looking at him, her large flashing eyes were serious, almost terrible. Then her tears clouded them over, her pink eyelids lowered, and she gave him her hands. Léon was just pressing them to his lips when a servant appeared to say that someone wanted to see the gentleman.

"You will come back?" she said.

"Yes."

"But when?"

"Immediately."

"It's a trick," said the pharmacist, when he saw Léon. "I wanted to interrupt this visit, that seemed to me to annoy you. Let's go and have a glass of *garus*⁶ at Bridoux'."

Léon swore that he must get back to his office. Then the pharmacist began making jokes about legal papers and procedure.

"Forget about Cujas and Barthole⁷ a bit, what the Devil! Who's going to stop you? Be a man! Let's go to Bridoux'. You'll see his dog. It's very interesting."

And as the clerk still insisted:

"I'll go with you. I'll read a paper while I wait for you, or thumb through a code."

Léon, bewildered by Emma's anger, Monsieur Homais' chatter,

6. A tonic made from cinnamon, nutmeg, and saffron, named after its eighteenth-century German inventor.

7. This comment reveals how closely Flaubert allied Homais with the clichés of the nineteenth century, which he was later to inventory in the *Dictionnaire des idées reçues*, where we find the following entry for Cujas: "Inseparable from Barthole.—What did they write? What does it matter? Say to all men studying law: You are holed up with Cujas and Barthole.'" Bernard Ajac offers an extensive juxtaposition of the commonplaces of the *Dictionnaire* with lines from *Madame Bovary* in an appendix at the back of his edition of *Madame Bovary* (Paris: Flammarion, 1986), 520–30. The comment about Cujas is on page 524.

and perhaps, by the heaviness of the luncheon, was undecided, and, as though he were under the spell of the pharmacist who kept repeating:

“Let’s go to Bridoux’. It’s just by here, in the Rue Malpalu.”

Then, out of cowardice, out of stupidity, out of that undefinable necessity that leads us towards those actions we are most set against, he allowed himself to be led off to Bridoux’; they found him in his small courtyard overseeing three workmen who panted as they turned the huge wheel of a seltzer water machine. Homais gave them some advice; he embraced Bridoux; they drank some garus. Twenty times Léon tried to escape, but the other seized him by the arm saying:

“Wait a minute! I’m coming! We’ll go to the *Fanal de Rouen* to see the fellows there. I’ll introduce you to Thomassin.”

He finally got rid of him, however, and flew to the hotel. Emma was gone.

She had just left in exasperation. She detested him now. His failure to come as he had promised she took as an insult, and she looked for other reasons for separating from him: he was incapable of heroism, weak, banal, more spiritless than a woman, avaricious, and timorous as well.

Later when she was calmer, she realized that she had doubtless been unjust to him. But the picking apart of those we love always alienates us from them. One must not touch one’s idols, a little of the guilt always comes off on one’s fingers.

They gradually began to talk more frequently of matters outside their love, and in the letters that Emma wrote him she spoke of flowers, poetry, the moon and the stars, naïve resources of a waning passion striving to keep itself alive by all external aids. She was constantly promising herself a profound happiness on her next trip; then she confessed to herself that she had felt nothing extraordinary. This disappointment quickly gave way to a new hope, and Emma returned to him more avid and inflamed than before. She undressed brutally, ripping off the thin laces of her corset so violently that they would whistle round her hips like a gliding snake. She went on tiptoe, barefooted, to see once more that the door was locked, then with one movement, she would let her clothes fall at once to the ground;—then, pale and serious, without a word, she would throw herself against his breast with a long shudder.

Yet there was upon that brow covered with cold drops, on those stammering lips, in those wild eyes, in the grip of those arms, something strange, vague and sinister that seemed to Léon to be subtly gliding between them to force them apart.

He did not dare to question her; but finding how experienced she was, he told himself that she must have passed through all the ex-

tremes of both pleasure and pain. What had once charmed now frightened him a little. Furthermore, he revolted against the daily increased absorption of his personality into hers. He resented her, because of this constant victory. He even strove not to love her; then, when he heard the creaking of her boots, he felt his courage desert him, like drunkards at the sight of strong liquor.

It is true, she showered him with every sort of attention, from exotic foods, to little coquettish refinements in her dress and languishing glances. She used to bring roses from Yonville hidden in her bosom which she would toss up into his face; she was worried about his health, advised him how he should behave; and in order to bind him closer to her, hoping perhaps that heaven would take her part, she hung a medal of the Virgin round his neck. She inquired like a virtuous mother about his companions. She said to him:

"Don't see them; don't go out; only think of us; love me!"

She would have liked to be able to watch over his life, and the idea occurred to her of having him followed in the streets. Near the hotel there was always a kind of vagabond who accosted travellers, and who would surely not refuse . . . But her pride revolted at this.

"Ah! So what! What does it matter if he betrays me! What do I care?"

One day, when they had parted early and she was returning alone along the boulevard, she saw the walls of her convent; she sat down on a bench in the shade of the elms. How calm her life had been in those days! How she envied her first undefinable sentiments of love which she had tried to construct from the books she read.

The first months of her marriage, her rides in the forest, the viscount who had waltzed with her, and Lagardy singing, all repassed before her eyes . . . And Léon suddenly appeared to her as far off as the others.

"I do love him!" she said to herself.

No matter! She was not happy, she never had been. Why was her life so unsatisfactory, why did everything she leaned on instantly rot and give way? . . . But suppose there existed somewhere some one strong and beautiful, a man of valor, passionate yet refined, the heart of a poet in the form of an angel, a bronze stringed lyre, playing elegaic epithalamia to the heavens, why might she not someday happen on him? What a vain thought! Besides, nothing was worth the trouble of seeking it; everything was a lie. Every smile concealed a yawn of boredom, every joy a curse, every pleasure its own disgust, and the sweetest kisses left upon your lips only the unattainable desire for a greater delight.

A coarse metallic rattle sounded around her, and the convent bell struck four. And it seemed to her that she had been sitting on that

bench since the beginning of time. But an infinity of time can be compressed into a minute like a crowd of people into a small space.

Emma lived all absorbed in her passions and worried no more about money matters than an archduchess.

There came a day, however, when a seedy looking man with a red face and a bald head came to her house, saying he had been sent by Monsieur Vinçart of Rouen. He took out the pins that held together the side-pockets of his long green overcoat, stuck them into his sleeve, and politely handed her a paper.

It was a bill for seven hundred francs, signed by her, and which Lheureux, in spite of all his promises had endorsed to Vinçart.

She sent her servant for him. He could not come.

Then the stranger who had remained standing, casting around him to the right and left curious glances which were hidden behind his blond eyebrows, asked with an innocent air:

"What answer am I to take Vinçart?"

"Well!" said Emma, "tell him . . . that I haven't got it . . . I'll pay him next week . . . He must wait . . . yes, next week."

And the fellow went without another word.

But the next day at twelve o'clock she received a summons, and the sight of the stamped paper, on which appeared several times in large letters. "Maître Hareng, bailiff at Buchy," so frightened her that she rushed in all haste to Lheureux. She found him in his shop, tying up a parcel.

"At your service," he said. "What can I do for you?"

But Lheureux continued what he was doing, aided by a young girl of about thirteen, somewhat hunchbacked, who was both his clerk and his servant.

Then, his sabots clattering on the wooden planks of the shop, he mounted in front of Madame Bovary to the second floor and showed her into a narrow closet, where, in a large pine wood desk, lay some ledgers, protected by an iron bar laid horizontally across them and padlocked down. Against the wall, under some remnants of calico, one caught sight of a safe, but of such dimensions that it must contain something besides promissory notes and cash. Monsieur Lheureux, in fact, went in for pawnbroking, and it was there that he had put Madame Bovary's gold chain, together with the earrings of poor old Tellier, who had been forced, at last, to sell his café, and had bought a small grocery store in Quincampoix, where he was dying of catarrh amongst his candles, that were less yellow than his face.

Lheureux sat down in a large cane arm-chair, saying:

"What's new?"

"Look here!"

"Well, what do you want me to do about it?"

Then she lost her temper, reminding him that he had promised not to endorse her notes away. He admitted it.

"But I was pressed myself; they were holding a knife against my throat too."

"And what will happen now?" she went on.

"Oh, it's very simple; a judgment and then a seizure . . . that's about it!"

Emma kept down a desire to strike him, and asked gently if there was no way of quieting Monsieur Vinçart.

"Oh, sure! appease Vinçart, indeed! You don't know him; he's fiercer than an Arab!"

Nevertheless, Monsieur Lheureux had to help her.

"All right then, listen, it seems to me that I've been pretty good to you so far."

And opening one of his ledgers:

"Look!" he said.

Then moving his finger up the page:

"Let's see . . . let's see . . . ! August 3d, two hundred francs . . . June 17th, a hundred and fifty . . . March 23d, forty-six . . . In April . . ."

He stopped, as if afraid of making some mistake.

"I won't even mention the bills signed by Monsieur Bovary, one for seven hundred francs, and another for three hundred. As to the little payments on your account and the interest, I'd never get to the end of the list, I can't figure that high. I'll have nothing more to do with it."

She wept; she even called him "her good Monsieur Lheureux." But he always fell back upon "that rascal Vinçart." Besides, he hadn't a penny, no one was paying him these days, they were eating his coat off his back, a poor shopkeeper like himself couldn't advance money.

Emma was silent, and Monsieur Lheureux, who was biting the feathers of a quill, no doubt became uneasy at her silence, for he went on:

"Perhaps, if something were paid on this, one of these days . . . I might . . ."

"Well," she said, "as soon as the balance on the Barneville property . . ."

"What? . . ."

And on hearing that Langlois had not yet paid he seemed much surprised. Then in a honied voice:

"Then we'll agree, what do you say to . . . ?"

"Oh! Whatever you say!"

On this he closed his eyes to reflect, wrote down a few figures, and saying that this was really going to hurt him, it was a risky af-

fair, that he was "bleeding" himself for her, he wrote out four bills for two hundred and fifty francs each, to fall due month by month.

"Provided that Vinçart will listen to me! However, it's settled. I don't back down on my word. I'm as square as a brick."

Next he carelessly showed her several new goods; not one of which, however, was in his opinion worthy of madame.

"When I think that there's a dress that costs seven cents a yard and guaranteed color-fast! And they actually swallow it all down! Of course you understand one doesn't tell them what it really is!" He hoped by this confession of chicanery towards others to convince her of his honesty with her.

Then he called her back to show her three yards of guipure that he had lately picked up "at a sale."

"Isn't it lovely?" said Lheureux. "It is very much used now for the backs of arm-chairs. It's quite the rage."

And, quicker than a juggler, he wrapped up the guipure in some blue paper and put it in Emma's hands.

"But at least let me know . . ."

"Yes, some other time," he replied, turning on his heel.

That same evening she urged Bovary to write to his mother, to ask her to send at once the whole of the balance due from the father's estate. The mother-in-law replied that she had nothing more: that the liquidation was complete, and, aside from Barneville, there remained for them an income of six hundred francs, that she would pay them punctually.

Madame Bovary then sent bills to two or three patients, and was soon making great use of this method which turned out to be very successful. She was always careful to add a postscript: "Do not mention this to my husband; you know how proud he is . . . forgive my having to . . . your humble servant. . . ." There were a few complaints; she intercepted them.

To get money she began selling her old gloves, her old hats, all sorts of old odds and ends, and she bargained rapaciously, her peasant blood standing her in good stead. Then on her trips to town she searched the second-hand stores for nick-nacks which she was sure, if no one else, Monsieur Lheureux would certainly take off her hands. She bought ostrich feathers, Chinese porcelain, and trunks; she borrowed from Félicité, from Madame Lefrançois, from the landlady at the Croix-Rouge, from everybody, no matter where. With the money she at last received from Barneville she paid two bills; the other fifteen hundred francs fell due. She renewed the notes, and then renewed them again!

Sometimes, it is true, she tried to add up her accounts, but the results were always so staggering, she couldn't believe they were

possible. Then she would begin over again, soon get confused, leave everything where it was and forget about it.

The house was a dreary place now! Tradesmen were seen leaving it with angry faces. Handkerchiefs hung drying on the stoves, and little Berthe, to the great scandal of Madame Homais, wore stockings with holes in them. If Charles timidly ventured a remark, she would snap back at him savagely that it certainly wasn't her fault!

What was the meaning of all these fits of temper? He explained everything by her old nervous illness, and reproaching himself with having taken her infirmities for faults, accused himself of egotism, and longed to go and take her in his arms.

"Ah, no!" he said to himself; "I would only annoy her."

And he stayed where he was.

After dinner he would walk about alone in the garden; he took little Berthe on his lap and unfolding his medical journal, tried to teach her to read. But the child, who had never had any schooling at all, would soon open wide her large eyes in bewilderment and begin to cry. Then he would comfort her; he fetched water in her watering can to make rivers on the sand path, or broke off branches from the privet hedges to plant trees in the flower beds. This did not spoil the garden much, which was now overgrown with long weeds. They owed Lestiboudois for so many day's wages. Then the child would grow cold and ask for her mother.

"Go call your nurse," said Charles. "You know, my darling, that mama does not like to be disturbed!"

Autumn was setting in, and the leaves were already falling—as they had two years ago when she was ill!—Where would it all end! . . . And he would continue to pace up and down, his hands behind his back.

Madame was in her room. No one was allowed to enter. There she stayed from morning to night, listless and hardly dressed, from time to time lighting a tablet of Turkish incense she had bought at the shop of an Algerian in Rouen. In order to get rid of this sleeping man stretched out beside her at night, she finally managed by continual badgering to relegate him to a room on the third floor; then she would read until morning, lurid novels where there would be scenes of orgies, violence and bloodshed. Often she would be seized by a sudden terror and cry out. Charles would come running.

"Oh! Leave me alone!" she would say.

Or at other times, when she was burnt more fiercely by that inner flame which her adultery kept feeding, panting and overcome with desire, she would throw open the window breathing in the chill air and letting the wind blow back her hair which hung too



Une Mère de Famille

Dessiné par GAVARNI.

Gravé par PRATO.

Paul Gavarni, "Une Mère de Famille" [A mother] dressed in a stevedore costume, mentioned on page 231. From images of Carnival in *Le Tiroir du diable* (Paris, 1844), editor's collection. Carnival was represented as the occasion for excess, even on the part of respectable women.

heavy on her neck, and, looking up at the stars, she would long for the love of a prince. She thought of him, of Léon. She would then have given anything for a single one of those meetings which would appease her.

These were her gala days. She was determined that they should be magnificent! When he could not pay all the expenses himself, she made up the deficit liberally, which happened pretty well every time. He tried to convince her that they would be just as well off somewhere else, in a more modest hotel, but she always found some objection.

One day she drew six small silver-gilt spoons from her bag (they were old Rouault's wedding present), begging him to pawn them at once for her; Léon obeyed, although the errand annoyed him. He was afraid of compromising himself.

Then, on reflection, he began to think that his mistress was beginning to behave rather strangely, and perhaps they were not wrong in wishing to separate him from her.

In fact, some one had sent his mother a long anonymous letter to warn her that he was "ruining himself with a married woman"; and immediately the good woman had visions of the eternal bug-a-boo of every family, that is to say, that vague and terrible creature, the Siren, the fantastic monster which makes its home in the treacherous depths of love. She wrote to Maître Dubocage, his employer, who behaved perfectly in the affair. He kept him for three quarters of an hour trying to open his eyes, to warn him of the abyss into which he was falling. Such an intrigue would damage him later on in his career. He implored him to break with her, and, if he would not make this sacrifice in his own interest, to do it at least for his, Dubocage's sake.

Léon finally swore he would not see Emma again; and he reproached himself with not having kept his word, considering all the trouble and reproaches she was likely to bring down on him, not counting the jokes made by his fellow clerks as they sat around the stove in the morning. Besides, he was soon to be head clerk; it was time to settle down. So he gave up his flute, his exalted sentiments, his poetic imagination; for every bourgeois in the flush of his youth, were it but for a day, a moment, has believed himself capable of immense passions, of lofty enterprises. The most mediocre libertine has dreamed of sultanas; every notary bears within him the débris of a poet.

He was bored now when Emma suddenly began to sob on his breast; and his heart, like the people who can only stand a certain amount of music, became drowsy through indifference to the vibrations of a love whose subtleties he could no longer distinguish.

They knew one another too well to experience any of those sud-



Paul Gavarni, "Après le débardeur, la fin du monde" [After the stevedore costume, the end of the world]. From images of Carnival in *Le Tiroir du diable* (Paris, 1844), editor's collection.

den surprises which multiply the enjoyment of a possession a hundredfold. She was as sick of him as he was weary of her. Emma found again in adultery all the platitudes of marriage.

But how to get rid of him? Then, though she felt humiliated by the sordidity of such a happiness, she clung to it out of habit, or out of degeneration; she pursued it more desperately than ever, destroying every pleasure by always wishing for it to be too great. She blamed Léon for her disappointed hopes, as if he had betrayed her; and she even longed for some catastrophe that would bring about their separation, since she had not the courage to do it herself.

She none the less went on writing him love letters, in keeping with the notion that a woman must write to her lover.

But while writing to him, it was another man she saw, a phantom fashioned out of her most ardent memories, of her favorite books, her strongest desires, and at last he became so real, so tangible, that her heart beat wildly in awe and admiration, though unable to see him distinctly, for, like a god, he was hidden beneath the abundance of his attributes. He dwelt in that azure land where silken ladders swung from balconies in the moonlight, beneath a flower-scented breeze. She felt him near her; he was coming and would ravish her entire being in a kiss. Then she would fall back to earth again shattered; for these vague ecstasies of imaginary love, would exhaust her more than the wildest orgies.

She now felt a constant pain throughout her body. Often she even received summonses, stamped paper that she barely looked at. She would have liked not to be alive, or to be always asleep.

On the day of Mid-Lent she did not return to Yonville; that evening she went to a masked ball. She wore velvet breeches, red stockings, a peruke, and a three-cornered hat cocked over one ear. She danced all night to the wild sounds of the trombones; people gathered around her, and in the morning she found herself on the steps of the theatre together with five or six other masked dancers, dressed as stevedores or sailors, friends of Léon's who were talking about going out to find some supper.

The neighboring cafés were full. They found a dreadful looking restaurant at the harbor, where the proprietor showed them to a little room on the fifth floor.

The men were whispering in a corner, no doubt consulting about expenses. There were a clerk, two medical students, and a shop assistant: what company for her! As to the women, Emma soon perceived from the tone of their voices that most of them probably came from the lowest class. This frightened her, she drew back her chair and lowered her eyes.

The others began to eat; she ate nothing. Her head was on fire, her eyes smarted, and her skin was ice-cold. In her head she

seemed to feel the floor of the ball-room rebounding again beneath the rhythmical pulsation of thousands of dancing feet. The smell of punch and cigar smoke made her dizzy. She fainted: they carried her to the window.

Day was breaking, and a large purple stain was spreading across the pale sky in the direction of the St. Catherine hills. The ashen river was shivering in the wind; there was no one on the bridges; the street lamps were going out.

She came to herself, however, and began to think of Berthe asleep at home in the maid's room. But just then a cart loaded with long strips of iron passed by, and made a deafening metallic vibration against the walls of the house.

She abruptly slipped out of the room; removed her costume; told Léon she had to return; and found herself alone at last in the Hôtel de Boulogne. Everything, herself included, was now unbearable to her. She would have liked to take wing like a bird, and fly off far away to become young again in the realms of immaculate purity.

She left the hotel, crossed the Boulevard, the Place Cauchoise, and the Faubourg, as far as an open street that overlooked the park. She walked rapidly, the fresh air calmed her; and, little by little, the faces of the crowd, the masks, the quadrilles, the lights, the supper, those women, all, disappeared like rising mists. Then, reaching the Croix-Rouge, she threw herself on the bed in her little room on the second floor, where there were pictures of the "Tour de Nesle." At four o'clock Hivert awoke her.

When she got home, Félicité showed her a grey paper stuck behind the clock. She read:

"In virtue of the seizure in execution of a judgment."

What judgment . . . ? As a matter of fact, the evening before another paper had been brought that she had not yet seen, and she was stunned by these words:

"By power of the king, the law, and the courts, Mme. Bovary is hereby ordered . . ."

Then, skipping several lines, she read:

"Within twenty-four hours, at the latest . . ." But what? "To pay the sum of eight thousand francs." There was even written at the bottom of the page, "She will be constrained thereto by every form of law, and notably by a writ of distraint on her furniture and effects."

What should she do? . . . In twenty-four hours; tomorrow! Lheureux, she thought, probably wanted to frighten her again, for, all at once, she saw through his manoeuvres, the reason for his favors. The only thing that reassured her was the extraordinary amount of the figure.

Nevertheless, as a result of buying and not paying, of borrowing,

signing notes, and renewing these notes which grew ever larger each time they fell due, she had ended by preparing a capital for Monsieur Lheureux which he was impatiently waiting to collect to use in his own financial speculations.

She went over to his place, assuming an air of indifference.

"Do you know what has happened to me? It's a joke, I'm sure!"

"No."

"What do you mean?"

He slowly turned around, and, folding his arms, said to her:

"Did you think, my dear lady, that I was going to go on to the end of time providing you with merchandise and cash, just for the love of God? I certainly have to get back what I laid out, let's be fair."

She objected to the amount of the debt.

"Ah! Too bad! The court has recognised it! There's a judgment. You've been notified. Besides, it isn't my fault. It's Vinçart's."

"But couldn't you . . . ?"

"No! Not a single thing!"

"But . . . Still . . . let's talk it over."

And she began beating about the bush; she had known nothing about it . . . it was a surprise . . .

"Whose fault is that?" said Lheureux, bowing ironically. "While I'm slaving like a black man, you go gallivanting about."

"Ah! Don't preach to me!"

"It never does any harm," he replied.

She turned coward; she implored him; she even pressed her pretty white and slender hand against the shopkeeper's knee.

"There, that'll do! Any one'd think you wanted to seduce me!"

"You are a wretch!" she cried.

"Oh, oh! What a fuss you are making!"

"I will show you up. I'll tell my husband . . ."

"All right! I too, I'll show your husband something!"

And Lheureux drew from his strong box the receipt for eighteen hundred francs that she had given him when Vinçart had discounted the bills.

"Do you think," he added, "that he won't catch on to your little theft, the poor dear man?"

She collapsed, more overcome than if felled by the blow of a club. He was walking up and down from the window to the bureau, repeating all the while:

"I'll show him all right . . . I'll show him all right . . ." Then he approached her, and said in a soft voice:

"It's no fun, I know; but after all it hasn't killed anyone, and, since that is the only way that is left for you paying back my money . . ."

"But where am I to get any?" said Emma, wringing her hands.

"Bah! when one has friends like you!"

And he looked at her with such a knowing and terrible stare, that she shuddered to the very core of her heart.

"I promise you," she said, "I'll sign . . ."

"I've enough of your signatures!"

"I will sell something else . . ."

"Oh come!" he said, shrugging his shoulders. "You've nothing left to sell."

And he called through the peep-hole that looked down into the shop:

"Annette, don't forget the three coupons of No. 14."

The servant appeared; Emma caught the hint and asked how much money would be needed to put a stop to the proceedings.

"It is too late."

"But if I were to bring you several thousand francs, a quarter of the sum, a third, almost all?"

"No; it's no use!"

And he pushed her gently towards the staircase.

"I implore you, Monsieur Lheureux, just a few days more!"

She was sobbing.

"Ah that's good! let's have some tears!"

"You'll drive me to do something desperate!"

"Don't make me laugh!" said he, shutting the door.

VII

She was stoical the next day when Maître Hareng, the bailiff, with two assistants arrived at her house to draw up inventory for the seizure.

They began with Bovary's consulting-room, and did not write down the phrenological head, which was considered an "instrument of his profession"; but in the kitchen they counted the plates, the saucepans, the chairs, the candlesticks, and in the bedroom all the nick-nacks on the wall-shelf. They examined her dresses, the linen, the dressing-room; and her whole existence, to its most intimate details, was stretched out like a cadavre in an autopsy before the eyes of these three men.

Maître Hareng, buttoned up in his thin black coat, wearing a white choker and very tight foot-straps, repeated from time to time:

"Allow me madame? Allow me?"

Often he uttered exclamations:

"Charming! very pretty."

Then he began writing again, dipping his pen into the horn ink-stand he carried in his left hand.

When they had done with the rooms they went up to the attic.

She kept a desk there in which Rodolphe's letters were locked. It had to be opened.

"Ah! a correspondence!" said Maître Hareng, with a discreet smile. "But allow me! for I must make sure the box contains nothing else." And he tipped up the papers lightly, as if to let the napoleons fall out. This made her furious to see this coarse hand, with red moist fingers like slugs, touching these pages against which her heart had beaten.

They went at last! Félicité came back. Emma had sent her out to watch for Bovary in order to keep him away, and they hastily installed the man set to guard the seizure, in the attic, where he swore he would not stir.

During the evening Charles seemed to her careworn. Emma watched him with a look of anguish, fancying she saw an accusation in every line of his face. Then, when her eyes wandered over the chimney-piece ornamented with Chinese screens, over the large curtains, the arm-chairs, all those things that had softened the bitterness of her life, remorse seized her, or rather an immense regret, that, far from destroying her passion, rather irritated it. Charles placidly poked the fire, both his feet on the andirons.

Once the man, no doubt bored in his hiding-place, made a slight noise.

"Is any one walking upstairs?" said Charles.

"No," she replied; "it is a window that has been left open, and is hanging in the wind."

The next day which was Sunday, she went to Rouen to call on all the brokers whose names she knew. They were either in the country, or away on a trip. She was not discouraged; and those whom she did manage to see she asked for money, insisting that she absolutely had to have it, that she would pay it back. Some laughed in her face; all refused.

At two o'clock she ran to Léon's apartment, and knocked at the door. No one answered. At length he appeared.

"What brings you here?"

"Am I disturbing you?"

"No . . . but . . ." And he admitted that his landlord didn't like his having "women" there.

"I must speak to you," she went on.

Then he took down the key, but she stopped him.

"No, no! Over there, in our home!"

And they went to their room at the Hôtel de Boulogne.

On arriving she drank off a large glass of water. She was very pale. She said to him:

"Léon, I have a favor to ask you."

And, shaking him by both hands which she held tightly in hers, she added:

"Listen, I must have eight thousand francs."

"But you are mad!"

"Not yet."

And thereupon, telling him the story of the seizure, she explained her distress to him; for Charles knew nothing of it; her mother-in-law detested her; old Rouault could do nothing; but he, Léon, he would set about finding this indispensable sum . . .

"But what do you want me . . .?"

"What a coward you are!" she cried.

Then he said stupidly, "You're making things out to be worse than they are. Your fellow there could probably be quieted with three thousand francs."

All the more reason to try and do something; it was inconceivable that they couldn't find three thousand francs. Besides, Léon could sign the notes instead of her.

"Go! try! you must! run! . . . Oh! Try! try! I will love you so!"

He went out, and came back at the end of an hour, saying, with a solemn face:

"I have been to three people . . . with no success!"

Then they sat there facing each other on either side of the fireplace, motionless, without speaking. Emma shrugged her shoulders as she tapped her foot impatiently. He heard her murmur:

"If I were in your place I'd certainly find some!"

"Where?"

"At your office."

And she looked at him.

A diabolical determination showed in her burning eyes which were half closed in a lascivious and encouraging manner;—so that the young man felt himself growing weak beneath the mute will of this woman who was urging him to commit a crime. Then he was afraid, and to avoid any explanation he smote his forehead crying:

"Morel is coming back tonight! He will not refuse me, I hope" (this was one of his friends, the son of a very rich merchant); "and I will bring it to you to-morrow," he added.

Emma did not seem to welcome this new hope with all the joy he had expected. Did she suspect the lie? He went on, blushing:

"However, if you don't see me by three o'clock, do not wait for me, my darling. I must leave now, forgive me. Good-bye!"

He pressed her hand, but it felt quite lifeless. Emma had no strength left for any sentiment whatever.

Four o'clock struck; and she rose to return to Yonville, mechanically obeying the force of old habits.

The weather was beautiful; it was one of those March days, clear and sharp, when the sun shines in a perfectly white sky. The people of Rouen, dressed in their Sunday-clothes, seemed happy as they strolled by. She reached the Place du Parvis. People were coming out of the cathedral after vespers; the crowd flowed out through the three portals like a river through the three arches of a bridge, and in the middle, more immobile than a rock, stood the verger.

Then she remembered the day when, eager and full of hope, she had entered beneath this large nave, that had opened out before her, less profound than her love; and she walked on weeping beneath her veil, dazed, staggering, almost fainting.

"Look out!" cried a voice issuing from behind a carriage gate which was swinging open.

She stopped to let pass a black horse, prancing between the shafts of a tilbury, driven by a gentleman dressed in sables. Who was it? She knew him . . . The carriage sprang forward and disappeared.

Why, it was he, the Viscount! She turned away; the street was empty. She was so crushed, so sad, that she had to lean against a wall to keep herself from falling.

Then she thought she had been mistaken.

How could she tell? Everything, within herself and without, was abandoning her. She felt that she was lost, that she was wandering about at random within undefinable abysses, and she was almost happy, on reaching the Croix-Rouge, to see the good Homais, who was watching a large box full of pharmaceutical stores being hoisted on to the *Hirondelle*; holding in his hand a silk handkerchief containing six "cheminots" for his wife.

Madame Homais was very fond of these small, heavy rolls shaped like turbans which are eaten during Lent with salt butter: a last relic of Gothic fare, going back, perhaps, to the Crusades, and with which the hardy Normans would stuff themselves in times gone by, thinking that they saw, illuminated in the golden light of the torches, between the tankards of Hippocras and the gigantic slabs of meat, the heads of Saracens to be devoured. The druggist's wife crunched them up as they had done, heroically, in spite of her wretched teeth; so whenever Homais made a trip to town, he never failed to bring her home some which he bought at the great baker's in the Rue Massacre.

"Charmed to see you," he said, offering Emma a hand to help her into the *Hirondelle*.

Then he tied his "cheminots" to the baggage net and remained with his head bare and his arms folded in an attitude pensive and Napoleonic.

But when the blind man appeared as usual at the foot of the hill he exclaimed indignantly:

"I can't understand why the authorities continue to tolerate such criminal occupations! These unfortunate people should be locked up, forced to do some work. I give you my word, Progress marches at a snail's pace! We are paddling about in a state of total barbarism!"

The blind man held out his hat which flapped about in the window as though it were a pocket in the upholstery which had come loose.

"This," said the pharmacist, "is a scrofulous disease."

And though he knew the poor devil, he pretended to see him for the first time, muttering such words as "cornea," "opaque cornea," "sclerotic," "facies," then asked him in a paternal tone:

"My friend, have you suffered long from this dreadful affliction? Instead of getting drunk in the café you would do better to follow a diet."

He advised him to drink good wine, good beer and to eat good roasts of meat. The blind man went on with his song. He actually seemed almost insane. At last Monsieur Homais opened his purse.

"Now there's a sou; give me back two liards: don't forget what I told you, you'll find it does you good."

Hivert openly cast some doubt on its efficacy. But the druggist said that he would cure the man himself with an antiphlogistic salve of his own composition, and he gave his address: "Monsieur Homais, near the market, everyone knows me."

"All right!" said Hivert, "in payment, you can 'put on your act' for us."

The blind man squatted down on his haunches with his head thrown back, and rolling his greenish eyes and sticking out his tongue, he rubbed his stomach with both hands while uttering a sort of low howl like a famished dog. Emma, overcome with disgust, threw him a five-franc piece over her shoulder. It was all her fortune. It seemed like a grand thing to her to throw it away like this.

The coach had already started again when Monsieur Homais suddenly leaned out of the window and shouted:

"No farinacious foods or dairy products, wear woolen clothing next to the skin, and expose the diseased areas to the smoke of juniper berries."

The sight of the familiar things that passed before her eyes gradually diverted Emma from her present suffering. An intolerable fatigue overwhelmed her, and she reached home stupefied, discouraged, almost asleep.

"Let come what may!" she told herself.

Besides, anything could happen. Couldn't some extraordinary event occur at any moment? Lheureux might even die.

At nine o'clock in the morning she was awakened by the sound of voices in the square. A crowd around the market was reading a large bill fixed to one of the posts, and she saw Justin climb on a milepost and tear down the bill. The local policeman had just seized him by the collar. Monsieur Homais came out of his shop, and Mère Lefrançois, in the midst of the crowd, was talking the loudest of all.

"Madame! madame!" cried Félicité, running in, "it's an outrage!"

And the poor girl, all in tears, handed her a yellow paper that she had just torn off the door. Emma read with a glance that her furniture was for sale.

Then they looked at one another in silence. Servant and master had no secrets from each other. At last Félicité whispered:

"If I were you, madame, I'd go see Monsieur Guillaumin."

"You think so?"

The question meant:

"You who know all about the house from the butler, has the master sometimes spoken of me?"

"Yes, you'd do well to go there."

She dressed, put on her black gown, and her cape with jet beads, and that she might not be seen (there was still a crowd on the Square), she took the path by the river, outside the village.

She was out of breath when she reached the notary's gate. The sky was sombre, and a little snow was falling.

At the sound of the bell, Theodore in a red waistcoat appeared on the steps; he came to open the door with a casual air, as if she were an old acquaintance, and showed her into the dining-room.

A large porcelain stove crackled beneath a cactus that filled up the niche in the wall, and in black wood frames against the oak-stained paper hung Steuben's "Esmeralda" and Schopin's "Putiphar." The ready-laid table, the two silver chafing-dishes, the crystal door-knobs, the parquet and the furniture, all shone with a scrupulous, English cleanliness; the windows were ornamented at each corner with stained glass.

"Now this," thought Emma. "is the kind of dining-room I ought to have."

The notary came in. With his left hand, he pressed his palm-embroidered dressing gown against his body, while with his other hand he quickly took off and replaced his brown velvet skullcap, which he wore jauntily cocked to the right. After circling around his bald cranium, the end of three strains of blond hair stuck out from underneath the cap.

After he had offered her a seat he sat down to breakfast, apologising profusely for his rudeness.

"I have come," she said, "to beg you, sir . . ."

"What, madame? I am listening."

And she began telling him about her situation.

Monsieur Guillaumin knew all about it. He was working in secret partnership with the shopkeeper, who always provided him with the capital for the mortgage loans he was asked to arrange.

So he knew (and better than she herself) the long story of these notes, small at first, bearing the names of several endorsers, made out for long terms and constantly renewed up to the day when, gathering together all the protested notes, the shopkeeper had asked his friend Vinçart to take in his own name all the necessary legal steps to collect the money, not wishing to appear as a shark in the eyes of his fellow-citizens.

She mingled her story with recriminations against Lheureux, to which the notary from time to time gave meaningless replies. Eating his cutlet and drinking his tea, he buried his chin in his sky-blue cravat, into which were thrust two diamond pins, held together by a small gold chain; and he smiled a singular smile, in a sugary, ambiguous fashion. Noticing that her feet were damp:

"Do get closer to the stove," he said, "put your feet up against the porcelain."

She was afraid of dirtying it but the notary replied gallantly:

"Pretty things never spoil anything."

Then she tried to appeal to his better feelings and, growing moved herself, she began telling him about the tightness of her household, her worries, her wants. He could understand that—such an elegant woman!—and, without interrupting his lunch, he turned completely round towards her, so that his knee brushed against her boot; the sole was beginning to curl in the heat of the stove.

But when she asked for three thousand francs, his lips drew tight and he said how sorry he was not to have had the management of her capital before, for there were hundreds of ways very convenient, even for a lady, of turning her money to account. In the turfpits of Gaumesnil or in Le Havre real estate, they could have ventured, with hardly any risk, on some excellent speculations; and he let her consume herself with rage at the thought of the fabulous sums that she would certainly have made.

"How was it," he went on, "that you didn't come to me?"

"I don't know," she said.

"Why not? Did I frighten you so much? It is I, on the contrary, who ought to complain. We hardly know one another; yet I am very devoted to you. You do not doubt that any longer, I hope?"

He held out his hand, took hers, kissed it greedily, then held it on his knee; and he played delicately with her fingers, while muttering thousands of compliments.

His bland voice rustled like a running brook; a light shone in his eyes through the glimmering of his spectacles, and his hand was advancing up Emma's sleeve to press her arm. She felt against her cheek his panting breath. This man was intolerable.

She sprang to her feet and told him:

"Sir, I am waiting."

"For what?" said the notary, who suddenly became very pale.

"This money."

"But . . ."

Then, yielding to an irresistible wave of desire:

"Well then, . . . yes!"

He dragged himself towards her on his knees, regardless of his dressing gown.

"I beg you, stay! I love you!"

He seized her by the waist. Madame Bovary's face flushed purple. She recoiled with a terrible look, exclaiming:

"You shamelessly take advantage of my distress, sir! I am to be pitied—not to be sold."

And she went out.

The notary remained dumbfounded, his eyes fixed on his fine embroidered slippers. They were a love gift, and their sight finally consoled him. Besides, he reflected that such an adventure might have carried him too far.

"The wretch! the scoundrel! . . . what an infamy!" she said to herself, as she fled with nervous steps under the aspens that lined the road. The disappointment of her failure increased the indignation of her outraged modesty; it seemed to her that Providence pursued her implacably, and, strengthening herself in her pride, she had never felt so much esteem for herself nor so much contempt for others. A spirit of warfare transformed her. She would have liked to strike all men, to spit in their faces, to crush them; she kept walking straight on, as quickly as she could, pale, shaking and furious, searching the empty horizon with tear-dimmed eyes, almost rejoicing in the hatred that was choking her.

When she saw her house a numbness came over her. She could not go on; yet she had to. Besides, what escape was there for her?

Félicité was waiting for her at the door.

"Well?"

"No!" said Emma.

And for a quarter of an hour the two of them went over the various persons in Yonville who might perhaps be inclined to help her. But each time that Félicité named some one Emma replied:

"Out of the question! they won't!"

"And the master'll soon be in."

"I know that well enough . . . Now leave me alone."

She had tried everything; there was nothing more to be done now; and when Charles came in she would have to tell him:

"Step aside! This rug on which you are walking is no longer ours. In your own house you don't own a chair, a pin, a straw, and it is I, poor man, who have ruined you."

Then there would be a great sob; next he would weep abundantly, and at last, the surprise passed, he would forgive her.

"Yes," she murmured, grinding her teeth, "*he* will forgive me, the man I could never forgive for having known me, even if he had a million to spare! . . . Never! never!"

The thought of Bovary's magnanimity exasperated her. He was bound to find out the catastrophe, whether she confessed or not, now, soon, or to-morrow; so there was no escape from the horrible scene and she would have to bear the weight of his generosity. She wanted to return to Lheureux, but what good would it do? To write to her father—it was too late; and perhaps she began to repent now that she had not yielded to the notary, when she heard the trot of a horse in the alley. It was he; he was opening the gate; he was whiter than the plaster wall. Rushing to the stairs, she fled to the Square; and the wife of the mayor, who was talking to Lestiboudois in front of the church, saw her enter the house of the tax-collector.

She hurried off to tell Madame Caron, and the two ladies went up to the attic; hidden behind a sheet strung up on two poles, they stationed themselves comfortably in full command of Binet's room.

He was alone in his garret, busily copying in wood one of those indescribable bits of ivory, composed of crescents, of spheres hollowed out one within the other, the whole as straight as an obelisk, and of no use whatever; and he was beginning on the last piece—he was nearing his goal! In the twilight of the workshop the white dust was flying from his tools like a shower of sparks under the hoofs of a galloping horse; the two wheels were turning, droning; Binet smiled, his chin lowered, his nostrils distended. He seemed lost in the state of complete bliss that only the most menial tasks can offer: distracting the mind by easily overcome obstacles, they satisfy it completely, leading to a fulfilled achievement that leaves no room for dreams beyond.

"Ah! there she is!" exclaimed Madame Tuvache.

But the noise of the lathe made it impossible to hear what she was saying.

At last the two ladies thought they made out the word "francs," and Madame Tuvache whispered in a low voice:

"She's asking for extra time to pay her taxes."

"Apparently!" replied the other.

They saw her walking up and down, examining the napkin-rings,

the candlesticks, the banister rails against the walls, while Binet stroked his beard with satisfaction.

"Do you think she wants to order something from him?" said Madame Tuvache.

"Why, he never sells anything," objected her neighbor.

The tax-collector seemed to be listening with wide-open eyes, as if he did not understand. She went on in a tender, suppliant manner. She came nearer to him, her breast heaving; they no longer spoke.

"Is she making advances to him?" said Madame Tuvache.

Binet was scarlet to his very ears. She took hold of his hands.

"Oh, it's too much!"

And no doubt she was suggesting something abominable to him; for the tax-collector—yet he was brave, had fought at Bautzen and at Lutzen,⁸ had been through the French campaign, and had even been proposed for the Croix de Guerre—suddenly, as at the sight of a serpent, recoiled as far as he could from her, exclaiming:

"Madame! How dare you? . . ."

"Women like that ought to be whipped," said Madame Tuvache.

"But where did she go?" Madame Caron asked. For while they talked, she had vanished out of sight, till they discovered her running up the Grande Rue and turning right as if making for the graveyard, leaving them lost in wonder.

"Mère Rollet," she cried on reaching the nurse's home, "I am choking; unlace me!" She fell sobbing on the bed. Nurse Rollet covered her with a petticoat and remained standing by her side. Then, as she did not answer, the woman withdrew, took her wheel and began spinning flax.

"Please, stop that!" she murmured, fancying she heard Binet's lathe.

"What's bothering her?" said the nurse to herself. "Why has she come here?"

She had come, impelled by a kind of horror that drove her from her home.

Lying on her back, motionless, and with staring eyes, she saw things but vaguely, although she tried with idiotic persistence to focus her attention on them. She looked at the scaling walls, two logs smoking end to end in the fireplace, and a long spider crawling over her head in a cracked beam. At last she began to collect her thoughts. She remembered—one day, with Léon . . . Oh! how long ago that was—the sun was shining on the river, and the air full of the scent from the clematis . . . Then, carried by her memories as by a rushing torrent, she soon remembered what had happened the day before.

8. Napoleonic battles in the campaign of 1813 against the Prussians and Russians.

"What time is it?" she asked.

Mère Rollet went out, raised the fingers of her right hand to that side of the sky that was brightest, and came back slowly, saying:

"Nearly three."

"Ah! thank you, thank you!"

For he would come, he was bound to. He would have found the money. But he would, perhaps, go down to her house, not guessing where she was, and she told the nurse to run and fetch him.

"Be quick!"

"I'm going, my dear lady, I'm going!"

She wondered now why she had not thought of him from the first. Yesterday he had given his word; he would not break it. And she already saw herself at Lheureux's spreading out her three bank-notes on his desk. Then she would have to invent some story to explain matters to Bovary. What would she tell him?

The nurse, however, was a long time returning. But, as there was no clock in the cot, Emma feared she was perhaps exaggerating the length of time. She began walking round the garden, step by step; she went into the path by the hedge, and returned quickly, hoping that the woman would have come back by another road. At last, weary of waiting, assailed by fears that she thrust from her, no longer conscious whether she had been here a century or a moment, she sat down in a corner, closed her eyes, and stopped her ears. The gate grated; she sprang up. Before she could speak, Mère Rollet told her:

"There is no one at your house!"

"What?"

"He isn't there. And Monsieur is crying. He is calling for you. Everybody is looking for you."

Emma did not answer. She gasped with wild, rolling eyes, while the peasant woman, frightened at her face drew back instinctively, thinking her mad. Suddenly she struck her brow and uttered a cry; for the thought of Rodolphe, like a flash of lightning in a dark night, had struck into her soul. He was so good, so tender, so generous! And besides, should he hesitate to come to her assistance, she would know well enough how one single glance would reawaken their lost love. So she set out towards La Huchette, unaware that she was hastening to offer what had so angered her a while ago, not in the least conscious of her prostitution.

VIII

She asked herself as she walked along, "What am I going to say? How shall I begin?" And as she went on she recognized the thickets, the trees, the sea-rushes on the hill, the château beyond. All

the sensations of her first love came back to her, and her poor oppressed heart expanded in the warmth of this tenderness. A warm wind blew in her face; melting snow fell drop by drop from the leave-buds onto the grass.

She entered, as in the past, through the small park-gate, reached the main courtyard, planted with a double row of lindens, their long whispering branches swaying in the wind. The dogs in their kennels barked, but their resounding voices brought no one out.

She went up the large straight staircase with wooden banisters that led to the hallway paved with dusty flagstones, into which a row of doors opened, as in a monastery or an inn. He was at the top, right at the end, on the left. When she placed her fingers on the lock her strength suddenly deserted her. She was afraid, almost wished he would not be there, though this was her only hope, her last chance of salvation. She collected her thoughts for one moment, and, strengthening herself by the feeling of present necessity, went in.

He was sitting in front of the fire, both his feet propped against the mantelpiece, smoking a pipe.

"Oh, it's you!" he said, getting up hurriedly.

"Yes, it is I . . . I have come, Rodolphe, to ask your advice."

And, despite all her efforts, it was impossible for her to open her lips.

"You have not changed; you're as charming as ever!"

"Oh," she replied bitterly, "they are poor charms since you disdained them."

Then he began a long justification of his conduct, excusing himself in vague terms, since he was unable to invent better.

She yielded to his words, still more to his voice and the sight of him, so that she pretended to believe, or perhaps believed, in the pretext he gave for their break; it was a secret on which depended the honor, the very life of a third person.

"Never mind," she said, looking at him sadly. "I have suffered much."

He replied philosophically:

"Life is that way!"

"Has life," Emma went on, "been kind to you at least since our separation?"

"Oh, neither good . . . nor bad."

"Perhaps it would have been better never to have parted."

"Yes, perhaps."

"You think so?" she said, drawing nearer.

Then, with a sigh:

"Oh, Rodolphe! if only you knew! . . . I loved you so!"

It was then that she took his hand, and they remained some

time, their fingers intertwined, like that first day at the Agricultural Fair. With a gesture of pride he struggled against this emotion. But sinking upon his breast she told him:

"How did you think I could live without you? One cannot lose the habit of happiness. I was desperate, I thought I was going to die! I'll tell you about it . . . But you, you fled from me!"

With the natural cowardice that characterizes the stronger sex, he had carefully avoided her for the last three years; now Emma persisted, with coaxing little motions of the head, playful and feline:

"I know you love others, you may as well admit it. Oh! I don't blame them, I understand! You seduced them just as you seduced me. You're a man, a real man! you have all it takes to make yourself loved. But we'll start all over, won't we? We'll love each other as before! Look, I am laughing, I am happy! . . . Say something!"

She was irresistible, with a tear trembling in her eye, like a rain-drop in a blue flower-cup, after the storm.

He had drawn her upon his knees, and with the back of his hand was caressing her smooth hair; a last ray of the sun was mirrored there, like a golden arrow. She lowered her head; at last he kissed her on the eyelids quite gently with the tips of his lips.

"Why, you have been crying! Why?"

She burst into tears. Rodolphe thought this was an outburst of her love. As she did not speak, he took this silence to be a last remnant of resistance, so he exclaimed:

"Oh, forgive me! You are the only one who really pleases me. I was a fool, a wicked fool! I love you, I'll always love you! What is the matter? Tell me . . ."

He knelt before her.

"Well, Rodolphe . . . I am ruined! You must lend me three thousand francs."

"But . . ." he said, as he slowly rose to his feet, "but . . ." His face assumed a grave expression.

"You know," she went on quickly, "that my husband had entrusted his money to a notary to invest, and he absconded. So we borrowed; the patients don't pay us. Moreover, the estate isn't settled yet; we shall have the money later on. But to-day, for want of three thousand francs, we are to be sold out, right now, this very minute. Counting on your friendship, I have come to you for help."

"Ah!" thought Rodolphe, turning very pale, "so that's what she came for."

At last he said, very calmly:

"My dear lady, I haven't got them."

He did not lie. If he had had it, he would probably have given the money, although it is generally unpleasant to do such fine things: a

demand for money being, of all the winds that blow upon love, the coldest and most destructive.

She stared at him in silence for minutes.

"You haven't got them!"

She repeated several times:

"You haven't got them! . . . I ought to have spared myself this last shame. You never loved me. You are no better than the others."

She was losing her head, giving herself away.

Rodolphe interrupted her, declaring he was himself "hard up."

"Oh! I feel sorry for you!" said Emma, "exceedingly sorry!"

And fixing her eyes upon an embossed rifle that shone against its panoply:

"But when one is so poor one doesn't have silver on the butt of one's gun. One doesn't buy a clock inlaid with tortoiseshell," she went on, pointing to the Boulle clock, "nor silver-gilt whistles for one's whips," and she touched them, "nor charms for one's watch. Oh, he has all he needs! even a liqueur-stand in his bedroom; for you pamper yourself, you live well. You have a château, farms, woods; you go hunting; you travel to Paris. Why, if it were but that," she cried, taking up two cuff-links from the mantelpiece, "even for the least of these trifles, one could get money . . . Oh, I don't want anything from you; you can keep them!"

And she flung the links away with such force that their gold chain broke as it struck against the wall.

"But I! I would have given you everything. I would have sold all, worked for you with my hands, I would have begged on the high-roads for a smile, for a look, to hear you say 'Thank you!' And you sit there quietly in your arm-chair, as if you had not made me suffer enough already! But for you, and you know it, I might have lived happily. What made you do it? Was it a bet? Yet you loved me . . . you said so. And but a moment ago . . . Ah! it would have been better to have driven me away. My hands are hot with your kisses, and there is the spot on the carpet where at my knees you swore an eternity of love! You made me believe you; for two years you held me in the most magnificent, the sweetest dream! . . . Our plans for the journey, do you remember? Oh, your letter! your letter! it tore my heart! And then when I come back to him—to him, rich, happy, free—to implore the help the first stranger would give, a suppliant, and bringing back to him all my tenderness, he repulses me because it could cost him three thousand francs!"

"I haven't got them," replied Rodolphe, with that perfect calm with which resigned rage covers itself as with a shield.

She went out. The walls trembled, the ceiling was crushing her, and she passed back through the long alley, stumbling against the heaps of dead leaves scattered by the wind. At last she reached the

low hedge in front of the gate; she broke her nails against the lock in her haste to open it. Then a hundred paces beyond, breathless, almost falling, she stopped. And now turning round, she once more saw the impassive château, with the park, the gardens, the three courts, and all the windows of the façade.

She remained lost in stupor, and only conscious of herself through the beating of her arteries, that seemed to burst forth like a deafening music filling all the fields. The earth beneath her feet was more yielding than the sea, and the furrows seemed to her immense brown waves breaking into foam. All the memories and ideas that crowded her head seemed to explode at once like a thousand pieces of fireworks. She saw her father, Lheureux's closet, their room at home, another landscape. Madness was coming upon her; she grew afraid, and managed to recover herself, in a confused way, it is true, for she did not remember the cause of her dreadful confusion, namely the money. She suffered only in her love, and felt her soul escaping from her in this memory, as wounded men, dying, feel their life ebb from their bleeding wounds.

Night was falling, crows were flying about.

Suddenly it seemed to her that fiery spheres were exploding in the air like bullets when they strike, and were whirling, whirling, to melt at last upon the snow between the branches of the trees. In the midst of each of them appeared the face of Rodolphe. They multiplied and drew near, they penetrated her. It all disappeared; she recognised the lights of the houses that shone through the fog.

Now her plight, like an abyss, loomed before her. She was panting as if her heart would burst. Then in an ecstasy of heroism, that made her almost joyous, she ran down the hill, crossed the cowplank, the footpath, the alley, the market, and reached the pharmacy. She was about to enter, but at the sound of the bell some one might come, and slipping in by the gate, holding her breath, feeling her way along the walls, she went as far as the door of the kitchen, where a candle was burning on the stove. Justin in his shirt-sleeves was carrying out a dish.

"Ah! they're eating; let's wait."

He returned; she tapped at the window. He came out.

"The key! the one for upstairs where he keeps the . . ."

"What?"

And he looked at her, astonished at the pallor of her face, that stood out white against the black background of the night. She seemed to him extraordinarily beautiful and majestic as a phantom. Without understanding what she wanted, he had the presentiment of something terrible.

But she went on quickly in a low voice that was sweet and melting:
"I want it; give it to me."

As the partition wall was thin, they could hear the clatter of the forks on the plates in the dining-room.

She pretended that she wanted to kill the rats that kept her from sleeping.

"I must go ask Monsieur."

"No, stay!"

Then with a casual air:

"Oh, it's not worth bothering him about, I'll tell him myself later. Come, hold the light for me."

She entered the corridor into which the laboratory door opened. Against the wall was a key labelled *Capharnaïm*.

"Justin!" called the pharmacist, growing impatient.

"Let's go up."

And he followed her. The key turned in the lock, and she went straight to the third shelf, so well did her memory guide her, seized the blue jar, tore out the cork, plunged in her hand, and withdrawing it full of white powder, she ate it greedily.

"Stop!" he cried, throwing himself upon her.

"Quiet! They might hear us . . ."

He was in despair, ready to call out.

"Say nothing, or all the blame will fall on your master."

Then she went home, suddenly calmed, with something of the serenity of one that has done his duty.

When Charles, thunderstruck at the news of the execution, rushed home, Emma had just gone out. He cried aloud, wept, fainted, but she did not return. Where could she be? He sent Félicité to Homais, to Monsieur Tuvache, to Lheureux, to the "Lion d'Or," everywhere, and in between the waves of his anxiety he saw his reputation destroyed, their fortune lost, Berthe's future ruined. By what?—Not a word! He waited till six in the evening. At last, unable to bear it any longer, and fancying she had gone to Rouen, he set out along the highroad, walked a mile, met no one, again waited, and returned home.

She had come back.

"What happened? . . . Why did you? . . . Tell me . . ." She sat down at her writing-table and wrote a letter, which she sealed slowly, adding the date and the hour.

Then she said in a solemn tone:

"You are to read it to-morrow; till then, I beg you, don't ask me a single question. No, not one!"

"But . . ."

"Oh, leave me!"

She lay down full length on her bed.

A bitter taste in her mouth awakened her. She saw Charles, and again closed her eyes.

She was studying herself curiously, to detect the first signs of suffering. But no! nothing as yet. She heard the ticking of the clock, the crackling of the fire, and Charles breathing as he stood upright by her bed.

"Ah! it is but a little thing, death!" she thought. "I shall fall asleep and all will be over."

She drank a mouthful of water and turned her face to the wall. The frightful taste of ink persisted.

"I am thirsty; oh! so thirsty," she sighed.

"What is the matter?" said Charles, who was handing her a glass.

"It's nothing . . . Open the window, I'm choking."

She was seized with a sickness so sudden that she had hardly time to draw out her handkerchief from under the pillow.

"Take it away," she said quickly; "throw it away."

He spoke to her; she did not answer. She lay motionless, afraid that the slightest movement might make her vomit. But she felt an icy cold creeping from her feet to her heart.

"Ah! It's beginning," she murmured.

"What did you say?"

She gently rocked her head to and fro in anguish, opening her jaws as if something very heavy were weighing upon her tongue. At eight o'clock the vomiting began again.

Charles noticed that at the bottom of the basin there was a trace of white sediment sticking to the sides of the porcelain.

"This is extraordinary, very strange!" he repeated.

"No!" she loudly replied, "you are mistaken."

Then gently, almost caressingly, he passed his hand over her stomach. She uttered a sharp cry. He recoiled in terror.

Then she began to moan, faintly at first. Her shoulders were shaken by a strong shudder, and she was growing paler than the sheets in which she buried her clenched fists. Her unequal pulse was now almost imperceptible.

Drops of sweat oozed from her face, that had turned blue and rigid as under the effect of a metallic vapor. Her teeth chattered, her dilated eyes looked vaguely about her, and to all questions she replied only with a shake of the head; she even smiled once or twice. Gradually, her moaning grew louder; she couldn't repress a muffled scream; she pretended she felt better and that she'd soon get up. But she was seized with convulsions and cried out:

"God! It's horrible!"

He threw himself on his knees by her bed.

"Tell me! what have you eaten? Answer, for heaven's sake!"

And he looked at her with a tenderness in his eyes such as she had never seen.

"Well, there . . . there . . ." she said in a faltering voice.

He flew to the writing-table, tore open the seal, and read aloud: "Let no one be blamed . . ." He stopped, passed his hands over his eyes, and read it over again.

"What! . . . Help! Help!"

He could only keep repeating the word: "Poisoned! poisoned!" Félicité ran to Homais, who proclaimed it in the market-place; Madame Lefrançois heard it at the "Lion d'Or"; some got up to go and tell their neighbors, and all night the village was on the alert.

Distracted, stammering, reeling, Charles wandered about the room. He knocked against the furniture, tore his hair, and the pharmacist had never believed that there could be so terrible a sight.

He went home to write to Monsieur Canivet and to Doctor Larivière. His mind kept wandering, he had to start over fifteen times. Hippolyte went to Neufchâtel, and Justin so spurred Bovary's horse that he left it foundered and three parts dead by the hill at Bois-Guillaume.

Charles tried to look up his medical dictionary, but could not read it; the lines were jumping before his eyes.

"Be calm," said the pharmacist; "we must administer a powerful antidote. What is the poison?"

Charles showed him the letter. It was arsenic.

"Very well," said Homais, "we must make an analysis."

For he knew that in cases of poisoning an analysis must be made; and the other, who did not understand, answered:

"Oh, do it! Do anything! Save her . . ."

Then going back to her, he sank upon the carpet, and lay there with his head leaning against the edge of her bed, sobbing.

"Don't cry," she said to him. "Soon I won't trouble you any longer."

"Why did you do it? Who made you?"

She replied:

"There was no other way!"

"Weren't you happy? Is it my fault? But I did the best I could!"

"Yes, that's true . . . you're good, not like the others."

And she slowly passed her hand over his hair. The sweetness of this sensation deepened his sadness; he felt his whole being dissolving in despair at the thought that he must lose her, just when she was confessing more love for him than she ever did. He didn't know what to do, felt paralyzed by fear; the need for an immediate decision took away his last bit of self-control.

Emma thought that, at last, she was through with lying, cheating and with the numberless desires that had tortured her. She hated no one now; a twilight dimness was settling upon her thoughts,

and, of all earthly noises, Emma heard none but the intermittent lamentations of this poor heart, sweet and remote like the echo of a symphony dying away.

"Bring me the child," she said, raising herself on her elbow.

"You're not feeling worse, are you?" asked Charles.

"No, no!"

The child, serious, and still half-asleep, was carried in on the maid's arm in her long white nightgown, from which her bare feet peeped out. She looked wonderingly at the disordered room, and half-closed her eyes, dazzled by the burning candles on the table. They reminded her, no doubt, of the morning of New Year's day and Mid-Lent, when thus awakened early by candlelight she came to her mother's bed to fetch her presents.

"But where is it, mamma?" she asked.

And as everybody was silent, "But I can't see my little stocking."

Félicité held her over the bed while she still kept looking towards the mantelpiece.

"Did nurse take it away?" she asked.

At the mention of this name, that carried her back to the memory of her adulteries and her calamities, Madame Bovary turned away her head, as at the loathing of another bitterer poison that rose to her mouth. But Berthe remained perched on the bed.

"Oh, how big your eyes are, mamma! How pale you are! how you sweat!"

Her mother looked at her.

"I'm frightened!" cried the child, recoiling.

Emma took her hand to kiss it; the child struggled.

"Enough! Take her away!" cried Charles, who was sobbing at the foot of the bed.

Then the symptoms ceased for a moment; she seemed less agitated; and at every insignificant word she spoke, every time she drew breath a little easier, his hopes revived. At last, when Canivet came in, he threw himself into his arms.

"Ah; it's you. Thank you! How good of you to come. But she's better. See! look at her."

His colleague was by no means of this opinion, and "never beating about the bush"—as he put it—he prescribed an emetic in order to empty the stomach completely.

She soon began vomiting blood. Her lips became drawn. Her limbs were convulsed, her whole body covered with brown spots, and her pulse slipped beneath the fingers like a stretched thread, like a harp-string about to break.

After this she began to scream horribly. She cursed the poison, railed at it, and implored it to be quick, and thrust away with her stiffened arms everything that Charles, in more agony than herself,

tried to make her drink. He stood up, his handkerchief to his lips, moaning, weeping, and choked by sobs that shook his whole body. Félicité was running up and down the room. Homais, motionless, uttered great sighs; and Monsieur Canivet, always retaining his self-command, nevertheless began to feel uneasy.

"The devil! yet she has been purged, and since the cause has been removed . . ."

"The effect must cease," said Homais, "that's obvious."

"Oh, save her!" cried Bovary.

And, without listening to the pharmacist, who was still venturing the hypothesis, "It is perhaps a salutary paroxysm," Canivet was about to administer theriaca, when they heard the cracking of a whip; all the windows rattled, and a postchaise drawn by three horses abreast, up to their ears in mud, drove at a gallop round the corner of market. It was Doctor Larivière.

The apparition of a god would not have caused more commotion. Bovary raised his hands; Canivet stopped short; and Homais pulled off his cap long before the doctor had come in.

He belonged to that great school of surgeons created by Bichat, to that generation, now extinct, of philosophical practitioners, who, cherishing their art with a fanatical love, exercised it with enthusiasm and wisdom. Every one in his hospital trembled when he was angry: and his students so revered him that they tried, as soon as they were themselves in practice, to imitate him as much as possible. They could be found in all the neighboring towns wearing exactly the same merino overcoat and black frock. The doctor's buttoned cuffs slightly covered his fleshly hands—very beautiful hands, never covered by gloves, as though to be more ready to plunge into suffering. Disdainful of honors, of titles, and of academies, hospitable, generous, fatherly to the poor, and practising virtue without believing in it, he would almost have passed for a saint if the keenness of his intellect had not caused him to be feared as a demon. His glance, more penetrating than his scalpels, looked straight into your soul, and would detect any lie, regardless how well hidden. He went through life with the benign dignity that goes with the assurance of talent and wealth, with forty years of a hard-working, blameless life.

He frowned as soon as he had passed the door when he saw the cadaverous face of Emma stretched out on her back with her mouth open. Then, while apparently listening to Canivet, he rubbed his fingers up and down beneath his nostrils, repeating:

"I see, yes, yes . . ."

But he slowly shrugged his shoulders. Bovary watched him; they looked at one another; and this man, accustomed as he was to the sight of pain, could not keep back a tear that fell on his shirt front.

He tried to take Canivet into the next room. Charles followed him.

"She is sinking, isn't she? If we put on poultices? Anything! Oh, think of something, you who have saved so many!"

Charles put both arms around him, and looked at him in anxious supplication, half-fainting against his breast.

"Come, my poor boy, courage! There is nothing more to be done."

And Doctor Larivière turned away.

"You are leaving?"

"I'll be back."

He went out as if to give an order to the coachman, followed by Canivet, who was equally glad to escape from the spectacle of Emma dying.

The pharmacist caught up with them on the Square. He could not by temperament keep away from celebrities, so he begged Monsieur Larivière to do him the signal honor of staying for lunch.

He sent quickly to the "Lion d'Or" for some pigeons; to the butcher's for all the cutlets that could be found; to Tuvache for cream; and to Lestiboudois for eggs; and Homais himself aided in the preparations, while Madame Homais was saying as she tightened her apron-strings:

"I hope you'll forgive us, sir, for in this village, if one is caught unawares . . ."

"Stemmed glasses!" whispered Homais.

"If only we were in the city, I'd be able to find stuffed pig's feet . . ."

"Be quiet . . . Please doctor, à table!"

He thought fit, after the first few mouthfuls, to supply some details about the catastrophe.

"We first had a feeling of siccidity in the pharynx, then intolerable pains at the epigastrium, super-purgation, coma."

"But how did she poison herself?"

"I don't know, doctor, and I don't even know where she can have procured the arsenious acid."

Justin, who was just bringing in a pile of plates, began to tremble.

"What's the matter?" said the pharmacist.

At this question the young man dropped the whole lot on the floor with a dreadful crash.

"Imbecile!" cried Homais, "clumsy lout! blockhead! confounded ass!"

But suddenly controlling himself:

"I wished, doctor, to make an analysis, and *primo* I delicately introduced a tube . . ."

"You would have done better," said the physician, "to introduce your fingers into her throat."

His colleague was silent, having just before privately received a severe lecture about his emetic, so that this good Canivet, so arrogant and so verbose at the time of the club-foot, was to-day very modest. He smiled an incessantly approving smile.

Homais dilated in Amphitryonic⁹ pride, and the affecting thought of Bovary vaguely contributed to his pleasure by a kind of selfish comparison with his own lot. Moreover, the presence of the surgeon exalted him. He displayed his erudition, spoke effusively about cantharides, upas, the manchineel, adder bites.

"I have even read that various persons have found themselves under toxicological symptoms, and, as it were, paralyzed by blood sausage that had been too strongly smoked. At least, this was stated in a very fine paper prepared by one of our pharmaceutical authorities, one of our masters, the illustrious Cadet de Gassicourt!"

Madame Homais reappeared, carrying one of those shaky machines that are heated with spirits of wine; for Homais liked to make his coffee at the table, having, moreover, torrefied it, pulverised it, and mixed it himself.

"*Saccharum*, doctor?" he said, offering sugar.

Then he had all his children brought down, anxious to have the physician's opinion on their constitutions.

At last Monsieur Larivière was about to leave, when Madame Homais asked for a consultation about her husband. He was making his blood too thick by falling asleep every evening after dinner.

"Oh, it isn't his blood I'd call too thick," said the physician.

And, smiling a little at his unnoticed joke, the doctor opened the door. But the shop was full of people; he had the greatest difficulty in getting rid of Monsieur Tuvache, who feared his wife would get pneumonia because she was in the habit of spitting on the ashes; then of Monsieur Binet, who sometimes experienced sudden attacks of great hunger; and of Madame Caron, who suffered from pricking sensations; of Lheureux, who had dizzy spells; of Lestiboudois, who had rheumatism; and of Madame Lefrançois, who had heartburn. At last the three horses started; and it was the general opinion that he had not shown himself at all obliging.

Public attention was distracted by the appearance of Monsieur Bournisien, who was going across the square carrying the holy oil.

Homais, as was due to his principles, compared priests to ravens attracted by the smell of death. The sight of an ecclesiastic was personally disagreeable to him, for the cassock made him think of

9. "Amphitryonic" is used to indicate a good host, a usage derived from the play *Amphitryon* by Moliere. Flaubert here contrasts the horror of Emma's situation with Homais's fatuous pride in his hospitality.

the shroud, and his dislike of the one matched his fear of the other.

Nevertheless, not shrinking from what he called his "Mission," he returned to Bovary's house with Canivet, who had been strongly urged by Dr. Larivière to make this call; and he would, but for his wife's objections, have taken his two sons with him, in order to accustom them to great occasions; that this might be a lesson, an example, a solemn picture, that should remain in their heads later on.

The room when they went in was full of mournful solemnity. On the work-table, covered over with a white cloth, there were five or six small balls of cotton in a silver dish, near a large crucifix between two lighted candles.

Emma, her chin sunken upon her breast, had her eyes inordinately wide open, and her poor hands wandered over the sheets with that hideous and gentle movement of the dying, that seems as if they already wanted to cover themselves with the shroud. Pale as a statue and with eyes red as fire, Charles, beyond weeping, stood opposite her at the foot of the bed, while the priest, bending one knee, was muttering in a low voice.

She turned her face slowly, and seemed filled with joy on suddenly seeing the violet stole. She was doubtlessly reminded, in this moment of sudden serenity, of the lost bliss of her first mystical flights, mingling with the visions of eternal beatitude that were beginning.

The priest rose to take the crucifix; then she stretched forward her neck like one suffering from thirst, and glueing her lips to the body of the Man-God, she pressed upon it with all her expiring strength the fullest kiss of love that she had ever given. Then he recited the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*, dipped his right thumb in the oil, and began to give extreme unction. First, upon the eyes, that had so coveted all wordly goods; then upon the nostrils, that had been so greedy of the warm breeze and the scents of love; then upon the mouth, that had spoken lies, moaned in pride and cried out in lust; then upon the hands that had taken delight in the texture of sensuality; and finally upon the soles of the feet, so swift when she had hastened to satisfy her desires, and that would now walk no more.

The curé wiped his fingers, threw the bit of oil-stained cotton into the fire, and came and sat down by the dying woman, to tell her that she must now blend her sufferings with those of Jesus Christ and abandon herself to the divine mercy.

Finishing his exhortations, he tried to place in her hand a blessed candle, symbol of the celestial glory with which she was soon to be surrounded. Emma, too weak, could not close her fingers, and if it hadn't been for Monsieur Bournisien, the taper would have fallen to the ground.

Yet she was no longer quite so pale, and her face had an expression of serenity as if the sacrament had cured her.

The priest did not fail to point this out; he even explained to Bovary that the Lord sometimes prolonged the life of persons when he thought it useful for their salvation; and Charles remembered the day when, so near death, she had received communion. Perhaps there was no need to despair, he thought.

In fact, she looked around her slowly, as one awakening from a dream; then in a distinct voice she asked for her mirror, and remained bent over it for some time, until big tears fell from her eyes. Then she turned away her head with a sigh and fell back upon the pillows.

Her chest soon began heaving rapidly; the whole of her tongue protruded from her mouth; her eyes, as they rolled, grew paler, like the two globes of a lamp that is going out, so that one might have thought her already dead but for the fearful labouring of her ribs, shaken by violent breathing, as if the soul were struggling to free itself. Félicité knelt down before the crucifix, and the pharmacist himself slightly bent his knees, while Monsieur Canivet looked out vaguely at the Square. Bournisien had resumed his praying, his face bowed against the edge of the bed, his long black cassock trailing behind him in the room. Charles was on the other side, on his knees, his arms outstretched towards Emma. He had taken her hands and pressed them, shuddering at every heartbeat, as at the tremors of a falling ruin. As the death-rattle became stronger the priest prayed faster; his prayers mingled with Bovary's stifled sobs, and sometimes all seemed lost in the muffled murmur of the Latin syllables that sounded like a tolling bell.

Suddenly from the pavement outside came the loud noise of wooden shoes and the clattering of a stick; and a voice rose—a raucous voice—that sang

Often the heat of a summer's day
Makes a young girl dream her heart away.

Emma raised herself like a galvanised corpse, her hair streaming, her eyes fixed, staring.

To gather up all the new-cut stalks
Of wheat left by the scythe's cold swing.
Nanette bends over as she walks
Toward the furrows from where they spring.

"The blind man!" she cried.

And Emma began to laugh, an atrocious, frantic, desperate laugh, thinking she saw the hideous face of the poor wretch loom out of the eternal darkness like a menace.

The wind blew very hard that day
It blew her petticoat away.

A final spasm threw her back upon the mattress. They all drew near. She had ceased to exist.

IX

Someone's death always causes a kind of stupefaction; so difficult it is to grasp this advent of nothingness and to resign ourselves to the fact that it has actually taken place. But still, when he saw that she did not move, Charles flung himself upon her, crying:

"Farewell! farewell!"

Homais and Canivet dragged him from the room.

"Control yourself!"

"Yes," he said, struggling, "I'll be quiet. I won't do anything. But let me stay. I want to see her. She is my wife!"

And he wept.

"Cry," said the pharmacist; "let nature take its course; that will relieve you."

Weaker than a child, Charles let himself be led downstairs into the sitting-room, and Monsieur Homais soon went home. On the Square he was accosted by the blind man, who, having dragged himself as far as Yonville in the hope of getting the antiphlogistic salve, was asking every passer-by where the pharmacist lived.

"Good heavens, man, as if I didn't have other fish to fry! I can't help it, but you'll have to come back later."

And he hurried into the shop.

He had to write two letters, to prepare a soothing potion for Bovary, to invent some lie that would conceal the poisoning, and work it up into an article for the *Fanal*, without counting the people who were waiting to get the news from him; and when the Yonvillers had all heard his story of the arsenic that she had mistaken for sugar in making a vanilla cream, Homais once more returned to Bovary's.

He found him alone (Monsieur Canivet had left), sitting in an arm-chair near the window, staring with a vacant look at the stone floor.

"Well," Homais said, "you ought yourself to fix the hour for the ceremony."

"Why? What ceremony?"

Then, in a stammering, frightened voice:

"Oh, no! not that. No! I want to keep her here."

Homais, to save face, took up a pitcher from the whatnot to water the geraniums.

"Ah! thank you," said Charles; "how kind of you!"

But he did not finish, choked by the flow of memories that Homais' action had released in him.

Then to distract him, Homais thought fit to talk a little about horticulture: plants wanted moisture. Charles bowed his head in approval.

"Besides, we'll soon be having fine weather again."

"Ah!" said Bovary.

The pharmacist, at his wit's end, gently drew aside the small window-curtain.

"Look! there's Monsieur Tuvache passing by."

Charles repeated mechanically:

"Monsieur Tuvache passing by!"

Homais did not dare to bring up the funeral arrangements again; it was the priest who finally convinced him of the necessity to bury Emma.

He shut himself up in his consulting-room, took a pen, and after sobbing for some time, wrote:

"I wish her to be buried in her wedding dress, with white shoes, and a wreath. Her hair is to be spread out over her shoulders. Three coffins, one oak, one mahogany, one of lead. Let no one try to overrule me; I shall have the strength to resist him. She is to be covered with a large piece of green velvet. This is my wish; see that it is done."

The two men were much taken aback by Bovary's romantic ideas. The pharmacist was first to remonstrate with him:

"This velvet seems excessive to me. Besides, think of the expense . . ."

"What's that to you?" cried Charles. "Leave me alone! You didn't love her. Go away!"

The priest took him by the arm for a walk in the garden. He discoursed on the vanity of earthly things. God was very great, very good: one must submit to his decrees without a murmur, even learn to be grateful for one's suffering.

Charles burst into blasphemy:

"I hate your God!"

"The spirit of rebellion is still upon you," sighed the priest.

Bovary was far away. He was striding along by the wall, near the espalier, and he ground his teeth; he raised to heaven looks of malediction, but not so much as a leaf stirred.

A fine rain was falling; Charles, whose chest was bare, at last began to shiver; he went in and sat down in the kitchen.

At six o'clock a noise like a clatter of old iron was heard on the square; it was the *Hirondelle* coming in, and he remained with his forehead pressed against the window-pane, watching all the pas-

sengers get out, one after the other. Félicité put down a mattress for him in the drawing-room. He threw himself upon it and fell asleep.

Although a philosopher, Monsieur Homais respected the dead. So bearing poor Charles no grudge, he returned in the evening to sit up with the body, bringing with him three books and a writing pad for taking notes.

Monsieur Bournisien was there, and two large candles were burning at the head of the bed, which had been taken out of the alcove.

The pharmacist, unable to keep silent, soon began to express some regrets about this "unfortunate young woman," and the priest replied that there was nothing to do now but pray for her.

"Still," Homais insisted, "it is one of two things; either she died in a state of grace (as the Church calls it), and then she doesn't need our prayers; or else she died unrepentant (that is, I believe, the correct technical term), and then . . ."

Bournisien interrupted him, replying testily that it was none the less necessary to pray.

"But," the pharmacist objected, "since God knows all our needs, what can be the good of prayer?"

"What!" the priest exclaimed, "of prayer? Why, aren't you a Christian?"

"I beg your pardon," said Homais; "I admire Christianity. It freed the slaves, brought morality into the world . . ."

"That isn't the point. Look at the texts . . ."

"Oh! oh! As to texts, look at history; everybody knows that the Jesuits have falsified all the texts!"

Charles came in, and advancing towards the bed, slowly drew the curtains.

Emma's head was turned towards her right shoulder, the corner of her mouth, which was open, seemed like a black hole at the lower part of her face; her two thumbs were bent into the palms of her hands; a kind of white dust besprinkled her lashes, and her eyes were beginning to disappear in a viscous pallor, as if covered by a spiderweb. The sheet sunk in from her breast to her knees, and then rose at the tips of her toes, and it seemed to Charles that infinite masses, an enormous load, were weighing upon her.

The church clock struck two. They could hear the loud murmur of the river flowing in the darkness at the foot of the terrace. Monsieur Bournisien noisily blew his nose from time to time, and Homais' pen was scratching over the paper.

"Come, my good friend," he said, "don't stay here; the sight is too much for you."

When Charles had left, the pharmacist and the priest resumed their argument.

"Read Voltaire," said the one, "read d'Holbach, read the *Encyclopédie!*"¹

"Read the 'Letters of Some Portuguese Jews,'" said the other; "read 'The Meaning of Christianity,' by the former magistrate Nicolas."

They grew warm, they grew red, they both talked at once without listening to each other. Bournisien was scandalised at such audacity; Homais marvelled at such stupidity; and they were about to come to blows when Charles suddenly reappeared. He couldn't resist coming upstairs as though he were spellbound.

He stood at the foot of the bed to see her better, and he lost himself in a contemplation so deep that it was no longer painful.

He recalled stories of catalepsy, the marvels of magnetism, and he said to himself that by willing it with all his force he might perhaps succeed in reviving her. Once he even bent towards her, and cried in a low voice, "Emma! Emma!" His strong breathing made the flames of the candles tremble against the wall.

At daybreak the elder Madame Bovary arrived. As he embraced her, Charles burst into another flood of tears. She tried, as the pharmacist had done, to remonstrate with him on the expenses for the funeral. He became so angry that she was silent, and he even commissioned her to go to town at once and buy what was necessary.

Charles remained alone the whole afternoon; they had taken Berthe to Madame Homais'; Félicité was in the room upstairs with Madame Lefrançois.

In the evening he had some visitors. He rose and shook hands with them, unable to speak. Then they sat down together, and formed a large semicircle in front of the fire. With lowered head, they crossed and uncrossed their legs, and uttered from time to time a deep sigh. They were bored to tears, yet none would be the first to go.

Homais, when he returned at nine o'clock (for the last two days Homais seemed to have made the public square his residence), was laden with a supply of camphor, benzoin and aromatic herbs. He also carried a large jar full of chlorine water, to keep off the miasma. Just then the servant, Madame Lefrançois and the elder Madame Bovary were busy getting Emma dressed, and they were drawing down the long stiff veil that covered her to her satin shoes.

1. Paul-Henri Dietrich, baron d' Holbach (1723–1789), friend and disciple of Diderot, was one of the most outspoken opponents of religion in the French Enlightenment. The *Encyclopédie*, a dictionary of the sciences, arts and letters, edited by Diderot and d'Alembert (1751–1752) is the intellectual monument of the French Enlightenment.

Félicité was sobbing:

"Oh, my poor mistress! my poor mistress!"

"Look at her," said the innkeeper, sighing; "how pretty she still is! Now, couldn't you swear she was going to get up in a minute?"

Then they bent over her to put on her wreath. They had to raise the head a little, and a rush of black liquid poured from her mouth, as if she were vomiting.

"Heavens! Watch out for her dress!" cried Madame Lefrançois. "Now, just come and help us," she said to the pharmacist, "or are you afraid?"

"Afraid?" he replied, "I? As if I hadn't seen a lot worse when I was a student at the Hotel-Dieu. We used to make punch in the dissecting room! Nothingness does not frighten a philosopher; I have often said that I intend to leave my body to the hospitals, to serve the cause of science."

On arriving, the curé inquired after Monsieur Bovary and, at Homais' reply, he said:

"Of course, the blow is still too recent."

Then Homais congratulated him on not being exposed, like other people, to the loss of a beloved companion; this led to a discussion on the celibacy of priests.

"You must admit," said the pharmacist, "that it is against nature for a man to do without women. There have been crimes . . ."

"For Heaven's sake!" exclaimed the priest, "how do you expect an individual who is married to keep the secrets of the confessional, for example?"

Homais attacked confession. Bournisien defended it; he discoursed on the acts of restitution that it brought about. He cited various anecdotes about thieves who had suddenly become honest. Military men on approaching the tribunal of penitence had finally seen the light. At Fribourg there was a minister . . .

His companion had fallen asleep. Then he felt somewhat stifled by the over-heavy atmosphere of the room; he opened the window; this awoke the pharmacist.

"Come, take a pinch of snuff," he told him. "Take it, it'll do you good."

A continual barking was heard in the distance.

"Do you hear that dog howling?" said the pharmacist.

"They smell the dead," replied the priest. "It's like bees; they leave their hives when there is a death in the neighborhood."

Homais failed to object to these prejudices, for he had again dropped asleep. Monsieur Bournisien, stronger than he, went on moving his lips and muttering for some time, then insensibly his chin sank down, he dropped his big black book, and began to snore.

They sat opposite one another, with bulging stomachs, puffed-up faces, and frowning looks, after so much disagreement uniting at last in the same human weakness, and they moved no more than the corpse by their side, that also seemed to be sleeping.

Charles coming in did not wake them. It was the last time; he came to bid her farewell.

The aromatic herbs were still smoking, and spirals of bluish vapour blended at the window with the entering fog. There were few stars, and the night was warm.

The wax of the candles fell in great drops upon the sheets of the bed. Charles watched them burn, straining his eyes in the glare of their yellow flame.

The watered satin of her gown shimmered white as moonlight. Emma was lost beneath it; and it seemed to him that, spreading beyond her own self, she blended confusedly with everything around her—the silence, the night, the passing wind, the damp odors rising from the ground.

Then suddenly he saw her in the garden at Tostes, on a bench against the thorn hedge, or else at Rouen in the streets, on the threshold of their house, in the yard at Bertaux. He again heard the laughter of the happy boys dancing under the appletrees: the room was filled with the perfume of her hair; and her dress rustled in his arms with a crackling noise. It was the same dress she was wearing now!

For a long while he thus recalled all his lost joys, her attitudes, her movements, the sound of her voice. Wave upon wave of despair came over him, like the tides of an overflowing sea.

He was seized by a terrible curiosity. Slowly, with the tips of his fingers, his heart pounding, he lifted her veil. But he uttered a cry of horror that awoke the other two.

They dragged him down into the sitting-room. Then Félicité came up to say that he wanted some of her hair.

“Cut some off,” replied the pharmacist.

And as she did not dare to, he himself stepped forward, scissors in hand. He trembled so that he nicked the skin of the temple in several places. At last, stiffening himself against emotion, Homais gave two or three great cuts at random that left white patches amongst that beautiful black hair.

The pharmacist and the curé resumed their original occupations, not without time and again falling asleep—something of which they accused each other whenever they awoke. Monsieur Bour-nisien sprinkled the room with holy water and Homais threw a little chlorine on the floor.

Félicité had been so considerate as to put on the chest of draw-

ers, for each of them, a bottle of brandy, some cheese, and a large brioche, and about four o'clock in the morning, unable to restrain himself any longer, the pharmacist sighed:

"I must say that I wouldn't mind taking some sustenance."

The priest did not need any persuading; he left to say mass and, upon his return, they ate and drank, chuckling a little without knowing why, stimulated by that vague gaiety that comes upon us after times of sadness. At the last glass the priest said to the pharmacist, as he clapped him on the shoulder:

"We'll end up good friends, you and I."

In the passage downstairs they met the undertaker's men, who were coming in. Then for two hours Charles had to suffer the torture of hearing the hammer resound against the wood. Next day they lowered her into her oak coffin, that was fitted into the other two; but as the bier was too large, they had to fill up the gaps with the wool of a mattress. At last, when the three lids had been planed down, nailed, soldered, it was placed outside in front of the door; the house was thrown open, and the people of Yonville began to flock round.

Old Rouault arrived, and fainted on the square at the sight of the black cloth.

X

He had only received Homais' letter thirty-six hours after the event; and, to cushion the blow, he had worded it in such a manner that it was impossible to make out just what had happened.

First, the old man had been shaken as if struck by apoplexy. Next, he understood that she was not dead, but she might be . . . At last, he had put on his smock, taken his hat, fastened his spurs to his boots, and set out at full speed; and the whole of the way old Rouault, panting, had been devoured by anxiety. He felt so dizzy that he was forced to dismount. He fancied he heard voices around him and thought he was losing his mind.

Day broke. He saw three black hens asleep in a tree. He shuddered, horrified at this omen. Then he promised the Holy Virgin three chasubles for the church, and vowed that he would go barefooted from the cemetery at Bertaux to the chapel of Vassonville.

He entered Maromme calling out ahead at the people of the inn, burst open the door with a thrust of his shoulder, made for a sack of oats and emptied a bottle of sweet cider into the manger; then he remounted his nag, whose feet struck sparks as it galloped along.

He told himself that they would certainly save her; the doctors were bound to discover a remedy. He remembered all the miraculous cures he had been told about.

Then she appeared to him dead: She was there, before his eyes, lying on her back in the middle of the road. He reined in his horse, and the hallucination disappeared.

At Quincampoix, to give himself heart, he drank three cups of coffee one after the other.

He imagined that they had written the wrong name on the letter. He looked for the letter in his pocket, felt it there, but did not dare to open it.

At last he began to think it was all a bad joke, a spiteful farce, somebody's idea of a fine prank; besides, if she were dead, he would have known. It couldn't be! the countryside looked as usual: the sky was blue, the trees swayed; a flock of sheep passed by. He reached the village; they saw him coming, hunched over his horse, whipping it savagely till its saddle-girths dripped with blood.

When he recovered consciousness, he fell, weeping, into Bovary's arms:

"My daughter! Emma! my child! tell me . . ."

The other replied between sobs:

"I don't know! I don't know! It's a curse!"

The pharmacist pulled them apart.

"Spare him the horrible details. I'll tell monsieur all about it. People are coming, show some dignity, for heaven's sake! Let's behave like philosophers."

Poor Charles tried as hard as he could, and repeated several times:

"Yes, be brave . . ."

"Damn it, I'll be brave," cried the old man, "I'll stay with her till the end!"

The bell was tolling. All was ready; they had to start.

Seated together in a stall of the choir, they saw the three chanting choristers continually pass and repass in front of them. The serpent-player² was blowing with all his might. Monsieur Bour-nisien, in full regalia, was singing in a shrill voice. He bowed before the tabernacle, raising his hands, stretched out his arms. Lestiboudois went about the church with his verger's staff. The bier stood near the lectern, between four rows of candles. Charles felt an urge to get up and put them out.

Yet he tried to stir into himself the proper devotional feelings, to throw himself into the hope of a future life in which he would see her again. He tried to convince himself that she had gone on a long journey, far away, for a long time. But when he thought of her lying there, and that it was all over and that they would put her in the earth, he was seized with a fierce, gloomy, desperate rage. It seemed

2. The serpent was a serpentine-shaped wind instrument made of leather-covered wood.

at times that he felt nothing, and he welcomed this lull in his pain, while blaming himself bitterly for being such a scoundrel.

The sharp noise of an iron-tipped stick was heard on the stones, striking them at irregular intervals. It came from the end of the church, and stopped short at the lower aisles. A man in a coarse brown jacket knelt down painfully. It was Hippolyte, the stable-boy at the "Lion d'Or." He had put on his new leg.

One of the choir boys came round the nave taking collection, and the coppers chinked one after the other on the silver plate.

"Oh hurry up!" cried Bovary, angrily throwing him a five-franc piece. "I can't stand it any longer."

The singer thanked him with a deep bow.

They sang, they knelt, they stood up; it was endless! He remembered how once, in the early days of their marriage, they had been to mass together, and they had sat down on the other side, on the right, by the wall. The bell began again. There was a great shuffling of chairs; the pall bearers slipped their three poles under the coffin, and every one left the church.

Then Justin appeared in the doorway of the pharmacy, but retreated suddenly, pale and staggering.

People stood at the windows to see the procession pass by. Charles walked first, as straight as he could. He tried to look brave and nodded to those who joined the crowd, coming from the side streets or from the open doors. The six men, three on either side, walked slowly, panting a little. The priests, the choristers, and the two choir-boys recited the *De profundis*, and their voices echoed over the fields, rising and falling with the shape of the hills. Sometimes they disappeared in the windings of the path; but the great silver cross always remained visible among the trees.

The women followed, wearing black coats with turned-down hoods; each of them carried a large lighted candle, and Charles felt himself grow faint at this continual repetition of prayers and torch-lights, oppressed by the sweetish smell of wax and of cassocks. A fresh breeze was blowing; the rye and colza were turning green and along the roadside, dewdrops hung from the hawthorn hedges. All sorts of joyous sounds filled the air; the jolting of a cart rolling way off in the ruts, the crowing of a cock, repeated again and again, or the gamboling of a foal under the apple-trees. The pure sky was dappled with rosy clouds; a blueish haze hung over the iris-covered cottages. Charles recognized each courtyard as he passed. He remembered mornings like this, when, after visiting a patient, he left one of those houses to return home, to his wife.

The black cloth decorated with silver tears, flapped from time to time in the wind, baring the coffin underneath. The tired bearers

walked more slowly, and the bier advanced jerkily, like a boat that pitches with every wave.

They reached the cemetery.

The men went right down to a place in the grass where a grave had been dug. They grouped themselves all round; and while the priest spoke, the red soil thrown up at the sides kept noiselessly slipping down at the corners.

Then, when the four ropes were laid out, the coffin was pushed onto them. He watched it go down; it seemed to go down forever.

At last a thud was heard; the ropes creaked and were drawn up. Then Bournisien took the spade handed to him by Lestibouois; while his right hand kept sprinkling holy water, he vigorously threw in a spadeful of earth with the left; and the wood of the coffin, struck by the pebbles, gave forth that dread sound that seems to us the reverberation of eternity.

The priest passed the holy water sprinkler to his neighbor, Monsieur Homais. The pharmacist swung it gravely, then handed it to Charles, who sank to his knees and threw in handfuls of earth, crying, "Adieu!" He sent her kisses; he dragged himself towards the grave, as if to engulf himself with her.

They led him away, and he soon grew calmer, feeling perhaps, like the others, a vague satisfaction that it was all over.

Old Rouault on his way back began quietly smoking a pipe, to Homais' silent disapproval. He also noticed that Monsieur Binet had not come, that Tuvache had disappeared after mass, and that Theodore, the notary's servant, wore a blue coat—"as if he couldn't respect customs, and wear a black coat, for Heaven's sake!" And to share his observations with others he went from group to group. They were deploring Emma's death, especially Lheureux, who had not failed to come to the funeral.

"Poor little lady! What a blow for her husband!"

"Can you imagine," the pharmacist replied, "that he would have done away with himself if I hadn't intervened?"

"Such a fine person! To think that I saw her only last Saturday in my store."

"I haven't had leisure," said Homais, "to prepare a few words that I would cast over her tomb."

On getting home, Charles undressed, and old Rouault put on his blue smock. It was new, and as he had repeatedly wiped his eyes on the sleeves during his journey, the dye had stained his face, and traces of tears lined the layer of dust that covered it.

Mother Bovary joined them. All three were silent. At last the old man sighed:

"Do you remember, my friend, I came to Tostes once when you

had just lost your first deceased? I consoled you that time. I could think of something to say then, but now . . .”

Then, with a loud groan that shook his whole chest, “Ah! this is the end for me! I saw my wife go . . . then my son . . . and now today my daughter!”

He wanted to go back at once to Bertaux, saying that he couldn't sleep in this house. He even refused to see his grand-daughter.

“No, no! It would grieve me too much. You'll kiss her many times for me. Good bye . . . You're a good man! And I'll never forget this,” he said, slapping his thigh. “Never fear, you shall always have your turkey.”

But when he reached the top of the hill he turned back, as he had turned once before on the road of Saint-Victor when he had parted from her. The windows of the village were all ablaze in the slanting rays of the sun that was setting behind the meadow. He put his hand over his eyes, and saw at the horizon a walled enclosure, with black clusters of trees among the white stones; then he went on his way at a gentle trot, for his nag was limping.

Despite their fatigue, Charles and his mother stayed up talking very long that evening. They spoke of the days of the past and of the future. She would come to live at Yonville; she would keep house for him; they would never part again. She was subtly affectionate, rejoicing in her heart at regaining some of the tenderness that had wandered from her for so many years. Midnight struck. The village was silent as usual, and Charles lay awake, never ceasing to think of her.

Rodolphe, who, to distract himself, had been roaming in the woods all day, was quietly asleep in his château; and Léon, away in the city, also slept.

There was another who at that hour was not asleep.

On the grave between the pine-trees a child was on his knees weeping, and his heart, rent by sobs, was panting in the dark under the weight of an immense sorrow, tender as the moon and unfathomable as the night.

The gate suddenly grated. It was Lestiboudois coming to fetch the spade he had forgotten. He recognized Justin climbing over the wall, and knew at last who had been stealing his potatoes.

XI

The next day Charles had the child brought back. She asked for her mamma. They told her she was away; that she would bring her back some toys. Berthe mentioned her again several times, then finally forgot her. The child's gaiety broke Bovary's heart, and he had to put up besides with the intolerable consolations of the pharmacist.

Before long, money troubles started again. Monsieur Lheureux was putting his friend Vinçart back on the warpath, and before long Charles was signing notes for exorbitant amounts. For he would never consent to let the smallest of the things that had belonged to *her* be sold. His mother was exasperated with him; he grew even more angry than she did. He was a changed man. She left the house.

Then every one began to collect what they could. Mademoiselle Lempereur presented a bill for six months' teaching, although Emma had never taken a lesson (despite the receipted bill she had shown Bovary); it was an arrangement between the two women. The lending library demanded three years' subscriptions; Mère Rollet claimed postage for some twenty letters, and when Charles asked for an explanation, she was tactful enough to reply:

"Oh, I know nothing about it. It was her business."

With every debt he paid Charles thought he had reached the end. But others followed ceaselessly.

He tried to collect accounts due him from patients. He was shown the letters his wife had written. Then he had to apologize.

Félicité now wore Madame Bovary's dresses; not all, for he had kept some, and he locked himself up in Emma's room to look at them. Félicité was about her former mistress's height and often, on seeing her from behind, Charles thought she had come back and cried out:

"Oh, stay, don't go away!"

But at Pentecost she ran away from Yonville, carried off by Theodore, stealing all that was left of the wardrobe.

It was about this time that the widow Dupuis had the honor to inform him of the "marriage of Monsieur Léon Dupuis her son, notary at Yvetot, to Mademoiselle Léocadié Lebœuf Bondeville." Charles, among the other congratulations he sent him, wrote this sentence:

"How happy this would have made my poor wife!"

One day when, wandering aimlessly about the house, he had gone up to the attic, he felt a crumpled piece of paper under his slipper. He opened it and read: "Courage, Emma, courage. I would not bring misery into your life." It was Rodolphe's letter, fallen to the ground between the boxes, where it had remained till now, when the wind from the open dormer had blown it toward the door. And Charles stood, motionless and staring, in the very same place where, long ago, Emma, in despair, and paler even than he had thought of dying. At last he discovered a small R at the bottom of the second page. What did this mean? He remembered Rodolphe's attentions, his sudden disappearance, his embarrassed air on two or three subsequent occasions. But the respectful tone of the letter deceived him.

"Perhaps they loved one another platonically," he told himself.

Besides, Charles was not of those who go to the root of things; he shrank from the proofs, and his vague jealousy was lost in the immensity of his sorrow.

Every one, he thought, must have adored her; all men inevitably must have coveted her. This made her seem even more beautiful, and it awoke in him a fierce and persistent desire, which inflamed his despair and grew boundless, since it could never be assuaged.

To please her, as if she were still living, he adopted her taste, her ideas; he bought patent leather boots and took to wearing white cravats. He waxed his moustache and, just like her, signed promissory notes. She corrupted him from beyond the grave.

He was obliged to sell his silver piece by piece; next he sold the drawing-room furniture. All the rooms were stripped; but the bedroom, her own room, remained as before. After his dinner Charles went up there. He pushed the round table in front of the fire, and drew up *her* arm-chair. He sat down facing it. A candle burnt in one of the gilt candlesticks. Berthe, at his side, colored pictures.

He suffered, poor man, at seeing her so badly dressed, with laceless boots, and the arm-holes of her pinafore torn down to the hips; for the cleaning woman took no care of her. But she was so sweet, so pretty, and her little head bent forward so gracefully, letting her fair hair fall over her rosy cheeks, that an infinite joy came upon him, a happiness mingled with bitterness, like those ill-made wines that taste of resin. He mended her toys, made her puppets from cardboard, or sewed up half-torn dolls. Then, if his eyes fell upon the sewing kit, a ribbon lying about, or even a pin left in a crack of the table, he began to dream, and looked so sad that she became as sad as he.

No one now came to see them, for Justin had run away to Rouen, where he worked in a grocery, and the pharmacist's children saw less and less of the child. In view of the difference in their social positions, Monsieur Homais had chosen to discontinue the former intimacy.

The blind man, whom his salve had not cured, had gone back to the hill of Bois-Guillaume, where he told the travellers of his failure, to such an extent, that Homais when he went to town hid himself behind the curtains of the *Hirondelle* to avoid meeting him. He detested him, and wishing, in the interests of his own reputation, to get rid of him at all costs, he directed against him a secret campaign, that betrayed the depth of his intellect and the baseness of his vanity. Thus, for six consecutive months, one could read in the *Fanal de Rouen* editorials such as these:

"Anyone who has ever wended his way towards the fertile plains of Picardy has, no doubt, remarked, by the Bois-Guillaume hill, an

unfortunate wretch suffering from a horrible facial wound. He bothers the passers by, pursues them and levies a regular tax on all travellers. Are we still living in the monstrous times of the Middle Ages, when vagabonds were permitted to display in our public places leprosy and scrofulas they had brought back from the Crusades?"

Or:

"In spite of the laws against vagrancy, the approaches to our great towns continue to be infected by bands of beggars. Some are seen going about alone, and these are, by no means, the least dangerous. Why don't our city authorities intervene?"

Then Homais invented incidents:

"Yesterday, by the Bois-Guillaume hill, a skittish horse . . ." And then followed the story of an accident caused by the presence of the blind man.

He managed so well that the fellow was locked up. But he was released. He began again, and so did Homais. It was a struggle. Homais won out, for his foe was condemned to lifelong confinement in an asylum.

This success emboldened him, and henceforth there was no longer a dog run over, a barn burnt down, a woman beaten in the parish, of which he did not immediately inform the public, guided always by the love of progress and the hate of priests. He instituted comparisons between the public and parochial schools to the detriment of the latter; called to mind the massacre of St. Bartholomew³ *à propos* of a grant of one hundred francs to the church; denounced abuses and kept people on their toes. That was his phrase. Homais was digging and delving; he was becoming dangerous.

However, he was stifling in the narrow limits of journalism, and soon a book, a major work, became a necessity. Then he composed "General Statistics of the Canton of Yonville, followed by Climatological Remarks." The statistics drove him to philosophy. He busied himself with great questions: the social problem, the moral plight of the poorer classes, pisciculture, rubber, railways, &c. He even began to blush at being a bourgeois. He affected bohemian manners, he smoked. He bought two *chic* Pompadour statuettes to adorn his drawing-room.

He by no means gave up his store. On the contrary, he kept well abreast of new discoveries. He followed the great trend towards chocolates; he was the first to introduce *Cho-ca* and *Revalenta* into the Seine-Inférieure. He was enthusiastic about the hydro-electric

3. Murder of French Protestants in 1572, beginning in Paris on August 24, St. Bartholomew's Day, and continuing into October as it spread through several provinces. The work of soldiers and mobs, instigated by the French court, the massacre left 70,000 dead and reignited the Wars of Religion.

Pulvermacher health-belts; he wore one himself, and when at night he took off his flannel undershirt, Madame Homais was dazzled by the golden spiral that almost hid him from view. Her ardor would redouble for that man, swaddled more than a Scythian and as resplendent as one of the Magi.

He had fine ideas about Emma's tomb. First he proposed a broken column surmounted by a drapery, next a pyramid, then a Temple of Vesta, a sort of rotunda . . . or else a large pile of ruins. And in all his plans Homais always stuck to the weeping willow, which he looked upon as the indispensable symbol of sorrow.

Charles and he made a journey to Rouen together to look at some tombs, accompanied by an artist, one Vaufraylard, a friend of Bridoux's, who never ceased to make puns. At last, after having examined some hundred drawings, having ordered an estimate and made another journey to Rouen, Charles decided in favor of a mausoleum, whose two principal sides were to be decorated with "a spirit bearing an extinguished torch."

As to the inscription, Homais could think of nothing finer than *Sta viator*, and he got no further; he racked his brain in vain; all that he could come up with was *Sta viator*. At last he hit upon *Amabilem conjugem calcas*,⁴ which was adopted.

A strange thing was happening to Bovary: while continually thinking of Emma, he was nevertheless forgetting her. He grew desperate as he felt this image fading from his memory in spite of all efforts to retain it. Yet every night he dreamt of her; it was always the same dream. He approached her, but when he was about to embrace her she fell into decay in his arms.

For a week he was seen going to church in the evening. Monsieur Bournisien even paid him two or three visits, then gave him up. Moreover, the old man was growing bigoted and fanatic, according to Homais. He thundered against the spirit of the age, and never failed, every other week, in his sermon, to recount the death agony of Voltaire, who died devouring his excrements, as every one knows.⁵

In spite of Bovary's thrifty life, he was far from being able to pay off his old debts. Lheureux refused to renew any more notes. Execution became imminent. Then he appealed to his mother, who consented to let him take a mortgage on her property, but with a great many recriminations against Emma; and in return for her sacrifice she asked for a shawl that had escaped from Félicité's raids. Charles refused to give it to her; they quarrelled.

4. The final text of Emma's epitaph reads "Stop traveller. You tread on a beloved wife."

5. There are several accounts of Voltaire's last hour; the one referred to here seems to derive from Catholic progaganda against the notoriously anticlerical philosopher. The twentieth-century biographer John Hearsey suggests the following as the most truthful contemporary account: "Until the last moment, all breathed the benignity and goodness of his character; everything showed forth his tranquility" (*Voltaire*, 1976), 272.

She made the first peace overtures by offering to let the little girl, who could help her in the house, live with her. Charles consented to this, but when the time for parting came, all his courage failed him. Then there was a final, complete break between them.

As his affections vanished, he clung more closely to the love of his child. She worried him, however, for she coughed sometimes, and had red patches on her cheeks.

Across the square, facing his house, the prospering family of the pharmacist was more flourishing and thriving than ever. Napoleon helped him in the laboratory, Athalie embroidered him a skullcap, Irma cut out rounds of paper to cover the preserves, and Franklin recited the tables of Pythagoras by rote, without the slightest hesitation. He was the happiest of fathers, the most fortunate of men.

Not quite, however! A secret ambition devoured him. Homais hankered after the Croix de la Légion d'Honneur.⁶ He had plenty of claims to it.

"First, having at the time of the cholera distinguished myself by a boundless devotion; second, by having published, at my expense, various works of public usefulness, such as" (and he recalled his pamphlet entitled, *On Cider, its Manufacture and Effects*, besides observations on the wooly aphids that he had sent to the Academy; his volume of statistics, and down to his pharmaceutical thesis); "without counting that I am a member of several learned societies" (he was member of a single one).

"And if this won't do," he said, turning on his heels, "there always is the assistance I give at fires!"

Homais' next step was trying to win over the Government to his cause. He secretly did the prefect several favors during the elections. He sold, in a word, prostituted himself. He even addressed a petition to the sovereign in which he implored him to "do him justice;" he called him "our good king," and compared him to Henri IV.

And every morning the pharmacist rushed for the paper to see if his nomination appeared. It was never there. At last, unable to bear it any longer, he had a grass plot in his garden designed to represent the Star of the Croix d'Honneur, with two little strips of grass running from the top to imitate the ribbon. He walked round it with folded arms, meditating on the folly of the Government and the ingratitude of men.

Out of respect, or because he took an almost sensuous pleasure in dragging out his investigations, Charles had not yet opened the secret drawer of Emma's rosewood desk. One day, however, he sat

6. Cross of the Legion of Honor: the highest mark of distinction awarded by the French government.

down before it, turned the key, and pressed the spring. All Léon's letters were there. There could be no doubt this time. He devoured them to the very last, ransacked every corner, all the furniture, all the drawers, behind the walls, sobbing and shouting in mad distress. He discovered a box and kicked it open. Rodolphe's portrait flew out at him, from among the pile of love letters.

People wondered at his despondency. He never went out, saw no one, refused even to visit his patients. Then they said "he shut himself up to drink."

At times, however, someone would climb on the garden hedge, moved by curiosity. They would stare in amazement at this long-bearded, shabbily clothed, wild figure of a man, who wept aloud as he walked up and down.

On summer evenings, he would take his little girl with him to visit the cemetery. They came back at nightfall, when the only light left in the village was that in Binet's window.

He was unable, however, to savor his grief to the full, for he had no one to share it with. He paid visits to Madame Lefrançois to be able to speak of *her*. But the innkeeper only listened with half an ear, having troubles of her own. For Monsieur Lheureux had finally set up his own business, the *Favorites du Commerce*, and Hivert, every one's favorite messenger, threatened to go to work for the competition unless he received higher wages.

One day when he had gone to the market at Argueil to sell his horse—his last resource—he met Rodolphe.

They both turned pale when they caught sight of one another. Rodolphe, who had only sent his card for the funeral, first stammered some apologies, then grew bolder, and even invited Charles (it was in the month of August and very hot) to share a bottle of beer with him at the terrace of a café.

Leaning his elbows on the table, he chewed his cigar as he talked, and Charles was lost in reverie at the sight of the face she had loved. He seemed to find back something of her there. It was quite a shock to him. He would have liked to have been this man.

The other went on talking of agriculture, cattle and fertilizers, filling with banalities all the gaps where an allusion might slip in. Charles was not listening to him; Rodolphe noticed it, and he could follow the sequence of memories that crossed his face. This face gradually reddened; Charles's nostrils fluttered, his lips quivered. For a moment, Charles stared at him in somber fury and Rodolphe, startled and terrified, stopped talking. But soon the same look of mournful weariness returned to his face.

"I can't blame you for it," he said.

Rodolphe remained silent. And Charles, his head in his hands, went on in a broken voice, with the resigned accent of infinite grief:

"No, I can't blame you any longer."

He even made a phrase, the only one he'd ever made:

"Fate willed it this way."

Rodolphe, who had been the agent of this fate, thought him very meek for a man in his situation, comic even and slightly despicable.

The next day Charles sat down on the garden seat under the arbor. Rays of light were straying through the trellis, the vine leaves threw their shadows on the sand, jasmines perfumed the blue air, Spanish flies buzzed round the lilies in bloom, and Charles was panting like an adolescent under the vague desires of love that filled his aching heart.

At seven o'clock little Berthe who had not seen him all afternoon, came to fetch him for dinner.

His head was leaning against the wall, with closed eyes and open mouth, and in his hand was a long tress of black hair.

"Papa, come!"

And thinking he wanted to play, she gave him a gentle push. He fell to the ground. He was dead.

Thirty-six hours later, at the pharmacist's request, Monsieur Canivet arrived. He performed an autopsy, but found nothing.

When everything had been sold, there remained twelve francs and seventy-five centimes, just enough to send Mademoiselle Bovary off to her grandmother. The woman died the same year; and since Rouault was paralyzed, it was an aunt who took charge of her. She is poor, and sends her to a cotton-mill to earn a living.

Since Bovary's death three doctors have succeeded one another in Yonville without any success, so effectively did Homais hasten to eradicate them. He has more customers than there are sinners in hell; the authorities treat him kindly and he has the public on his side.

He has just been given the Croix de la Légion d'Honneur.

CONTEXTS



GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

Earlier Versions of *Madame Bovary*: Scenarios and Scenes†

[By collating Flaubert's numerous early drafts, Jean Pommier and Gabrielle Leleu compiled a 511-page continuous text covering the action of the entire novel, preceded by 103 pages of scenarios, plans for specific scenes, sketches for certain episodes, etc. From this mass of material, we have selected a few passages hoping to give a representative sampling of Flaubert's spontaneous writing, so ruthlessly eliminated from the final version. A deliberate attempt has been made to preserve something of the tone of the original in translation; the syntax is often faulty or indefinite, and certain uses of language are exceedingly odd. The reader should remember, however, that none of this material was destined to be published.]

The first three passages are scenarios, outlines, and notes that seem almost incoherent at first sight. At closer examination, they reveal how complete and definitive Flaubert's conception of his novel was from the very beginning. The first passage is the earliest known outline for the entire novel. Some of the smaller details of the final version are already present and the general sequence of events will in fact change very little between this outline and the final version. The names are different; certain episodes (such as Emma's trip to Paris, or her giving in to her first lover) will disappear altogether; the first sketch of Charles Bovary is interestingly different from the final character. Yet, on the whole, the original outline is remarkably close to the final text of *Madame Bovary*.]

[*The Earliest Known Outline*]

Charles Bovary officier de santé 33 years when the story begins already left a widower by a wife older than he / marries him out of cupidity or rather stupidity of which he is the dupe—his childhood in the country until he is 15—(tramps through the countryside—period of unrest) three or four years away at school—then a laborious med. student—pointless poverty of which he is not aware (his lodgings over the Eau de Robec in Rouen) gentle and sensitive disposition, correct, just and obtuse, no imagination one or two mistresses who introduce him to love he graduates—his mother with him / visits him from time to time spends a week or two at Charles'

† From *Madame Bovary, Nouvelle version précédée de scénarios inédits* ("New Version preceded by Unpublished Scenarios"), edited by Jean Pommier and Gabrielle Leleu (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1949); reprinted by permission of the publisher. Introduced, translated, and annotated by Paul de Man.

lodgings / (ambitious and manipulating—his father drunken and brash)—then his first wife

Mme. Bovary Marie (she signs Maria, Marianne or Marietta) daughter of a well to do farmer raised at a convent in Rouen (remembrance of her dreams when she passes again before her convent)—aristocratic friends—her dress the piano. At the show at the Saint-Romain fairs when her father a good fellow pious in the fashion of the Pays de Caux = (father Desnoyers) takes her there.

Loves her husband at first who is not bad looking—well built and somewhat conceited—but without much passion. His senses are still dormant. She introduces (little by little) more luxuries into the household than they can afford—her solitary life when her husband is away on calls—his homecomings in the evening, wet, just as she is beginning to read a romantic novel—usually about life in Paris. (Fashion magazines. Journal des Demoiselles) (a ball given at a chateau). the awakening of love without result. / long wait for a passionate stirring of the soul or an event which does not take place—the following year the ball is not given at the same period. / she ends by coming to detest the region and forces her husband to move.

They move elsewhere / it is still worse—the chief clerk of the attorney across the way / walks everyday under her window on his way to his office—he has a room in the house of the pharmacist across the street / the same sort of man as her husband but (by nature) superior though similar.—she resists her inclinations for a long time—then gives herself to him / calm—it is just the same as with her husband—lassitude with the soft character of this first lover.

a second lover 33 years old—a man of experience—dark—brutal—witty (flashy playboy type but mostly on the surface) jokingly grabs her and vigorously stirs up her passions—underneath his apparent gaiety he is archly conservative a hunter in corduroys / rough—swarthy—energetic and active—he is slowly ruining himself / practical bored sensual he demoralizes her by making her see life a little the way it is—

a trip to Paris

her return home—life is empty—she grows calmer—the head-clerk returns—(he is made chief-clerk at Rouen)—trip to Rouen on Thursdays—the Hotel d'Angleterre—fulfillment—passion—

despair of unassuageable sensual comfort (satisfied love creates the need for a general well being—disinterest in material things exists only at the beginning of love affairs) to which is added the poetic need of luxury—life of sin

reading of novels (from the point of imaginative sensuality) expenses—bills presented by local merchant!—

emptiness (of passion) for her lover increasing as her senses de-

velop revulsion—however she still cannot love her husband.
re-try with the captain—(he kicks her out)

(she tries to return to her husband—she respects him and perceives her approaching destruction)

last orgy with Leopold—Suicide

(illness.—)

her death.

eve of her death—rainy afternoon the coach passes under her open window—

funeral—

empty solitude of Charles with his little girl—evening. he becomes aware day by day of his wife's debts. The chief-clerk marries—

one day Charles while walking in the garden suddenly dies—his little girl in an orphanage.

[*The Dance at Vaubyessard—First Outline*]¹

arrival at night. appearance of Vaubyessard.

porch—

vestibule (—windowed gallery—) billiard room sound of the balls—reserved dress of the players—pictures partially in the shadow.

drawing room

dinner. butler dressed in black (looking more like a magistrate than a servant) dishes under glass, crystal, fruits served with meats—puddings—iced champagne—truffles—the duke.

dressing. she fixes her hair—(little) conjugal dialogue.

(she arrives just as they are beginning to dance) (description of the salon—scramble on the dance floor)—mantelpiece—magnolia in Chinese vases—)

the ball—the young people—general characterization of the “lions”: hands complexion—air at once brutal and effeminate, through handling horses and actresses. supple outfits, starched shirts, (—waistcoats—) pants that hug the thigh, some buttoned below.—stockings—odors batiste handkerchieves—(women included) dance.—delight in the measure—glissade—tray of steaming punch.

groups.—Rouen types: politicians—a reporter from a legitimist newspaper 1832

(peasants looking on)

the supper was served on—1/4 of an hour—Rhine wine. cold meats in aspic—bisque.

resumes—the musicians.

1. Cf. Norton Critical Edition, pp. 40–49.

cotillon—the viscount of *. yellow waistcoat—“try” to Emma—at the doorway they collide passes her hand under his waistcoat. sensation of his body through his shirt—returns to her place dizzy watches him dance—people begin to leave little by little (stinging eyes—burning cheeks. cold feet)

return to her room—morning rain—goes out—mountain-ash berry lantern in the grass—Chinese pavillion. colored glass—(falls asleep. concentrated sun) (sight of the closed windows of the chateau—they are asleep—) servants who are grooming the horses—water.

after breakfast (saddle room) / Charles and the businessman visit the vegetable gardens and the farm / swans on the bridge. hot-house—departure.

return silence—countryside—encounter with the gentlemen—red sky movement of the carriage—pretends to sleep.

house—dismisses Nastasie—drunken sleep—immense tomorrow.

[*Projected Epilogue*]²

The day he received it (his decoration) he couldn't believe it. Mr. X, a deputy, had sent him a bit of ribbon—tries it on looks at himself in the mirror dazzled.—

He shared in this ray of glory which beginning with the subprefect (a knight) went through the prefect (an officer) the general (a commander)—the ministers high dignitaries up to the king who held the grand-cross what am I saying up to the emperor Napoleon who had created it—Homais absorbed into the sun of Austerlitz.

All aspects of the cross. The Academy—diplomat—warrior—the thought was enough to kill one.—and it is one of the *greatest* proofs of his character that it did not kill him.

Self-doubts—looks at his bocal—doubts his existence. (delirium. fantastic effects. The cross reflected in bottles, rain thunder of red ribbon)—“am I not a character in a novel, the fruit of an imagination in delirium, the invention of some little beggar whom I have seen being born / and who invented me in order to prove that I do not exist / —Oh that is impossible. There are my foetuses. (there are my children there. there.)”

And picking up his discourse he finishes with that great phrase of modern rationalism Cogito, ergo sum.

2. Of this projected epilogue, developing considerably the figure of Homais, almost nothing remains in the final version. It throws a great deal of light on the symbolic significance of the pharmacist in the novel. Although the last lines of *Madame Bovary* indeed deal with Homais and his decoration (p. 275), we are never allowed such intimate glimpses into his inner self as we find in this outline.

[The following passages, numbered 1 to 15, are all taken from the "new version" established by Professor Pommier and Mademoiselle Leleu. With two exceptions (passages 4 and 15) they have been chosen to indicate what Albert Béguin has called Flaubert's talent for "following as closely as possible the hidden movements of the inner life." Themes such as memory, material sensation, subjective vision, *rêverie*, etc. are much in evidence in all the passages. The richness of the elaborate metaphorical language is particularly striking. It should be noted that passages of this kind, in which the stress is altogether on the inner life of the character, are by no means confined to Emma, as will be the case, generally speaking, in the final version. Some of the most lyrical fragments, containing the most original metaphors, refer to Charles (as in passages 1, 2, and 14), Léon (passages 6 and 7), or even Homais (Epilogue).

Passage 4 is altogether different. It is an instance of the heavily ironic imitation of realistic speech that appears in great abundance in the early drafts and that Flaubert often cut from the final version. The scene is taken from the dance at Vaubyessard; similar developments occurred in other scenes, especially in Homais's speeches. Passage 15 gives the final encounter between Charles and Rodolphe near the end of the book (p. 254); it contains the memorable sentence on Charles's love for Emma "almost reaching the proportions of a pure idea through generosity and impersonality," a sentence of crucial importance for an interpretation of the novel.

The titles of the passages are given for easier identification and do not appear in the text.]

[1. *Charles's Youth in Rouen*]³

On summer evenings, when the close streets are empty and when the servants after dinner are playing shuttle-cock at the doors, he would stand at the window looking out at the passers by. Beneath him, down below, the river, which makes this quarter of Rouen into a bargain basement Venice, flowed by, saffron or indigo, underneath the little bridges that covered it. Drying in the hot air, the strips of dyed cotton suspended from the attic windows swung back and forth from their long racks, and working men, squatting by the edge of the water, washed their arms and necks. Across from him, beyond the tile roofs, he could see the sky, immense and pure, and the setting sun. How beautiful it must be there now! He remembered the long evenings, when he would come home at this hour with his companions, riding on the croups of their work horses, the hoofs of their mounts striking sparks as they walked along the cart roads. He could see from there the huge wagons returning, loaded with hay that brushed against the doors of the farmhouses as they passed. In earlier times, he had ridden on these

3. Pommier and Leleu edition, p. 145; Norton Critical Edition, p. 12.

wagons, and he could see again the stars shining on the barn. They were shining on the barn now. A cock crows in the distance, the watchdogs are being released. The shepherd alone in the fields will soon be closing the gates of the paddock. He whistles for his dog. The crickets in the wheat fields are singing with little repetitive cries. And he closed his window again.

He became sad. He lost weight, his body grew long, and his face, which had always been gentle, took on an expression of quiet suffering, making him look even more distinguished.

[2. *Charles on His Way to the Bertaux Farm*]⁴

So at about three in the morning Charles, wrapped in his overcoat and with his cap pulled down over his eyes, set out for the Bertaux farm. The rain had stopped, the moon was rising and here and there the sky was clearing. Still congealed in the warmth of his first sleep, he let himself slump on the back of his horse. . . . Half asleep, still clinging to the warmth of his bed, and pursuing his dream, he would remember on awakening that he was about to be concerned with a broken leg and try to call to mind all the fractures he had seen and how they were treated. Through his half sleep, he saw pass before him re-knit femurs, splints, and bandages. Then, as his mind became weary from trying to remember and his horse walked slower, sleep overtook him of its own accord and he would fall again into a tepid drowsiness, where his most recent sensation came back to him. He saw himself simultaneously, both husband and student, lying on his own bed beside his wife, as he had just left it, and, at the same time, walking busily about in an operating room. He felt under his elbow the sensation of a desk in an amphitheatre, which was also his pillow at home. He smelled the odor of cataplasms and his wife's hair . . . And it all mingled into one whole, seeking for something with an uneasy longing, unable to lift its lead-weighted wings, while the confused memory turned round and round in place below. The wind came up, it was cold.

[3. *Emma at Tostes*]⁵

Usually she would walk as far as the clump of beeches outside of Banneville, to the abandoned pavilion built on the town walls, just on the other side of the moat. In this moat, among the other grasses, there grows a reed with sharp cutting leaves. She would sit by the edge. It is a deserted spot. No one walks that way. The trees are very high.

4. Pommier and Leleu, p. 151; Norton Critical Edition, p. 14.

5. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 200-01; Norton Critical Edition, p. 37.

She would arrive there out of breath from her walk, and begin to look about her for familiar landmarks to see if anything had changed since she had last come. She would recognize the marks in the grass where she had sat before, the same weeds growing among the loose stones in the wall, clumps of moss reddened by the sun sticking to the frames of the windows whose closed blinds were falling apart on their rusty iron hinges. Her thoughts, like her little greyhound, wandered to right and left, without aim, object or direction. Her eye followed the handsome animal with his delicate paws as he traced great circles in the ploughed furrows, in pursuit of some rat or field mouse, shaking his head in the patches of wheat and poppies which tickled his nose.

When her gaze had wandered at random over the whole surrounding horizon, her attention hardly brushing against the thoughts which followed each other in her head, like two concentric circles turning one within the other and contracting simultaneously their circumferences, her thought would return to herself and her gaze would turn inward. Seated on the ground, digging up small handfuls of earth with the tip of her umbrella, she always came back to the same question.

“Why in heaven’s name did I marry?”

She asked herself if it wouldn’t have been possible by some other combination of fate to have met another man; and like a poet who combines, she tried to discover in her head those adventures which had not happened, that life which wasn’t hers, that husband whom she didn’t know.

[4. *Conversations at Vaubyessard*]⁶

A few, who had dressed with the intention of dancing, wore tight fitting pants which were fastened above the calf by three buttons. Emma watched their feet shod in open-work stockings advancing toward her, revealing from time to time, by a movement of the toe, the interior of their dancing slippers lined with blue satin.

It was not difficult to see that they were only moderately enjoying themselves; the marquise even had to seek out two or three to entertain them to dance with some of the ladies.

It is true that the society at the ball that evening was not really altogether their set. In addition to a few close friends who were from the neighborhood or were taking the baths at Dieppe, and the guests at the château who had come there to spend the hunting season, the marquis had invited for reasons of politics some of the local dignitaries from Rouen. The mayor, the commander of the local regi-

6. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 209–12; the passage, dropped from the final version, was inserted on p. 45.

ment, the judge of the small claims court, a few magistrates and some of the more notable businessmen of the region were there with their wives. The marquis strolled from one group to another, and mixed amiably in the various conversations, receiving a compliment, returning three, and then moving on toward another group.

He approached three voluble gentlemen wearing velvet waistcoats.

"Ah, M. le Marquis," said one of them, who was holding a half-finished glass of punch in one hand, "what a delightful party you have got up for us!"

"Nothing at all!" answered the marquis bowing. "Just a little country occasion, a simple family affair."

"What, M. le Marquis, a little country occasion! Why it's a banquet from the Chaussée d'Antin! A symposium of ministers! A real Tuileries ball!"

The marquis, who resided in the aristocratic quarter of Paris, utterly despised the ministers, and detested the Tuileries, blushed to the roots of his hair at this triple insult.

The guest thought he had made a good hit and continued:

"The dinner, I assure you, was of a magnificence . . ."

The marquis moved off as though to speak with someone who was passing by.

"Yes, a very nice dinner," continued the notary turning toward his neighbor.

"What I like best in a dinner," added the other with a serious expression, "is luxury, sensational dishes. Did you notice the salmon, M. Belami?"

"Yes, you're right, a real beauty."

"Last year," put in the third gentleman, "we gave a dinner honoring the colonel of the National Guard. I was invited in my capacity as officer. We had a fine salmon there, but it didn't compare with this one."

"I like very much this way of changing the silverware after each course," said the man who liked luxury.

"That's called 'English service,' " said the notary.

Then they began to talk about the silverware they had seen.

"It must have cost a good thirty thousand francs," said the first man.

"I should say so," answered the second, "from thirty to thirty-five thousand!"

"If you count the coffee spoons, it might easily reach forty thousand!" added the third.

"Shh! Speak lower. The marquis is coming back."

The marquis stopped at the entrance to the game room where

Charles was standing silently watching a game of whist of which he understood nothing.

"Aren't you playing, Councilor?", he asked a bald-headed gentleman whose nose supported a pair of silver-rimmed spectacles.

"I am sorry, M. le Marquis, but the groups have already been made up. I am stretching my legs a bit to get the stiffness out. I am so much in my office that it is a real pleasure for me to stand up. Besides, the sight of these lively dancers is worth getting up to see. What a charming picture! It is truly a basket of flowers! A basket of flowers, truly, M. le Marquis!"

"Not all the flowers are in the bud," said the marquis lowering his voice.

"Oh! Very good, M. le Marquis, very good! Ha ha! Indeed, women are not perpetual."

"Ah! Charming!" said the marquis, "not perpetual. The word is perfect. I'll remember it to use myself when the occasion arises. Something which has always astonished me," he added, assuming a serious expression, "is the way serious men manage to preserve their sense of humor when they are out on a social occasion and leave on the threshold of their offices the important concerns which fill their heads."

"To the contrary, M. le Marquis, to the contrary! The more the imagination is held in check during the day, the more it releases of its own accord during the evening, like a bow. It brings about, in my case at least, a sort of revulsion, a nervous reaction, if I may use the expression, which relaxes me and leaves me the better disposed for my work the next day. During the second session this year, I presided over the Criminal Court. I didn't arrive home until very late. Well, I ate like a horse, I was gay as a colt, and I never felt better!"

Then, he added bowing:

"Your district, moreover, is one of the ones which gives us the least trouble."

"Yes, our country-spirit is on the whole pretty good," said the marquis. "However, the morals of the rural population are becoming worse every day due to the proximity of the factories. The example of quickly acquired wealth is handed down from the capitalist to the petty bourgeois, strikes the artisan, wins over the worker himself, and thus establishes a firm hold among the lower classes, causing much deplorable moral unrest. The book-traffic is also doing a great deal of harm to our young farmgirls. Instead of going to Vespers, they spend their Sundays reading all matter of corrupt little books which are ruining them, and on which the government ought to keep an eye."

Having divided five minutes between the dangers of education, the encroachment of industry and the immorality of the poorer classes, the marquis entered the gameroom and the magistrate went over to pay his court to the marquise. She was chatting with a lean young man whose elbow rested on the mantelpiece near to a flowering magnolia planted in a Chinese vase. He had long blond hair, a golden watchchain attached to his straight-buttoned waistcoat, and a somewhat worn black suit. He took no refreshments, did not dance, and was holding forth to the marquise on a grand project of his to set up retreats for young girls in all the towns within the five departments. He was a reporter for a legitimist newspaper in Le Havre; a former proctor in a private academy; then an insurance salesman and the author of a book of Christian elegies dedicated to the Bishop of Bayeux. A man of art and imagination, he closed his letters with a seal showing a half-opened heart stuck with a pen and bearing this inscription: "This well is her source."

[5. *Emma and the Colored Window Panes at Vaubyessard*]⁷

"Did you eat any of those little things made out of two slices of bread with meat in the middle?"

"Sandwiches?"

"I can never remember that name though it certainly fits them just right."

And he fell asleep.

But she never slept that night. She took off her dress, wrapped a shawl around her shoulders and looked out.

The night was dark. A few drops of rain were falling. One after the other the lights in the château went out. She listened to the sound of the stream flowing far off among the trees; the cold air soothed her eyes; her face was burning, and to warm her feet, she would walk up and down from time to time striking the tip of her fingers against the ground. She waited for day to break.

At dawn, when the big door below was opened, she went down and walked in the garden. The rest of the household were still asleep. She looked at the château with its closed blinds, trying to guess which rooms might by chance belong to the various persons she had noticed the evening before. But were they still there? Not one of them would be thinking of her; how did it happen that she was still thinking of them and longing to see them again?

There was mud on the sand along the little paths; she walked slowly crushing the berries from the mountain-ash trees which the

7. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 215-17; the passage, dropped from the final version, was inserted on p. 47.

wind had blown down. On turning into one lane, something round rolled under her foot. It was one of the lanterns from the ball; the extinguished wick was damp, lying in its cracked cup surrounded by dirty white wax. She stood before it a few minutes, rolling it over with her foot as though it were the corpse of some animal. A valet in a red vest appeared in the distance at the top of the stair landing, pushing before him some armchairs which he started to brush off. There began to be some movement now in the direction of the stables. A peasant girl who was passing by with a bundle of hay on her head bowed low in greeting.

Wandering at random, she reached a small wood, where she stopped in amazement before a little low house whose bell-shaped roof was turned up at the four corners and covered with tiles painted to look like fishscales and decorated on all sides by a row of wooden bells. The river here overflowed onto the grass forming a bay of sleeping water, where two canoes waited motionless beside a green cabin built for the swans among the water lilies. Looking in from without, one could see nothing of the interior. The door looked closed but opened under her touch, and she found herself in a room covered with blue wallpaper, with painted leaves and caged parakeets. The furniture consisted of a circular couch of gray percale, some bamboo chairs and a table of round green marble resting on a wicker base. It was a retreat for summer days, a place for meetings, where, hidden from all eyes, but viewing the horizon through a break in the trees, lovers must have come many times in the still hours to pass the melancholy moments of love against the murmuring of the water. The walls, behind the portraits, seemed to be thinking of things they did not wish to tell. In the middle of the river, rounding his wings to the wind, a swan was gliding, leaving on the still water a long furrow which fanned out behind him.

Diamond-shaped panes had been set into one of the two windows. She looked out at the countryside through the colored glass.

Through the blue pane everything seemed sad. A motionless azure haze diffused through the air, lengthened the meadows and pushed back the hills. The tips of the trees were velvety with a pale brown dust, dotted irregularly here and there as though there had been a snowfall, and far off in a distant field, a fire of dry leaves someone was burning seemed to have flames of wine alcohol.

Seen through the yellow glass, the leaves on the trees became smaller, the grass lighter, and the whole landscape as though it had been cut out of metal. The detached clouds looked like eiderdown quilts of golden dust ready to fall apart; the atmosphere seemed on fire. It was joyous and warm in this immense topaz color mixed with azure.

She put her eye to the green pane. Everything was green, the

sand, the water, the flowers, the earth itself became indistinguishable from the lawns. The shadows were all black, the leaden water seemed frozen to its banks.

But she remained longest in front of the red glass. In a reflection of purple that overspread the landscape in all directions, robbing everything of its own color, the trees and grass became almost gray, and even red itself disappeared. The enlarged stream flowed like a rose-colored river, the peat-covered flower beds seemed to be seas of coagulated blood, the immense sky blazed with innumerable fires. She became frightened.

She turned away her eyes, and through the window with transparent panes, suddenly, ordinary daylight reappeared, all pale with little patches of skycolored mist.

The morning dew was rising in the meadow; a flock of sheep were grazing on the park lawns as they trooped by; in a turret window of the château, a woman in a nightgown was cleaning out her comb in the wind; and, all at once, the white sunlight leapt into the closed room, where the walls as they warmed gave off a tepid odor that seemed to drain her of her strength. Exhausted, she sank down on a cushion. Emma felt a pain at the back of her head and, although she didn't sleep, she began to dream.

She was suddenly startled awake by a flock of rooks who grazed the top of the trees and settled in a grove of pines beyond.

She was frightened that someone would find her there; she hurried back.

Charles had gone off with the businessman to visit the farm and the gardens. He admired the fields, felt the brick walls of the wine press, and asked about the Marquis' income.

[6. *Léon after His First Encounter with Emma*]⁸

There was no doubt that the dinner on the previous evening had been a big event in his life, for his life up to that time had had very few events. The only son of a widow of no great wealth, who had sent him to school in a seminary at Yvetot, and later, for reasons of economy, to do his apprenticeship in a law office in Yonville, he had never before found himself in an intimate conversation with a lady for two full hours. But how had he suddenly been able to express, and with such eloquence, all those confused matters which the evening before he would have had difficulty even formulating for himself! Is it that our hearts, like small pebbles, wait motionless in the spot where Providence has placed them, for the precise shock which will strike a spark? Or is it with them as with a broker's safe,

8. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 260–61; Norton Critical Edition, p. 72.

that there exists between their mysterious hinges and certain words which one must know, a connecting spring which releases when it is touched so that the doors instantly open wide and the cash-filled drawers roll out of their own accord? He was reserved in his speech and usually maintained that silence about his own affairs appropriate to feminine natures, combining modesty with deceit. It was generally agreed at Yonville that his manners were distinguished, for he listened respectfully to the advice of his elders and did not seem too hot-headed in politics something remarkable in a young man. However, he had been a little revolutionized during the last vacation by a cousin of his, an artist who lived in Paris, a Phalansterian and a disciple of Saint-Simon,⁹ a romantic who was in bad grace with his grandparents because of his beard. He had given Léon a great many things to read and had taught him a number of others. It was since that time that he had hung portraits of George Sand and Lamartine in his room, giving him, in the eyes of any who penetrated that far, a certain air of eccentric melancholy which went well with his long hair and dreamy expression.

[7. *Léon and Emma during the Evenings at Homais's House*]¹

At that time, she used to wear those hats called "la Paysanne" which revealed her ears. They reminded Léon of ones he had seen at the opera. And while he gazed at Emma's braids, where the lamp light made ripples on the ebony strands, there would come slowly over his soul a reminiscence of similar emanations and forgotten sentiments. His feelings for other women in other times, the languors of adolescence, the wonder at his awakening manhood, the melancholy of his first desires, a thousand scattered yearnings were reunited in this new excitement which absorbed them all. In order to make his expectations more concrete, he would search his memory for familiar objects. In the sensuousness of remembrance, both felt and dreamt, the young man's thought would gently dissolve and it seemed sometimes that Emma almost disappeared in the very illuminations which radiated from her. But suddenly, when she would turn her face toward him and he would see her black eyes flashing, her moist lips speaking, her white teeth shining, it changed to a desire at once biting, precise and urgent. Something sharp would run all through him and he wanted to touch her on the shoulders that he might know her through some other sense than that of the eyes.

9. Phalansterians are disciples of Charles Fourier who, with the Saint-Simonians, represent the French, pre-Marxian trend of utopian socialism [*M. Cohen*].

1. Pommier and Leleu, p. 279; the passage, dropped from the final version, was inserted on pp. 81-82.

[8. *Emma after the Departure of Léon*]²

The next day was for Emma a day of mourning. It seemed to her that everything around her was enveloped in a black fog which floated vaguely over the surface of things, pushing them back so that they receded into the distance. Inert, as though she were paralyzed, she remained until evening with this new feeling of a terrible desertion. A somber melancholy blew into her heart, uttering soft moans, like the wind in winter when it blows in abandoned castles. And again she felt, as she had on her return from Vaubyessard, an infinite regret, an aimless despair. It was that sadness which follows the accomplishment of all that will never return, that bottomless fatigue which any completed action leaves behind. It was the sorrow brought to the heart or soul by any irrevocable deed, by separations, deaths, departures, certain arrivals, broken habits or fulfilled pleasures, the interruption of any accustomed movement or the sudden breaking off of a prolonged vibration. The silence which follows becomes the very measure of its sonority, while its length can be gauged by the intoxication which results.

Emma, as on her return from Vaubyessard, when quadrilles still whirled in her head and her eyes still smarted from the glare of the candles, suffered a boundless regret, a numbing despair. And within the remembrance of Léon, at once so near and so distant, confused things came back to her; details returned and her whole past was rekindled in the reflexion of this sorrow. This simple young man seemed to her the handsomest of men, the purest of souls. Former conversations and sudden glances came back to her in puffs of recollections, more melodious and lyrical than voices singing in harmony; his eyes out-sparkled the reflection of chandeliers on crystal plates and the odor of his hair which smelled of lemon, seemed sweeter and more penetrating than the perfume of a hothouse. There had been days she had not noticed at the time, that had lain dormant since and which now reappeared in their entirety. Long and pale like the ghosts of virgins who have died of love, they clustered around her, saying: "It is we! It is we! You should have taken us while we still lived!"

And wherever her eyes wandered or her ears strayed, there was a remembrance of Léon: the flowering stream along whose banks they had strolled together, the nasturtium-covered arbor in the garden where he used to read to her, her workbasket beside her on the bench, the places on the parquet where his feet had rested, the furniture he had sat on, the pharmacist's house, with his window between the inscriptions. The pot of basil was still drying in the sun.

2. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 319–21; Norton Critical Edition, p. 101.

She thought she could see him leaning out. And she thirsted for his lips, she longed for his love and cursed herself for having allowed him to leave. She could not comprehend through what weakness or virtue she had deprived herself of such a happiness. But he was gone, the only hope of her life! He would never return! It was useless for her to hope any longer. She wanted to run after him, to say to him: "Here I am!" Then she gave way before the difficulties of carrying out such a plan and turned all her fury on her own mistake.

She clung to this memory; it was the center of her lassitude, all her thoughts converged upon it and nourished it. It was the intimate creation of her idleness. In her life, abandoned, cold, naked and monotonous, it stood alone like a fire of dead twigs left in the middle of the Russian Steppes by departing travelers. She threw herself upon the remembered image, crushed herself against it, joyously, jealously, and with a trembling hand stirred up the embers which were about to go out. To make it burn brighter and flame higher, that she might re-light her sadness by this love-flame which was flickering in the night, she looked around her for things with which to feed it; the most insignificant details of the past or the future, reminiscences of simple words, whims, comparisons, dislikes, all these she threw in and warmed herself before this hearth with the full length of her soul.

For a long time, she watched over this fire to keep it going. Bending over it she nourished the flame. But the flame no longer burned so brightly, perhaps because her provision of fuel was exhausted, or else she had smothered it by piling her fuel on too high. Little by little, through absence, her love too went out, and even her reveries diminished in routine. From this hearth, there now came more smoke than flame, more despair than desire, and the purple light which had reddened her pale sky grew lesser by degrees. The pricks of her daily existence, which fell on her like sharp hailstones, disappeared more slowly. She mistook her hatred for Charles for a longing for Léon, the searing smart of hate for the warmth of love; but, while her torment increased and its cause receded, her hope departed, blowing out the cold embers of her consumed passion. Then she remained alone, and all was total night, an immense wasteland.

Emma then, in spite of all she could do, thought less and less of Léon and more and more of Charles. The one had abandoned her, the other obsessed her continually. Her illusions were gone, her sorrows remained. But what she did preserve, deep down within her was the concept of an extraordinary happiness whose realization she imagined possible under conditions no longer there. And although her dream changed in time, becoming more embellished

as the distance increased, the aftertaste nevertheless persisted. The comparison between her life as it was and her life as it should be made her detest her present state with more fury than ever.

[9. *Emma's Happiness with Rodolphe*]³

Then she would take the letter to the end of the garden, near the river, and slip it into a crevice in the wall. Rodolphe would come and pick it up, leaving in its place another which she always reproached for being too short.

She wrote hers breathlessly, without stopping, her heart pounding, her cheeks on fire, and the paper filled with the volubility of her love that overflowed into the very margins of the page. She reminded him of their joys of the evening before and was already chafing impatiently in anticipation of the next day. Between these recent memories and her secure anticipations, love burned as between two concentric chimneys and its sensations were reawakened by her effort to translate them. In this way, Emma drew out her passion by passing it through the laminating presses of style. Yet it lost nothing of its solidity since the satisfaction of her desires added each day something new.

Literary reminiscences, mystical impulses, carnal ecstasies and ephemeral caresses, all were confused in the immensity of this passion. A heap of experiences, great and small, some ordinary some exotic, some insipid some succulent, reappeared there, giving the passion variety, like those Spanish salads where one finds fruits and vegetables, chunks of goat meat and slices of citron floating about in pale-blond oil.

As the days followed one another, a more complete happiness took possession of her. Something of the happiness of her soul seemed to vibrate in the slightest fibers of her nerves. She felt a myriad green buds begin to swell within her, as under a constant warm rain, and she breathed more easily. Her renewed senses blossomed out more fully; she saw further into the distance, around her there was more sun, more air, more good odors. She understood better many human mysteries which had formerly perplexed her. And the whole of her life seemed to her to be at once both tranquil and beautiful. All the planes of her horizon having come within closer reach, she could touch her dreams with the palms of her hands, satisfied with her own personality and enchanted with her lover; desiring nothing more, without envy, without dreams, but not without memory, she gave herself to him.

When Charles would come home late at night, he did not dare to

3. Pommier and Leleu, pp. 383–84; the passage, dropped from the final version, was inserted on p. 131.

awaken her. But Emma had heard his footstep on the stairs and she awoke in the middle of an amorous dream, while Charles fell asleep at her side, lost in similar imaginings. In order to recapture something of what had charmed her a moment ago, she tried to think of Rodolphe so strongly that the image came closer and closer, appearing to her as clearly as in reality. Then it seemed to Emma that she had escaped out of herself and that she circled about him like an impalpable breath of wind. So much was the consciousness of her own being lost in that contemplation, that she no longer seemed to exist. The memories of the joys of the evening before made her more impatient for the delights of the morrow, and she would feast herself for a long time on the imagined spectacle of those two eyes which shone on her like black suns. Sometimes, half numbed among the shadows, and because of that man lying there beside her, she would be struck by a momentary illusion, but she would immediately return to the thought of her lover. Was he dreaming of her now while the wind was whipping against the windows and, no doubt, making the weathervanes on his *château* cry out? If only she could live there! and she saw herself living with him in his house and accompanying him on voyages, having become his concubine, his wife! But that would surely come about! They would not be separated until death! And something would eventually happen to make their love more free. Without knowing how, she was somehow certain! A succession of days, numberless and beautiful, unrolled against the splendid horizon like a chorus of dancing fairies gliding over a rainbow. But the child would suddenly begin to cough in its cradle or Charles would snore louder, and Emma, sighing, would listen to the striking of the hours. She would not fall asleep until morning when daylight whitened the window panes and one already heard Justin on the square opening the pharmacist's shutters.

[10. *Emma and Rodolphe*]⁴

She felt herself totally possessed by his caprice, like a violin which vibrates under the fingers of a master. By turns, it would play a gay and sensuous air, like an Italian *cavatina*, or again, a melody perfectly attuned to those pauses in happiness, the intervals of silence which sing as loudly as the music itself. Then love would descend the scale to a lower register; reveries without cause would hover softly and then disappear, swept away by a whirlwind of confused ideas. This too would break off, and a supreme ecstasy would mount, break off and mount again, rising to the outermost extreme,

4. Pommier and Leleu, p. 417 (note); dropped from the final version, inserted on p. 134.

like a little note, fragile and serious, which mounts, sliding over the E string, and throbbing with a sound so pure, so full, so delicate it seems that nothing beyond that point could exist.

[11. *Emma's Mystical Visions during Her Illness*]⁵

One day she thought she was dying and asked for communion. Bournisien hastened to the house, placing her under a canopy which was carried by Lestibourdois and a choir boy; then, as the preparations for the sacrament proceeded, the commode encumbered with medicine bottles was pushed aside, and the candelabras were brought in while Félicité began to scatter dahlias about. Emma felt her pain cease. Her body became ethereal, her thoughts cleared, as though her soul which had strayed so long the meandering paths of delirium had returned to her and she had reclaimed it. Her thoughts seemed to come like rushes of wind from within, propelling her forward, now unencumbered by the weight of sin. A new life would begin, either here below or there on high, it didn't matter! How she was refreshed by the drops of holy water, falling like celestial dew from above! And it was with a movement of joy that she advanced to unite herself with the body of Jesus Christ who was offering himself to her lips. Lost in ecstasy, she listened to the murmur of the Latin words with long endings like the sound of mystical waves passing through the air; the rays of the candles came to her like visions of paradise; and over her head, the white bed curtains billowed softly around her like the clouds to which her thoughts were flying. Fainting from joy and weakness, she let her head fall back on her pillows, hearing in the beating of her heart the harps of the seraphim. She thought she saw before her fever-dazzled eyes God the father surrounded by virgins and martyrs who stretched out their arms toward her. And for a long time, her fingers wandered over the rosary with the gentle gesture of a dying person clinging to something that pulls him upward. It was as though she were feeling something in her unconsciousness which helped her to mount.

This mystical vision remained in her memory as the most beautiful, the most voluptuous thing she had ever dreamed possible. And afterward she kept trying to recapture the sensation. This feeling continued, but in another form, less violent and less exclusive. It seemed as if a constant flow of hope and tranquility were pouring over her soul. And mixed with this serenity were memories of her convent, the sweet aftertaste of her first ideal loves, which, in her weakened state, erasing somewhat the interval between, brought

5. Pommier and Leleu, p. 453; Norton Critical Edition, pp. 170–71.

her back unawares to the days of her childhood when she knew nothing but limpidity, innocence and quietude. Her passion-worn soul would find rest at last in humility; for the first time, she savored the delights of weakness and watched with joy the defeat of her will which would make way for an even greater penetration of grace. So there still existed for her on earth, in place of the human joys which had deceived her, an unmixed happiness, a love transcending all loves, that fed upon itself, that would never cease, that would constantly grow! Amidst the ardors of prayer and under the illusions of her desire, she perceived a state of sanctity, composed of resignation and whitened with tears, a cold splendor, flashing like an aurora borealis, which colored her life to its outermost boundaries with a crimson reflection of heaven, fusing the two into one. She was seized by a longing to be there. She really wished to become a saint.

[12. *Léon in the Cathedral*]⁶

Confusing his love with the setting which gave it life, Léon came at last to believe that he was almost the god of the temple, the center of this cult whose priestess he awaited. His hands broke into a lascivious sweat and his soul filled with a mystical ecstasy. Something soft and liquid soothed him, propelled him, lifted him off the ground. He was all desire, all anxiety and joy, all vibration, and if the organ which hung under the great rose-window, like a silver forest beneath a fantastic sun, had suddenly begun to sing, it would certainly not have exhaled toward heaven melodies more sonorous, halleluiahs more joyous, an hosanna more triumphant than the amorous canticle which overflowed from his expectations. Like that immense instrument filled with hushed music, he felt that there reposed deep down within himself an infinity of love, which only awaited the contact of a breath or the pressure of a hand to break into fanfares and ecstasies.

[13. *Emma's Final Reminiscences*]⁷

One day when they had separated early and she was returning along the boulevard, she suddenly noticed the walls of her old convent. She recognized the dormitory, the laundry, the class rooms. Overcome by a depression, she sank down on a bench in the shade of the great elms which were swaying in the wind.

They had not grown. They still made the same murmuring sound

6. Pommier and Leleu, p. 491; the passage dropped from the final version, was inserted on p. 190.

7. Pommier and Leleu, p. 558; Norton Critical Edition, p. 223.

she had so loved in those days when, on summer mornings, still half asleep, she had arrived with the others in the great study hall with its opened windows. The lilies in the garden, already warmed by the sun, were releasing their lovely scent. She could hear the little birds. She sat down at her desk.

How calm those times had been! What dreams! How she envied now all those indescribable sentiments of love which serve no purpose but to fill books. She had felt them, however, and she examined them now, the way one holds up broken shells to the light. Formerly, they had sparkled with marvelous colors, and were filled with a limpid purity, wherein pearls were forming, perhaps, worthy to be set upon the forehead of a king. Then they had disappeared; her heart was filled only with the dust of their debris; she thought she could hear them far off, murmuring indistinctly as under some terrible oscillation. It was her dreadful lassitude which was rolling them back and forth like the tides.

[14. *Charles at Emma's Deathbed*]⁸

And each time he would gently wipe off her skin with bits of cotton which he then placed on the tray. She allowed herself to be manipulated without making a motion and never ceasing to smile.

But he had not finished yet, and moving to the far end of the alcove he lifted up the spread which covered the mattress and revealed her feet. They were white as alabaster with blue nails somewhat turned up at the ends. Charles kept following with an idiotic stare all the movements of the priest who was preparing them for the last journey where no one walks. The first time he had seen them had been one evening when, on his knees, he had untied the narrow ribbons of her white shoes. And the whole house around him was singing with joy in harmony with his intoxicated heart. He had shuddered, dazzled by the proximity of possession and felt as though he were suffocating under the overflow of a limitless desire, even sweeter than the perfume of her braids, deeper than her eyes, fuller than her dress which crackled like electric sparks in his arms. And amidst their silence, they heard the wedding carriages disappear one by one, gliding over the grass.

[15. *The Final Meeting Between Charles and Rodolphe*]⁹

Charles followed him, and while Rodolphe in a corner across from him, his elbows resting on the table, chewed on his cigar and talked of this and that, Charles studied him, lost in reverie at the

8. Pommier and Leleu, p. 611; the passage, dropped from the final version, was inserted on p. 257.

9. Pommier and Leleu, p. 641; Norton Critical Edition, p. 274.

sight of the face which she had loved. He seemed to find back something of her there, to be brought closer to her; it was astonishing! He would have liked to have been this man and he exclaimed:

“How did you do it?”

Rodolphe understood vaguely. Nevertheless, in order to avoid giving himself away he went on talking about the probable outcome of the harvest.

“Go ahead, talk about her! Speak since she loved you!” cried Charles, breaking into sobs, his head between his hands.

Then he raised his head and stared at him as though in a daze, with a sad and gentle expression.

“No, I don’t blame you for it.”

Then he made a phrase, a grand phrase, the only one he’d ever made:

“Fate willed it this way.”

Rodolphe, however, who had been somewhat the agent of this fate, was extremely surprised. He found him all too good-natured for a man in his situation, too accommodating, even comic and slightly despicable.

For he understood nothing of that voracious love which throws itself upon things at random to assuage its hunger, that passion empty of pride, without human respect or conscience, plunging entire into the being which is loved, taking possession of his sentiments, palpitating with them and almost reaching the proportions of a pure idea through generosity and impersonality.

The following day, at about one o’clock in the afternoon, Charles went to sit on the bench beneath the arbor. Rays of light were straying through the trellis in the spaces between the green. The shadows of the grape leaves made patterns on the sand. The murmuring stream washed with quiet waves against the terrace, jasmine perfumed the air, the katy-dids droned among the flowering lilies, and an immense lassitude fell from the blue heaven.

He was stifled, like an adolescent, under the amorous waves which swelled in his aching heart. And all the sorrows of his life returned to him, the joys of his marriage from the first day to the last. It had already been eighteen months now!

At seven o’clock in the evening, Berthe came to fetch him for dinner . . .

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

Letters about *Madame Bovary*†

To Louise Colet¹

[*Croisset, January 12 or 14, 1852*]

I am hideously worried, mortally depressed. My accursed *Bovary* is harrying me and driving me mad. Last Sunday Bouilhet criticized one of my characters and the outline.² I can do nothing about it: there is some truth in what he says, but I feel that the opposite is true also. Ah, I am tired and discouraged! You call me Master. What a wretched Master!

No—it is possible that the whole thing hasn't had enough spade-work, for distinctions between thought and style are a sophism. Everything depends on the conception. So much the worse! I am going to continue, and as quickly as I can, in order to have a complete picture. There are moments when all this makes me wish I were dead. Ah! No one will be able to say that I haven't experienced the agonies of Art!

Friday night [*Croisset, January 16, 1852*]

There are in me, literally speaking, two distinct persons: one who is infatuated with bombast, lyricism, eagle flights, sonorities of phrase and the high points of ideas; and another who digs and burrows into the truth as deeply as he can, who likes to treat a humble fact as respectfully as a big one, who would like to make you feel almost *physically* the things he reproduces; this latter person likes to laugh, and enjoys the animal sides of man. . . .

What seems beautiful to me, what I should like to write, is a book about nothing, a book dependent on nothing external, which would be held together by the strength of its style, just as the earth, suspended in the void, depends on nothing external for its support; a book which would have almost no subject, or at least in which the subject would be almost invisible, if such a thing is possible. The finest works are those that contain the least matter; the closer ex-

† From *The Selected Letters of Gustave Flaubert*, translated and edited by Francis Steegmuller (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc., 1953). Copyright © 1953 by Francis Steegmuller; reprinted by permission of the publishers. All notes are by the editor of this Norton Critical Edition. The passages here reprinted are those immediately relevant to *Madame Bovary*; Steegmuller himself made a selection from the very numerous letters that touch on the novel.

1. Louise Colet (1810–1876), a writer of the time; she was an on-and-off lover of Flaubert's.
2. Louis Bouilhet (1822–1869), himself a poet, had known Flaubert ever since they both were pupils at the Lycée in Rouen. He later became his close friend and literary counselor, editing his works with a thoroughness that was not always judicious.

pression comes to thought, the closer language comes to coinciding and merging with it, the finer the result. I believe that the future of Art lies in this direction. I see it, as it has developed from its beginnings, growing progressively more ethereal, from the Egyptian pylons to Gothic lancets, from the 20,000-line Hindu poems to the effusions of Byron. Form, as it is mastered, becomes attenuated; it becomes dissociated from any liturgy, rule, yardstick; the epic is discarded in favor of the novel, verse in favor of prose; there is no longer any orthodoxy, and form is as free as the will of its creator. This emancipation from matter can be observed everywhere: governments have gone through similar evolution, from the oriental despotisms to the socialisms of the future.

It is for this reason that there are no noble subjects or ignoble subjects; from the standpoint of pure Art one might almost establish the axiom that there is no such thing as subject, style in itself being an absolute manner of seeing things.

[*Croisset*,] *Saturday night, February 1, 1852*

Bad week. Work didn't go; I had reached a point where I didn't know what to say. It was all shadings and refinements; I was completely in the dark: it is very difficult to clarify by means of words what is still obscure in your thoughts. I made outlines, spoiled a lot of paper, floundered and fumbled. Now I shall perhaps find my way again. Oh, what a rascally thing style is! I think you have no idea of what kind of a book I am writing. In my other books I was slovenly; in this one I am trying to be impeccable, and to follow a geometrically straight line. No lyricism, no comments, the author's personality absent. It will make sad reading; there will be atrociously wretched and sordid things. Bouilhet, who arrived last Sunday at three just after I had written you, thinks the tone is right and hopes the book will be good. May God grant it! But it promises to take up an enormous amount of time. I shall certainly not be through by the beginning of next winter. I am doing no more than five or six pages a week.

[*Croisset*,] *February 8, [1852]*

So you are decidedly enthusiastic about *Saint Antoine*! Well, that makes one, at least! That's something. Though I don't accept everything you say about it, I think my friends refused to see what there was in it. Their judgment was superficial; I don't say unfair, but superficial. . . .

Now I am in an entirely different world, a world of attentive observations of the most humdrum details. I am delving into the damp and moldy corners of the soul. It is a far cry from the mythological and theological fireworks of *Saint Antoine*. And, just as the subject is different, so I am writing in an entirely different manner.

Nowhere in my book must the author express his emotions or his opinions.

I think that it will be less lofty than *Saint Antoine* as regards ideas (a fact that I consider of little importance), but perhaps it will be more intense and unusual without being obviously so.

Wednesday, 1 A.M. [Croisset, March 3, 1852]

Thank you, thank you, my darling, for all the affection you send me. It makes me proud that you should feel happy about me; how I will embrace you next week!

I have just reread several children's books for my novel. I am half crazy tonight, after all the things I looked at today—from old keepsakes to tales of shipwrecks and buccaneers. I came upon old engravings that I had colored when I was seven or eight and that I hadn't seen since. There are rocks painted blue and trees painted green. At the sight of some of them (for instance a scene showing people stranded on ice floes) I re-experienced feelings of terror that I had as a child. I should like something that would put it out of my mind; I am almost afraid to go to bed. There is a story of Dutch sailors in ice-bound waters, with bears attacking them in their hut (this picture used to keep me awake), and one about Chinese pirates sacking a temple full of golden idols. My travels and my childhood memories color off from each other, fuse, whirl dazzlingly before my eyes, and rise up in a spiral. . . .

For two days now I have been trying to live the dreams of young girls, and for this purpose I have been navigating in milky oceans of books about castles and troubadours in white-plumed velvet caps. Remind me to speak to you about this. You can give me exact details that I need.

Saturday, 1 A.M. [Croisset, March 20–21, 1852]

The entire value of my book, if it has any, will consist of my having known how to walk straight ahead on a hair, balanced above the two abysses of lyricism and vulgarity (which I seek to fuse in analytical narrative). When I think of what it can be I am dazzled. But then, when I reflect that so much beauty has been entrusted to me, I am so terrified that I am seized with cramps and long to rush off and hide—anywhere. I have been working like a mule for fifteen long years. All my life I have lived with a maniacal stubbornness, keeping all my other passions locked up in cages and visiting them only now and then, for diversion. Oh, if ever I produce a good book I'll have worked for it! Would to God that Buffon's blasphemous words were true.³ I should certainly be among the foremost.

3. The words attributed to Buffon are "Le génie est une longue patience" ("genius is a matter of endless patience").

Saturday, 12:30 A.M. [Croisset, March 27, 1852]

Tonight I finished scribbling the first draft of my young girl's dreams. I'll spend another fortnight sailing on these blue lakes, after which I'll go to a ball and then spend a rainy winter, which I'll end with a pregnancy. And about a third of my book will be done.

Saturday night [Croisset, April 24, 1852]

If I haven't written sooner in reply to your sorrowful and discouraged-sounding letter, it is because I have been in a great fit of work. The day before yesterday I went to bed at five in the morning and yesterday at three. Since last Monday I have put everything else aside, and have done nothing all week but sweat over my *Bovary*, disgruntled at making such slow progress. I have now reached my ball, which I will begin Monday. I hope that may go better. Since you last saw me I have written 25 pages in all (25 pages in six weeks). They were tough. Tomorrow I shall read them to Bouilhet. As for myself, I have gone over them so much, recopied them, changed them, handled them, that for the time being I can't make head or tail of them. But I think they will stand up. You speak of your discouragements: if you could see mine! Sometimes I don't understand why my arms don't drop from my body with fatigue, why my brains don't melt away. I am leading a stern existence, stripped of all external pleasure, and am sustained only by a kind of permanent rage, which sometimes makes me weep tears of impotence but which never abates. I love my work with a love that is frenzied and perverted, as an ascetic loves the hair shirt that scratches his belly. Sometimes, when I am empty, when words don't come, when I find I haven't written a single sentence after scribbling whole pages, I collapse on my couch and lie there dazed, bogged in a swamp of despair, hating myself and blaming myself for this demented pride. * * *

Thursday, 4 A.M. [Croisset, July 22, 1852]

I am in the process of copying and correcting the entire first part of *Bovary*. My eyes are smarting. I should like to be able to read these 158 pages at a single glance and grasp them with all their details in a single thought. A week from Sunday I shall read the whole thing to Bouilhet, and a day or two later you will see me. What a bitch of a thing prose is! It is never finished; there is always something to be done over. Still, I think it is possible to give it the consistency of verse. A good prose sentence should be like a good line of poetry—*unchangeable*, just as rhythmic, just as sonorous. Such, at least, is my ambition (I am sure of one thing: no one has ever conceived a more perfect type of prose than I; but as to the execu-

tion, how weak, how weak, oh God!). Nor does it seem to me impossible to give psychological analysis the swiftness, clarity, and impetus of a strictly dramatic narrative. That has never been attempted, and it would be beautiful. Have I succeeded a little in this? I have no idea. At this moment I have no definite opinion about my work.

Sunday, 11 P.M. [Croisset, September 19, 1852]

What trouble my *Bovary* is giving me! Still, I am beginning to see my way a little. Never in my life have I written anything more difficult than what I am doing now—trivial dialogue. . . . I have to portray, simultaneously and in the same conversation, five or six characters who speak, several others who are spoken about, the scene, and the whole town, giving physical descriptions of people and objects; and in the midst of all that I have to show a man and a woman who are beginning (through a similarity in tastes) to fall in love with each other. If only I had space! But the whole thing has to be swift without being dry, and well worked out without taking up too much room; and many details which would be more striking here I have to keep in reserve for use elsewhere. I am going to put the whole thing down quickly, and then proceed by a series of increasingly drastic revisions; by going over and over it I can perhaps pull it together. The language itself is a great stumbling-block. My characters are completely commonplace, but they have to speak in a literary style, and politeness of language takes away so much picturesqueness from any speech!

Saturday night, 3 o'clock [Croisset, January 15, 1853]

The beginning of the week was frightful, but things have been going better since Thursday. I still have six to eight pages to do before reaching a break, and then I'll come to see you. I think that will be in a fortnight. Bouilhet will probably come with me. His reason for not writing you more often is that he has nothing to report or has no time. Do you realize that the poor devil has to give eight hours of lessons a day? . . .

Last week I spent *five days writing one page*, and I dropped everything else for it—my Greek, my English; I gave myself up to it entirely. What worries me in my book is the element of *entertainment*. That side is weak; there is not enough action. I maintain, however, that *ideas* are action. It is more difficult to hold the reader's interest with them, I know, but this is a problem for style to solve. I now have fifty pages in a row without a single event. It is an uninterupted portrayal of a bourgeois existence and of a love that remains inactive—a love all the more difficult to depict because it is timid and deep, but alas! lacking in inner turbulence, because my gentle-

man has a sober nature. I had something similar in the first part: the husband loves his wife in somewhat the same fashion as her lover. Here are two mediocrities in the same milieu, and I must differentiate between them. If I bring it off it will be a great achievement, I think, for it will be like painting in monotone without contrasts—not easy. But I fear that all these subtleties will be wearisome, and that the reader will long for more movement. But one must be loyal to one's conception. If I tried to insert action I should be following a rule and would spoil everything. One must sing with one's own voice: and mine will never be dramatic or attractive. Besides, I am convinced that everything is a question of style, or rather of form, of presentation.

* * *

Wednesday night, midnight [Croisset, April 6, 1853]

What is making me go so slowly is that nothing in this book is derived from myself; never has my personality been of less use to me. Later I may be able to produce things that are better (I certainly hope so); it is difficult for me to imagine that I will ever write anything more carefully calculated. Everything is deliberate. If it's a failure, it will at least have been good practice. What is natural for me is unnatural for others—I am at home in the realm of the extraordinary and the fantastic, in flights of metaphysics and mythology. *Saint Antoine* didn't demand a quarter of the mental tension that *Bovary* is causing me. It was an outlet for my feelings; I had only pleasure in writing it, and the eighteen months spent writing its five hundred pages were the most deeply voluptuous of my entire life. Think of me now: having constantly to be in the skins of people for whom I feel aversion. For six months I have been a platonic lover, and at this very moment the sound of church bells is causing me Catholic raptures and I feel like going to confession!

Saturday night, 1 A.M. [Croisset, June 25–26, 1853]

At last I have finished the first section of my second part. I have now reached the point I should have reached before our last meeting at Mantes—you see how far behind I am. I shall spend another week reading it over and copying it, and a week from tomorrow shall spew it all out to Bouilhet. If it is all right it will be a great worry off my mind and a considerable accomplishment, I assure you, for I had very little to go on. But I think that this book will have a great defect: namely, a want of proportion between its various parts. I have so far 260 pages containing only preparations for action—more or less disguised expositions of character (some of them, it is true, more developed than others), of landscapes and of places. My conclusion, which will be the account of my little lady's death and funeral and of her husband's grief, will be sixty pages

long at least. That leaves, for the body of the action itself, 120 to 160 pages at the most. Isn't this a real defect? What reassures me (though not completely) is that the book is a biography rather than a fully developed story. It is not essentially dramatic; and if the dramatic element is well submerged in the general tone of the book the lack of proportion in the development of the various parts may pass unnoticed. But then isn't life a little like this? An act of coition lasts a minute, and it has been anticipated for months on end. Our passions are like volcanoes; they are continually rumbling, but they erupt only from time to time.

* * *

Tuesday, 1 A.M. [Croisset, June 28–29, 1853]

I have been in excellent form this week. I have written eight pages, all of which I think can stand pretty much as they are. Tonight I have just outlined the entire big scene of the Agricultural Show. It will be colossal—thirty pages at least. Against the background of this rustico-municipal celebration, with all its details (all my secondary characters will be shown in action), there will be continuous dialogue between a gentleman and the lady he is doing his best to seduce. Moreover, somewhere in the middle I have a solemn speech by a counselor of the prefecture, and at the end (this I have already finished) a newspaper article written by my pharmacist, who gives an account of the celebration in fine philosophical, poetical, progressive style. You see it is no small chore. I am sure of my local color and of many of my effects; but it's a hideous job to keep it from getting too long—especially since this sort of thing shouldn't be skimpy. Once this is behind me I shall soon reach my scene of the lovers in the autumn woods, with their horses cropping the leaves beside them; and then I think I'll have clear sailing—I'll have passed Charybdis, at least, even though Scylla still remains to be negotiated.

Sunday, 4 o'clock [Trouville, August 14, 1853]

I spent an hour yesterday watching the ladies bathe. What a sight! What a hideous sight! The two sexes used to bathe together here. But now they are kept separate by means of signposts, preventive nets, and a uniformed inspector—nothing more depressingly grotesque can be imagined. However, yesterday, from the place where I was standing in the sun, with my spectacles on my nose, I could contemplate the bathing beauties at my leisure. The human race must indeed have become absolutely moronic to have lost its sense of elegance to this degree. Nothing is more pitiful than these bags in which women encase their bodies, and these oil-cloth caps! What faces! What figures! And what feet! Red, scrawny, covered with corns and bunions, deformed by shoes, long as shut-

tles or wide as washerwomen's paddles. And in the midst of everything, scrofulous brats screaming and crying. Further off, grandmas knitting and respectable old gentlemen with gold-rimmed spectacles reading newspapers, looking up from time to time between lines to savor the vastness of the horizon with an air of approval. The whole thing made me long all afternoon to escape from Europe and go live in the Sandwich Islands or the forests of Brazil. There, at least, the beaches are not polluted by such ugly feet, by such foul-looking specimens of humanity.

The day before yesterday, in the woods of Touques, in a charming spot beside a spring, I found old cigar butts and scraps of pâté. People had been picnicking. I described such a scene in *Novembre*, eleven years ago; it was entirely imagined, and the other day it came true. Everything one invents is true, you may be sure. Poetry is as precise as geometry. Induction is as accurate as deduction; and besides, after reaching a certain point one no longer makes any mistake about the things of the soul. My poor Bovary, without a doubt, is suffering and weeping at this very instant in twenty villages of France.

Friday night, 2 A.M. [Croisset, December 23, 1853]

I must love you to write you tonight, for I am *exhausted*. My head feels as though it were being squeezed in an iron vise. Since two o'clock yesterday afternoon (except for about twenty-five minutes for dinner), I have been writing *Bovary*. I am in the midst of love-making; I am sweating and my throat is tight. This has been one of the rare days of my life passed completely in illusion from beginning to end. At six o'clock this evening, as I was writing the word "hysterics," I was so swept away, was bellowing so loudly and feeling so deeply what my little Bovary was going through, that I was afraid of having hysterics myself. I got up from my table and opened the window to calm myself. My head was spinning. Now I have great pains in my knees, in my back, and in my head. I feel like a man who has —ed too much (forgive me for the expression)—a kind of rapturous lassitude. And since I am in the midst of love it is only proper that I should not fall asleep before sending you a caress, a kiss, and whatever thoughts are left in me. Will what I write be good? I have no idea—I am hurrying a little, to be able to show Bouilhet a complete section when he comes to see me. What is certain is that my book has been going at a lively rate for the past week. May it continue so, for I am weary of my usual snail's pace. But I fear the awakening, the disillusion that may come from the recopied pages. No matter; it is a delicious thing to write, whether well or badly—to be no longer yourself but to move in an entire universe of your own creating. Today, for instance, man and

woman, lover and beloved, I rode in a forest on an autumn afternoon under the yellow leaves, and I was also the horse, the leaves, the wind, the words my people spoke, even the red sun that made them half-shut their love-drowned eyes. Is this pride or piety? Is it a silly overflow of exaggerated self-satisfaction, or is it really a vague and noble religious instinct? But when I think of these marvelous pleasures I have enjoyed I am tempted to offer God a prayer of thanks—if only I knew he could hear me! Praised be the Lord for not creating me a cotton merchant, a vaudevillian, a wit, etc.! Let us sing to Apollo like the ancient bards, and breathe deeply of the cold air of Parnassus; let us strum our guitars and clash our cymbals, and whirl like dervishes in the eternal pageant of Forms and Ideas.

Monday night, 1 o'clock [Croisset, January 2, 1854]

[Bouilhet] was satisfied with my love scene. However, before said passage I have a transition of eight lines which took me three days; it doesn't contain a superfluous word, yet I must do it over once again because it is too slow. It is a piece of direct discourse which has to be changed into indirect, and in which I haven't room to say everything that should be said. It all has to be swift and casual, since it must remain inconspicuous in the ensemble. After this I shall still have three or four other infinitesimal corrections, which will take me one more entire week. How slow I am! No matter; I am getting ahead. I have taken a great step forward, and feel an inner relief that gives me new vigor, even though tonight I literally sweated with effort. It is so difficult to undo what is done, and well done, in order to put something new in its place, and yet hide all traces of the patch. . . .

How true it is that concern with morality makes every work of the imagination false and stupid! I am becoming quite a critic. The novel I am writing sharpens this faculty, for it is essentially a work of criticism, or rather of anatomy. The reader will not notice, I hope, all the psychological work hidden under the form, but he will sense its effect. At the same time I am also tempted to write big, sumptuous things—battles, sieges, descriptions of the fabulous ancient East. Thursday night I spent two wonderful hours, my head in my hands, dreaming of the bright walls of Ecbatana. Nothing has been written about all that. How many things still hover in the limbo of human thought! There is no shortage of subjects, but only of men.

* * *

Friday night, midnight [Croisset, April 7, 1854]

I have just made a fresh copy of what I have written since New Year, or rather since the middle of February, for on my return from

Paris I burned all my January work. It amounts to thirteen pages, no more, no less, thirteen pages in seven weeks. However, they are in shape, I think, and as perfect as I can make them. There are only two or three repetitions of the same word which must be removed, and two turns of phrase that are still too much alike. At last something is completed. It was a difficult transition: the reader had to be led gradually and imperceptibly from psychology to action. Now I am about to begin the dramatic, eventful part. Two or three more big pushes and the end will be in sight. By July or August I hope to tackle the denouement. What a struggle it has been! My God, what a struggle! Such drudgery! Such discouragement! I spent all last evening frantically poring over surgical texts. I am studying the theory of clubfeet. In three hours I devoured an entire volume on this interesting subject and took notes. I came upon some really fine sentences. "The maternal breast is an impenetrable and mysterious sanctuary, where . . . etc." An excellent treatise, incidentally. Why am I not young? How I should work! One ought to know everything, to write. All of us scribblers are monstrously ignorant. If only we weren't so lacking in stamina, what a rich field of ideas and similes we could tap! Books that have been the source of entire literatures, like Homer and Rabelais, contain the sum of all the knowledge of their times. They knew everything, those fellows, and we know nothing. Ronsard's poetics contains a curious precept: he advises the poet to become well versed in the arts and crafts—to frequent blacksmiths, goldsmiths, locksmiths, etc.—in order to enrich his stock of metaphors. And indeed that is the sort of thing that makes for rich and varied language. The sentences in a book must quiver like the leaves in a forest, all dissimilar in their similarity.

Saturday night, 1 o'clock [Croisset, April 22, 1854]

I am still struggling with clubfeet. My dear brother failed to keep two appointments with me this week, and unless he comes tomorrow I shall be forced to make another trip to Rouen. No matter; my work progresses. I have had a good deal of trouble these last few days over a religious speech. From my point of view, what I have written is completely impious. How different it would have been in a different period! If I had been born a hundred years earlier how much rhetoric I'd have put into it! Instead, I have written a mere, almost literal description of what must have taken place. The leading characteristic of our century is its historical sense. This is why we have to confine ourselves to relating the facts—but *all* the facts, the *heart* of the facts. No one will ever say about me what is said about you in the sublime prospectus of the *Librairie Nouvelle*: "All her writings converge on this lofty goal" (the ideal of a better fu-

ture). No, we must sing merely for the sake of singing. Why is the ocean never still? What is the *goal* of nature? Well, I think the goal of mankind exactly the same. Things exist because they exist, and you can't do anything about it, my good people. We are always turning in the same circle, always rolling the same stone. Weren't men freer and more intelligent in the time of Pericles than they are under Napoleon III? On what do you base your statement that I am losing "the understanding of certain feelings" that I do not experience? First of all, please note that I *do* experience them. My heart is "human," and if I do not want a child "of my own" it is because I feel that if I had one my heart would become too "paternal." I love my little niece as though she were my daughter, and my "active" concern for her is enough to prove that those are not mere words. But I should rather be skinned alive than "exploit" this in my writing. I refuse to consider Art a drain-pipe for passion, a kind of chamberpot, a slightly more elegant substitute for gossip and confidences. No, no! Genuine poetry is not the scum of the heart. * * *

I am expressing myself badly, but well enough, I think, for you to understand the general trend of my resistance to your criticism, judicious as they may be. You were asking me to turn it into another book. You were asking me to violate the inner poetics that determined the pattern (as a philosopher would say) after which it was conceived. Finally, I should have failed in my duty to myself and to you, in acting out of deference and not out of conviction.

Art requires neither complaisance nor politeness; nothing but faith—faith and freedom.

*To Léon Laurent-Pichat*⁴

[*Croisset, between December 1 and 15, 1856*]

Dear Friend

First, thank you for pointing out the difference between your personal and your editorial attitudes concerning my book; I therefore now address not the poet Laurent-Pichat, but the *Revue*, an abstract personality whose interests you represent. This is my reply to the *Revue de Paris*:

1. You kept the manuscript of *Madame Bovary* for three months, and thus you had every opportunity, before beginning to print the work, to know your own mind regarding it. The alternatives were to take it or leave it. You took it, and you must abide by the consequences.

2. Once the agreement was concluded, I consented to the elimination of a passage which I consider very important, because you

4. Léon Laurent-Pichat (1823–1886) was co-director, with Maxime DuCamp, of the *Revue de Paris*, in which *Madame Bovary* first appeared.

claimed that to print it might involve you in difficulties. I complied gracefully, but I will not conceal from you (and now I am speaking to my friend Pichat) that I at once began to regret bitterly ever having had the idea of publishing. Let us speak our minds fully or not at all.

3. I consider that I have already done a great deal, and you consider that I should do still more. *I will do nothing*; I will not make a correction, not a cut; I will not suppress a comma; nothing, nothing! But if you consider that I am embarrassing you, if you are afraid, the simple thing to do is to stop publication of *Madame Bovary*. This would not disturb me in the slightest.

Now that I have finished addressing the *Revue*, let me point out one thing to my friend:

By eliminating the passage about the cab you have not made the story a whit less shocking; and you will accomplish no more by the cuts you ask for in the sixth installment.

You are objecting to details, whereas actually you should object to the whole. The brutal element is basic, not incidental. Blacks cannot be made white, and you cannot change a book's blood. All you can do is to weaken it.

I need scarcely say that if I break with the *Revue de Paris* I shall nevertheless retain friendly feelings for its editors.

I know how to distinguish between literature and literary business.

*To Madame Maurice Schlesinger*⁵

Paris, January 14, 1857

How touched I was by your kind letter, dear Madame! I can give you full answers to the questions you ask concerning the author and the book. Here is the whole story:

The *Revue de Paris*, in which I published my novel (in installments from October 1 to December 15), had previously received two warnings—being an anti-government organ. The authorities thought that it would be a clever move to suppress it entirely, on the grounds of immorality and atheism; and quite at random they picked out some passages from my book which they called licentious and blasphemous. I was summoned before the investigating magistrate and the proceedings began. But friends made strenuous efforts on my behalf, sloshing about for me in the most exalted filth of the capital. Now I am assured that everything has been stopped, though I have heard nothing official. I have no doubts of my suc-

5. Flaubert nourished an unconsummated love for Madame Maurice Schlesinger (1810–1888) and would use her as a model in drafting Madame Arnoux in *The Sentimental Education*.

cess; the whole thing has been too stupid. Consequently, I shall be able to publish my novel in book form. You will receive it in about six weeks, I think, and for your amusement I will mark the incriminated passages. One of them, a description of Extreme Unction, is nothing but a page from the *Rituel de Paris*, put into decent French; but the noble guardians of our religion are not very well versed in catechism.

Still, I might very well have been convicted and despite everything sentenced to a year of imprisonment, not to mention a fine of a thousand francs. In addition, each new volume by your friend would have been severely scrutinized by the gentlemen of the police, and a second offense would have put me in a dungeon for five years: in short, I'd have been unable to print a line. Thus, I have learned: (1) that it is extremely unpleasant to be involved in a political affair; (2) that social hypocrisy is a serious matter. But this time it was so stupid that it grew ashamed of itself, loosened its grip, and crawled back into its hole.

As for the book itself, which is moral, ultra-moral, and which might well be awarded the Montyon prize were it a little less frank (an honor which I covet but little), it has had as much success as a novel can have in a magazine.

The literary world has paid me some pretty compliments—whether sincere or not I do not know. I am even told that Monsieur de Lamartine is loudly singing my praises—which surprises me very much, for everything in my book must annoy him! The *Presse* and the *Moniteur* have made me some very substantial offers. I have been asked to write a comic(!) opera and my *Bovary* has been discussed in various publications large and small. And that, dear Madame, with no modesty whatever, is the balance sheet of my fame. Have no worry about the critics—they will treat me kindly, for they well know that I have no desire to compete with them in any way; on the contrary, they will be charming—it is so pleasant to have new idols with which to overturn the old.

Madame Bovary on Trial

Translator's Note

by Bregtje Hartendorf-Wallach

This is an English translation of the integral French transcripts of the obscenity trial against Gustave Flaubert, appended to the Pléiade edition of *Madame Bovary*, in Flaubert, *Oeuvres*, I, eds. A. Thibaudet and R. Dumesnil (Paris: Gallimard, 1951) 615–83. The obscenity trial took place in Paris on January 30, 1857, and lasted one day. It was held in front of a panel of three judges: judges Nacquart and Dupaty and presiding judge Dubarle. In my translation I have attempted to provide English equivalents for the French legal terminology and, to that effect, I have benefited from consulting an earlier translation of Flaubert's trial by Evelyn Gendel, which appeared in Mildred Marmur's translation of *Madame Bovary* (New York: New American Library, 1964). Margaret Cohen's helpful suggestions and expertise have also contributed to shaping my translation into an accessible, contemporary reading of the trial against Flaubert.

Throughout the trial, the prosecution and the defense indicate page references to the various installments of the novel, as it was originally published in the *Revue de Paris*. The French Pléiade trial transcripts reference these page numbers. I have adopted this method of referencing for all of the novel's cited passages in the trial by indicating the corresponding page numbers of quotes in the current Norton translation of *Madame Bovary*. Given the prevalence of quotes from Flaubert's text, the importance attached to them as evidence in the prosecutor's case, and the emphasis put on citing faithfully from the text by the defense, I will also point to significant textual deviations (additions, omissions, and alterations) in the present translation of the trial transcripts from the translation of the novel presented in the Norton Critical Edition. Differences due to Flaubert's elaborate emendations of the novel's serial publication in the *Revue de Paris* in preparation of the first integral edition of the novel in April of 1857 and other variations in the translation of the trial transcripts—such as explanatory comments between parentheses, repetitions, interjections, and emphases—are not noted, as they are easily identified.

Since cultural and literary references risk being lost on twenty-first-century English readers, I have included brief explanatory notes and, where possible, have provided the sources of additional literary quotes

in the trial, which have remained unidentified in the French trial transcripts and Gendel's translation. The rehabilitation of these references draws attention to the degree to which Flaubert's trial represents a "cours de littérature," or a literature course, and to the network of literary texts that informs *Madame Bovary*. I hope that these references will facilitate critical work on this rich and fascinating document.

The Ministry of Justice against Gustave Flaubert†

BRIEF

By the imperial counsel Ernest Pinard, Esq.¹

Gentlemen, in taking up these proceedings, the Ministry of Justice is faced with a difficulty that it is unable to conceal. It does not reside in the nature of the accusation: offenses to public morality and to religion are without a doubt somewhat vague and flexible terms that need to be specified.² Even so, when one speaks to upright and practical minds, it is easy to agree on this, and to distinguish whether a given book page strikes a blow at religion or morality. The difficulty does not reside in our charge; it is rather located in the scope of the work that you are to judge. It concerns a novel in its entirety. When a newspaper article is submitted for your assessment, it is immediately apparent where crime begins and where it ends; the Ministry of Justice reads the article and submits it for your assessment. Here, it is not a question of a newspaper article but a novel in full, which begins on the 1st of October and ends on the 15th of December and is made up of six installments in the *Revue de Paris* of 1856.³ What is to be done in this situation? What is the role of the Ministry of Jus-

† This translation appears for the first time in this Norton Critical Edition. Printed by permission of the translator. Page references to *Madame Bovary* are to this Norton Critical Edition.

1. According to LaCapra's analysis, prosecuting attorney Ernest Pinard played an instrumental role in bringing this case to trial, due to particular emotional investments in Flaubert's novel, going beyond his ambition, young age—he was 35 years old at the time of the trial—and defense of Christian morality (26–27). Dominick LaCapra's *Madame Bovary on Trial* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1982), excerpted in this volume, is a valuable resource for those interested in the significance of the trial in terms of French intellectual history of the nineteenth century, textual reception, and interpretation.
2. Article 1 of the law of May 17, 1819, made provisions for these offenses. Articles 59 and 60 of the Penal Code suppressed them. René Dumesnil, Introduction, *Madame Bovary*, 280.
3. According to LaCapra, the *Revue de Paris*, edited by Maxime Du Camp and Léon Laurent-Pichat, "was known to authorities of the Second Empire as a periodical purveying objectionably liberal, republican, and generally 'advanced' views" (20–21). Already

tice? Read the entire novel? That is impossible. On the other hand, to merely read the accused passages would mean being the object of well-founded criticism. We could be told: if you do not exhibit all facets of the case, if you pass over what precedes and what follows the offending passages, it is obvious that you stifle the proceedings by restricting the terms of discussion. In order to avoid this double disadvantage, there is only one way to proceed and that is to first of all narrate for you the entire novel without reading from it, without indicting any passage, and, secondly, to read and to indict while citing the text, and lastly to respond to objections that could be raised against the general method of accusation.

What is the title of the novel: *Madame Bovary*. It is a title that signifies nothing by itself. There is a second one between parentheses: *Provincial Life*. This is yet another title that does not explain the thoughts of the author but intimates them. The author did not mean to follow such or such true or false philosophical method, he meant to compose genre paintings, and you shall see what kind of paintings!!! The husband undoubtedly opens and ends the book, but the most serious portrait of the work, which illuminates the other paintings, is obviously that of Mrs. Bovary.

Here I narrate, I do not cite. We encounter the husband at collège, and, it must be said, the child already presages what the husband will be. He is excessively slow and timid, so timid that when he arrives at collège and is asked his name, he starts off by answering: *Charbovari*. He is so slow that he labors without moving forward. He is never the first but also never the last of his class; he is, if not the type of incompetence, at least the object of ridicule at collège. After his studies at collège, he went on to study medicine in Rouen, in a room on the fourth floor, overlooking the Seine,⁴ rented for him by his mother from a dyer that she knew. There he studies medicine and he succeeds little by little in obtaining, not the degree of medical doctor, but that of officier de santé. He visited taverns, he missed classes, but otherwise, he had no other passion than playing dominos. That is Mr. Bovary.

under suspicion by the imperial censors, Du Camp and Laurent-Pichat decided on a number of preemptive deletions in the serial publication of the novel, cutting, among others, the scene of the cab, against Flaubert's wishes. Dumesnil, introduction, *Madame Bovary*, 278. The counsel for the defense, Marie-Jules-Antoine Sénard suggests that this editorial self-censorship may have actually attracted the censors' attention, ultimately resulting in the trial. In light of this LaCapra observes that the way in which the editors of the *Revue de Paris* read the novel strikingly coincided with the way it was read at the trial (21). The first integral edition of *Madame Bovary* was published by Michel Lévy frères in April of 1857, two months after Gustave Flaubert, Léon Laurent-Pichat, and Auguste-Alexis Pillet were cleared of the charges brought against them. *Madame Bovary*, ed. Dumesnil 291n, 1026.

4. See page 11. The prosecutor here conflates the Seine with the Robec, a polluted tributary that collected the waste of the dyer's quarter of Rouen where Charles lodges, until it was paved over at the beginning of the twentieth century.

He will marry. His mother finds him a wife: a bailiff's widow from Dieppe. She is virtuous and ugly; she is forty-five years old and has a pension of 1200 livres.⁵ But the notary who administered the pension fund, left for America one fine morning and the recent Mrs. Bovary was struck in such a way, and so overwhelmed by this unexpected blow that she died as a result. That was the first marriage and the first scene.

Mr. Bovary, who had become a widow, contemplated remarrying. He scrutinizes his memories; there's no need to go very far and the daughter of a neighborhood farmer comes to mind immediately, Miss Emma Rouault, who, oddly enough, had aroused suspicions in Mrs. Bovary. Farmer Rouault had only one daughter, who was raised at the convent of the Ursulines of Rouen. She cared little about the farm; her father wished to marry her. The officier de santé steps forward, he is not demanding about the dowry and you understand that with such a frame of mind on both sides things move quickly. The marriage is concluded. Mr. Bovary is at his wife's feet, he is the happiest of men, the blindest of husbands; his only concern is to anticipate his wife's wishes.

Here the role of Mr. Bovary moves to the background; Mrs. Bovary's part becomes the serious artistic effort of the book.

Gentlemen, did Mrs. Bovary love her husband, or did she attempt to love him? No, and from the very start what we may refer to as the initiation scene occurred. From that moment forward, a different horizon spreads out before her and she perceives a new life. The owner of the chateau de la Vaubyessard had given a big party. The officier de santé was invited, his wife was invited and there, she experienced a kind of initiation in the ardors of sensual pleasure! She had perceived the Duke of Laverdière, who had enjoyed success at court; she had waltzed with a Viscount and experienced an unknown inner turmoil. From that moment forward, she had subsisted on a new life; her husband and all that surrounded her had become unbearable. One day, while looking through a piece of furniture, she had happened upon an iron wire that had torn open her finger; it was the wire of her bridal bouquet. To try to rescue her from the troubles that consumed her, Mr. Bovary gave up his practice and settled down in Yonville. It is here that the scene of the first fall takes place. We are now in the second installment. Mrs. Bovary arrives in Yonville, and the first person she meets there and on whom she fixes her gaze is not the local notary, but the sole clerk of that notary, Léon Dupuis. He is a rather young man who studies law and who will leave for the capital. Anyone else

5. Although the French franc definitively replaced the currency of the livre in 1803, everyday language continued to refer to the livre as the equivalent of the franc well into the nineteenth century. A pension of 1200 livres would nowadays amount to 2881.30 euros.

but Mr. Bovary would have been worried by the young clerk's visits, but Mr. Bovary is so naïve that he trusts his wife's virtue; the inexperienced Léon shared the same feeling. He has left, the opportunity is lost, but opportunities are easily renewed. In the vicinity of Yonville lived a certain Mr. Rodolphe Boulanger (you can see that I am narrating). He was a man of thirty-four years, with a violent disposition; he had had lots of success with easy catches; he then had an actress for a mistress; he took notice of Mrs. Bovary, she was young and charming; he decided to make her his mistress. It was an easy thing; he merely needed three opportunities. The first time he had come to the agricultural fair, the second time he had paid her a visit, the third time he had taken her on a horse ride, something that the husband had deemed necessary for his wife's health. And during this first visit to the forest the fall occurs. More and more arrangements to see each other will be made at Rodolphe's castle and, especially, in the officier de santé's garden. The lovers attain the extreme limits of sensual pleasure! Mrs. Bovary wants to be taken away by Rodolphe, Rodolphe does not dare say no, but he writes her a letter in which he attempts to prove to her, with the help of many reasons, that he cannot take her away. When she receives the letter, Mrs. Bovary is crushed and she suffers from a brain fever followed by typhoid fever. The fever killed her love, but left her ill. That was the second scene.

I am getting to the third scene. The fall with Rodolphe was followed by a religious reaction, but it had been a short one; Mrs. Bovary is about to fall again. Her husband had deemed the theater would help his wife's recovery and he had taken her to Rouen. In a loge, opposite to the one occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Bovary, sat Léon Dupuis, the young notary clerk who studies law in Paris and who has returned a remarkably educated and experienced man. He goes to see Mrs. Bovary; he suggests a meeting. Mrs. Bovary names the cathedral. Upon leaving the cathedral, Léon proposes to get into a cab. At first she resists, but Léon tells her that this is how it is done in Paris, and thus, no more obstacles remain. The fall takes place in the cab! More and more meetings are arranged both for Léon and Rodolphe at the officier de santé's residence and later in a rented room in Rouen. At last, she even came to be tired of this second love, and this is where the scene of distress begins, the final scene of the novel.

Mrs. Bovary had lavished and thrown gifts at Rodolphe and Léon, she had led a life of luxury, and, in order to deal with such expenses, she had signed numerous promissory notes. From her husband she had obtained complete power of attorney to manage their joint estate; she had met a usurer who accepted signed promissory notes which, without being paid on the settlement date, were

renewed under the name of an accomplice. Then had come the papier timbré,⁶ protests, judgments, seizure of goods and finally the public notice of the sale of the property of Mr. Bovary, who was unaware of anything. Reduced to the cruelest extremes, Mrs. Bovary asks everybody for money and obtains nothing from anyone. Léon does not have any, and he shrinks back, appalled at the idea of a crime that is suggested to him in order to get some. Spanning all degrees of humiliation, Mrs. Bovary goes to Rodolphe; she does not succeed, Rodolphe does not have three thousand francs. Only one way out remains for her. Offer her excuses to her husband? No. Talk over the matter with her husband? Well now, that husband would have the generosity to forgive her, and that is a humiliation she cannot accept: she poisons herself. Then come painful scenes. The husband is there, beside the ice-cold body of his wife. He has her wedding dress brought in and asks to dress her with it, and to enclose her body in a triple coffin.⁷

One day, he opens the secretary and finds the portrait of Rodolphe, his letters and those of Léon. Do you think that love will falter then? No, no, to the contrary, he gets carried away, he gets excited about this woman, whom others have possessed, due to the souvenirs of sensual pleasure that she left behind for him; and from that moment forward, he neglects his clientele, his family, he lets the remaining parts of his estate evaporate, and, one day, he is found dead in his garden's arbor, holding a long lock of black hair in his hands.

That is the novel: I have narrated it in its entirety without omitting any scene. It is called *Madame Bovary*; you may give it another title and justly call it: *History of the Adulteries of a Provincial Woman*.

Gentlemen, I have carried out the first part of my task; I have narrated, and I will cite, and after the quotations will come the accusation that pertains to two offenses: the offense to public morality and the offense to religious morality. The offense to public morality is in the lascivious paintings that I shall place before your eyes, the offense to religious morality resides in voluptuous images mingled with sacred things. I am getting to the citations. I shall be brief, for you will read the the novel in full. I shall limit myself to citing four scenes for you, or rather, four paintings. The first one will be the painting of the loves and the fall with Rodolphe; the second one, the religious transition between the two adulteries; the

6. Official promissory note, containing the state's water and ink marks indicating the amount of money and tax owed, as well as the date of issuance.

7. Monsieur Bovary wishes Emma to be buried in "Three coffins, one oak, one mahogany, one of lead." See page 259.

third one will be the fall with Léon, which is the second act of adultery, and, finally, the fourth one I want to cite is the death of Mrs. Bovary.

Before unveiling these four corners of the painting, allow me to wonder about the color and brushstroke of Mr. Flaubert, for after all, his novel is a painting, and we need to know to which school he belongs, what color he uses and in what the portrait of his heroine consists.

The overall color of the author, allow me to tell you, is lascivious, before, during and after these falls! When she is a child, she is ten or twelve years old at the convent of the Ursulines. At this age when a young girl is not formed, when a woman cannot feel those first emotions that reveal a new world, she goes to confession.

"When she went to confession (this first citation from the first installment is at page 30 of the October 1st issue),⁸ when she went to confession, she invented little sins in order that she might stay longer, kneeling in the shadows her hands joined together, her face against the grating beneath the whispering of the priest. Comparisons of betrothed, husband, celestial lover, and eternal marriage, that recur in sermons stirred within in the depths of her soul unexpected sweetness."

Is it natural that a little girl invents little sins, when we know that for a child the smallest ones are the most difficult to say? And besides, at that age, when a little girl is not formed, to show her inventing little sins in the dark, beneath the whispering of the priest, while remembering the comparisons of betrothed, husband and celestial lover, which made her experience a kind of shiver of sensual pleasure, is that not depicting what I have called a lascivious painting?

Do you want to see Mrs. Bovary in her slightest actions, in a state of freedom, without a lover, free of error? I skip over that word *future* and that married woman, who did not let anything be discovered where one might have guessed something, which is already a more than equivocal turn of phrase, but do you want to know how the husband was?

That husband of tomorrow "that would have been taken for the virgin of the evening before" and that married woman "who gave no sign that revealed anything."⁹ This husband (page 29),¹ who rises and leaves, "his heart full of the joys of the past night, his mind at rest, his flesh at ease" while "rechewing his happiness, like those who after dinner taste again the truffles which they are digesting."

8. Page 32.

9. Page 26.

1. Page 29.

Gentlemen, I care to clarify the character of Mr. Flaubert's literary work and his brush strokes. He sometimes has lines of a drawing that mean a lot and these lines cost him nothing.

And besides, do you know what catches the eye of this young woman at the chateau de Vaubyessard, what strikes her most? It is always the same thing, it is the Duke of Laverdière, the lover, "it was said, of Queen Marie-Antoinette, between Mr. de Coigny and Mr. de Lauzun," to whom "Emma's eyes turned involuntarily,² as to something extraordinary and august. He had lived at court and slept in the bed of queens!"³

This is merely an historical digression, it will be said? Sad and useless digression! History may have allowed for suspicions, but not for the right to establish them as certain. History has spoken of the necklace in all novels,⁴ history has spoken of a thousand things, but these are merely suspicions, and I repeat, I do not know that she is authorized to transform suspicions into certitude. And when Marie-Antoinette died with the dignity of a sovereign and the calm of a Christian, the blood shed could erase errors and suspicions all the more. My God, Mr. Flaubert needed a striking image to paint his heroine, and took that one to simultaneously give expression to depraved instincts and Mrs. Bovary's ambition!

Mrs. should waltz very well, and here she waltzes:

"They began slowly, then they increased in speed. They turned; all around them was turning, the lamps, the furniture, the wainscoting, the floor, like a disk on a pivot. On passing near the doors, the train of Emma's dress caught against his trousers. Their legs intertwined; he looked down at her; she raised her eyes to his. A torpor seized her and she stopped. They started again and, at an even pace, the Viscount, sweeping her along, disappeared with her to the end of the gallery, where, panting, she almost fell, and for a mo-

2. Pinard leaves out an important detail here that makes the Duke less physically appealing: "to this old man with hanging lips." Page 42.

3. Page 42.

4. The *Affair of the Necklace* of 1785–1786 refers to the trial ordered by King Louis XVI, against Cardinal Louis de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasbourg and the Chaplain of France, the Countess de La Motte, Cagliostro, and Miss d'Oliva. Cardinal de Rohan, who wished to reconcile with Queen Marie-Antoinette, fell prey to the intrigues of the Countess de La Motte and her accomplices Cagliostro and Miss d'Oliva. The Countess persuaded him that the purchase of a diamond necklace for the Queen, worth 1,600,000 livres, or today's equivalent of 3,841,715 euros, would benefit his return to grace. Once the necklace was acquired by the Cardinal, the Countess offered to pass it along to a servant of the Queen, who would then give his gift to the sovereign. This royal servant, however, was the Countess's lover, who sold the necklace. Meanwhile, the Cardinal failed to honor a payment that had come due, and the jewelers turned directly to the Queen to claim the money owed on the necklace. Even though the Countess de La Motte was convicted and incarcerated for her scheming crime, and the Cardinal de Rohan, Cagliostro, and Miss d'Oliva were acquitted, public opinion overwhelmingly considered the Queen the true culprit. This particular scandal discredited the French monarchy and marked Queen Marie-Antoinette's fall from grace. In commenting on the significance of this scandal, Goethe noted that the trial of the necklace was the preface to the French Revolution.

ment rested her head against his shoulder. And then, still turning, but more slowly, he guided her back to her seat. She leant back against the wall and covered her eyes with her hands."⁵

I know well that it is waltzed a bit in this manner, but that does not make it any more moral.

Take Mrs. Bovary in her simplest actions: it is always the same brushstroke and it is on all pages. Justin, the servant of the neighboring pharmacist, for instance, experiences sudden wonder when he is introduced to the secrets of this woman's dressing room. He pursues his voluptuous admiration to the kitchen.

"With his elbows on the long board on which Félicité, the maid, was ironing, he greedily watched all these women's garments spread out about him, the dimity petticoats, the fichus, the collars, and the drawers with running strings, wide at the hips and narrowing below.

'What is that for?' asked the young boy, passing his hand over the crinoline or the hooks and eyes.

'Why, haven't you ever seen anything?' Félicité answered laughing."⁶

As a result the husband wonders, in the presence of this freshly scented woman, whether the scent comes from the skin or the undershirt.

"Every evening he found easy-chairs and a well-dressed wife, charming and so freshly scented, that it was impossible to say where the scent came from, or whether it was the woman who perfumed her blouse."⁷

Enough of detailed citations! You now know the physiognomy of Mrs. Bovary at rest, when she does not provoke anyone, when she does not sin, when she is still completely innocent, when, returning from an appointment, she is not yet at the side of a husband that she detests; you now know the overall color of the painting, the general physiognomy of Mrs. Bovary. The author has taken the greatest care and used all the glory of his style to depict that woman. Did he try to emphasize her intelligence? Never. Her heart? Even less so. Her spirit? No. Her physical beauty? Not even. Ah! I am well aware that there is a most dazzling portrait of Mrs. Bovary after her adultery; but the painting is first and foremost lascivious, the poses are voluptuous, and the beauty of Mrs. Bovary is the beauty of provocation.

I am getting to the four important citations; I shall only cite four; I insist on restricting my scope; I have said that the first citation

5. Page 46.

6. Page 151.

7. Page 52. Pinaré omits the following details of the domestic scene: "a blazing fire, his dinner ready."

would be on the loves of Rodolphe, the second one on the religious transition, the third one on the loves of Léon and the last one on her death.

Let us look at the first one: Mrs. Bovary is close to the fall, nearly succumbing.

"Domestic mediocrity urged her on to wild extravagances, matrimonial tenderness to adulterous desires."⁸ . . . "She cursed herself for not having loved Léon. She thirsted for his lips."⁹

What seduced Rodolphe and what readied him? The pull of the fabric of Mrs. Bovary's dress, which tightened in one place or the next, in accordance with the inflections of her bodice! Rodolphe brought his servant to Bovary's house to have him bled. The servant is about to faint and Mrs. Bovary holds the wash-bowl.

"To put it under the table, with the movement she made in bending down, her dress spread around on the tiles of the room; and as Emma, stooping, staggered a little in stretching out her arms, the pull of her dress made it hug more closely the line of her bosom."¹ Hence this thought by Rodolphe: "he saw Emma again in the room, dressed as he had seen her, and he undressed her."²

Page 417.³ This is the first day when they talk to one another. "They looked at each other, as their desire increased, their dry lips trembled and languidly, effortlessly, their fingers intertwined."

These are the preliminaries to the fall. The fall itself must be read.

"When the costume was ready, Charles wrote to Mr. Boulanger that his wife was able to accept his invitation and that they thanked him in advance for his kindness.

The next day at noon, Rodolphe appeared at Charles' door with two saddle horses. One had pink rosettes at his ears and a deerskin sidesaddle.

He had put on high soft boots, assuming that she had never seen the likes of them; indeed, Emma was charmed with this appearance as he stood on the landing in his great, brown velvet coat and his white corduroy breeches . . ."⁴

.....⁵
 "As soon as he felt the ground, Emma's horse set off at a gallop. Rodolphe galloped by her side."⁶

8. Pages 90–91.

9. Page 101.

1. Page 105.

2. Page 107.

3. Page 121.

4. The costume referred to here is a riding habit. Page 126.

5. These dotted lines appear at several instances in the French trial transcript and indicate the acknowledged skipping over of several sentences in quotation from the novel.

6. Page 128.

Here they are in the forest.

"He drew her farther on to a small pool where duckweeds made greenness on the water . . ."⁷

.....
 'I shouldn't, I shouldn't!' she said. 'I am out of my mind listening to you!'

'Why? Emma! Emma!'

'Ah, Rodolphe! . . . ' she said slowly and she pressed against his shoulder.

The cloth of her dress clung to the velvet of his coat. She threw back her white neck, which swelled in a sigh, and, faltering, weeping, and hiding her face in her hands, with one long shudder, she abandoned herself to him."⁸

When she got up, and she returned to her home and hearth after having shaken off the tiring effects of sensual pleasure, to that home where she would find a husband that adored her; after her first error, after that first adultery, after her first fall, does she experience remorse, or the feeling of remorse, at the sight of that cheated husband that adored her? No! She returns her head held high while she glorifies adultery.

"When she saw herself in the mirror, she wondered at her face. Never had her eyes been so large, so black, or so deep. Something subtle about her being transfigured her.

She repeated: 'I have a lover! A lover!' delighting at the idea as if a second puberty had come to her. So at last she was to know those pleasures of love, that fever of happiness of which she had despaired. She was entering upon something marvelous, where all would be passion, ecstasy, delirium . . ."⁹

Thus from that first error, from that first fall on, she glorifies adultery, she sings adultery's hymn of praise, its poetry and its sensual delights. That, gentlemen, is to me far more serious, far more immoral than the fall itself!

Gentlemen, all pales in the face of this glorification of adultery, even the nocturnal rendezvous a few days later.

"To call her, Rodolphe threw a handful of sand at the shutters. She jumped up with a start; but sometimes he had to wait, for Charles had the habit of talking endlessly by the fireside. She was wild with impatience; if her eyes could have done it, they would have hurled him out of the window. At last she would begin to undress, then take up a book, and go on reading very quietly as if the book amused her. But Charles, who was in bed, would call her to come to bed.

7. Page 130.

8. Page 130.

9. Page 131.

'Come now, Emma,' he said, 'it is time.'

'Yes, I'm coming!' she answered.

Yet, as the candles shone in his eyes, he turned to the wall and fell asleep. She escaped, holding her breath, smiling, quivering, and undressed.

Rodolphe had a large cloak; he wrapped it around her, and putting his arm around her waist, he drew her without a word to the end of the garden.

It was in the arbor, on the same bench of half rotten sticks, where formerly Léon had stared at her so amorously on the summer evenings! She never thought of him now.

The cold of night made them clasp each other more tightly; the sighs of their lips seemed to them deeper; their eyes, that they could hardly see, larger; and in the midst of the silence, words softly spoken would fall on their soul with a crystalline sound, that echoed in endless reverberations."¹

Gentlemen, do you know a more expressive language in the world? Have you ever seen a more lascivious painting? Listen once more:

"Never had Mrs. Bovary been so beautiful as at this period; she had that indefinable beauty that results from joy, from enthusiasm, from success, and that expresses the harmony between temperament and circumstances. Her cravings, her sorrows, her sensuous pleasures and her ever-young illusions had slowly brought her to full maturity, and she blossomed forth in the fullness of her being, like a flower feeding on manure, on rain, wind and sunshine. Her half-closed eyelids seemed perfectly shaped for the long, languid glances that escaped from them, while her breathing dilated the fine nostrils and raised the fleshy corners of her mouth, shaded in the light by a slight black down. One would have said that some artist, skilled in corruption, had to have devised the shape of her hair as it fell on her neck, coiled in a heavy mass, casually reassembled after being loosened daily in adultery. Her voice now took more mellow inflections, her figure also; something subtle and penetrating escaped even from the folds of her gown and from the line of her foot. Charles thought her exquisite and altogether irresistible, as when they were first married."²

Thus far, the beauty of this woman had consisted in her grace, her demeanor, and her clothing; at last, she has just been shown without a veil, and you may say whether adultery has not made her grow in beauty:

"Take me away" she cried, "carry me off! . . . Ah, I beg you!"³

1. Pages 137-38.

2. Page 157.

3. Page 156.

"She pressed her lips against his mouth, as if to capture the un-hoped for consent the moment it was breathed forth in a kiss."⁴

Gentlemen, here is a portrait Mr. Flaubert knows how to paint. How the eyes of this woman are opening wide! How something ravishing came about her since her fall! Has her beauty ever been as dazzling as the morning after her fall, than in the days that followed her fall? What the author shows you is adulterous poetry, and I ask you once more whether these lascivious pages are not characterized by a profound immorality!!!

I am getting to the second citation. The second citation is a religious transition. Mrs. Bovary had been very sick, at the gates of death. She comes back to life, and her convalescence is marked by a small religious transition.

"Mr. Bournisien (he was the curé)⁵ came to see her. He inquired after her health, gave her news, and exhorted her to religion in a playful, gossipy tone that was not without charm. The mere sight of his cassock comforted her."⁶

She will go to communion. I do not much like to encounter holy things in a novel, but at least, when one talks about them, language should not disguise them. Is there something of the faith of the remorseful Madeleine⁷ in this adulterous woman who goes to communion? No, no, she is still the passionate woman who seeks illusions and who looks for them in the holiest and the noblest things.

"Once, at the height of her illness, she thought she was about to die and asked for communion; and while they were making the preparations in her room for the sacrament, while they were clearing the table of its medicine bottles and turning it into an altar, and while Félicité was strewing dahlia flowers on the floor, Emma felt some power passing over her that freed her from her pains, from all perception, from all feeling. Her body, relieved, no longer weighed; another life was beginning; it seemed to her that her being, mounting toward God, would be annihilated in that love like a burning incense that melts into vapor."⁸

In what language does one pray to God with words addressed to a lover in the effusions of adultery? They will speak, without a

4. Page 156.

5. A curé is a parish priest.

6. Page 170.

7. Mary Magdalene is a biblical figure representing a repenting adulterous woman. She is one of the women in the New Testament who witnessed the Resurrection of Jesus, when finding his grave empty. Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20. She is often referred to as being the same woman who followed Jesus into the house of Simon the Pharisee, where she bathed Jesus' feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. When Simon the Pharisee was outraged at the behavior of this woman, Jesus responded that her sins were forgiven due to her repentance. Luke, 7:36-50.

8. Pages 170-71.

doubt, of local color, and they will apologize by saying that a fanciful and novelistic woman does not do things as everyone else, even in religion. There is no local color that excuses this mixture! One day voluptuous, the next day religious: no woman, even in other regions, even under the sky of Spain and Italy, whispers to God the adulterous flatteries that she utters to her lover. You shall assess the value of this language, gentlemen, and you shall not forgive these words of adultery that are, in a sense, introduced into the sanctuary of divinity! That was the second citation; I am getting to the third one: the string of adulteries.

After the religious transition, Mrs. Bovary is still ready to fall. She goes to a show in Rouen. *Lucie de Lammermoor* was playing. Emma reflected on her own situation.

"Ah! If in the freshness of her beauty, before the blemishes of marriage and disillusion of adultery, (some would have said the disillusion of marriage and the blemishes of adultery) if in the freshness of her beauty, she could have anchored her life upon some great, strong heart! Virtue, affection, sensuous pleasure, and duty would have combined to give her eternal bliss."⁹

In seeing Lagardy on stage, she longed to run "into his arms, to take refuge in his strength, as in the incarnation of love itself, and to say to him, to cry out, 'Take me away! Carry me with you! Let us leave! All my passions and all my dreams are yours!'"¹

Léon was behind her.

"He was standing behind her, leaning with his shoulder against the wall of the box; now and again she felt herself shudder as she felt the warmth of his breath from his nostrils on her hair."²

We spoke earlier of the blemishes of marriage; you shall once more be shown adultery in all its poetry, in its ineffable seductions. I have said that the language should have at least been changed and should have said: the disillusion of marriage and the blemishes of adultery. Quite often, when one is married, instead of the cloudless happiness that one hoped for, one encounters sacrifices and bitterness. The word disillusion may therefore be justified, that of blemish cannot be.

Léon and Emma have arranged to meet each other in the cathedral. They visit it, or they don't visit it. They leave.

"A boy was playing on the sidewalk.

'Go and get me a cab!' Léon shouted to him.

The child bounded off like a ball . . .

'Ah, Léon! Truly . . . I don't know . . . if I should!' she simpered. Then, in a serious tone: 'it's very improper, you know.'

9. Pages 179-80.

1. Page 180.

2. Page 181.

'How so,' answered the clerk, 'everybody does it in Paris.'

And these words, like a decisive argument, entirely convinced her."³

Gentlemen, we know now that the fall does not take place in a cab. Due to misgivings that do him credit, the editor of the *Revue* removed the passage of the fall in the cab. But if the *Revue de Paris* draws the curtains on the cab, she does let us enter the room where the meetings take place.

Emma wishes to leave, for she had promised she would return that same evening. "Moreover, Charles expected her and in her heart, she felt already that cowardly docility that is for some women at once the chastisement and the price of adultery."⁴

"Léon kept walking ahead of her along the sidewalk. She followed him into the hotel. He went up, opened the door, entered. 'What an embrace!'

Then, after the kisses, the words rushed forth. They told each other the sorrows of the week, the forebodings, the anxiety for the letters; but now everything was forgotten; and they gazed at each other with voluptuous laughs, and tender names.

The bed was a large one, made of mahogany and shaped like a boat. The red silk curtains which hung from the ceiling, were gathered together too low, close to the lyre-shaped headboards; and nothing in the world was so lovely as her brown hair and white skin set off against that deep crimson color, when with a gesture of modesty, she closed her arms and hid her face in her hands.

The warm room, with its subdued carpet, its frivolous ornaments and its soft light, seemed made for the intimacies of passion."⁵

That is what occurs in that room. Here is yet another very important passage, as a lascivious painting!

"How they loved that room, so full of gaiety, despite its somewhat faded splendor! They always found the furniture arranged the same way, and sometimes hairpins, that she had forgotten the Thursday before, under the pedestal of the clock. They lunched by the fire-side on a little round table, inlaid with rosewood. Emma carved, put bits on his plate, while playing all sorts of coquettish tricks; she would laugh a ringing libertine laugh when the froth from the champagne overflowed the fragile glass into the rings of her fingers. They were so completely lost in the possession of each other that they thought themselves in their own house, that they would go on living there until separated by death, like an eternally young married couple. They said 'our room,' 'our carpet,' 'our armchairs,' she even said 'my slippers,' referring to the gift Léon had bought to sat-

3. Page 193.

4. Page 195.

5. Page 208.

isfy a whim of hers. They were rose-colored satin slippers, bordered with swans down. When she sat on his lap, her leg, which was then too short, hung in the air, and the dainty shoe having no back, was held on only by the toes of her bare foot.

He savored for the first time the inexpressible delights of feminine refinement. He had never encountered this grace of language, this direction in dress, these poses of a weary dove. He admired the exaltation of her soul and the lace on her petticoat. Besides, was she not a 'woman of the world,' and a married woman? In short, a real mistress?"⁶

Isn't that, gentleman, a description that shall be all that one could wish for, I hope, with regards to the accusation? Here is another one, or rather, the continuation of the same scene:

"She had tender words and kisses that thrilled his soul. Where could she have learnt this corruption so deep and well masked as to be almost unseizable?"⁷

Ah! I understand well, gentlemen, the disgust that this husband, who wanted to kiss her upon her return, gave cause to; I understand perfectly that while these kinds of meetings took place, at night she felt with horror "against her flesh, that stretched out man" who slept.⁸

This is not all, at page 73,⁹ there is a last depiction that I cannot leave out; she had reached the exhaustion of sensual pleasure.

"She was constantly promising herself a profound happiness on her next trip; then she confessed to herself that she had felt nothing extraordinary. But this disappointment quickly gave way to a new hope, and Emma returned to him more avid, more breathless and enflamed than before. She undressed brutally, ripping off the thin laces of her corset so violently that they would whistle round her hips like a gliding snake. She went on tiptoe, barefooted, to see once more that the door was locked, then with one movement, she would let her clothes fall at once to the ground;—then, pale and serious, without a word, she would throw herself against his breast with a long shudder."

I note two things here, gentlemen, an admirable painting with respect to talent, but an atrocious portrait from the perspective of morality. Yes, Mr. Flaubert knows how to embellish his paintings with all his artistic means, but without the consideration for the tact of art. In his work, no mist, no veils, it is nature in all its nudity, in all its harshness!

Still, a quote from page 78.¹

6. Pages 208–09.

7. Page 219.

8. Page 227.

9. Page 222.

1. Pages 229–31.

“They knew one another too well to experience any of those sudden surprises which multiply the enjoyment of a possession a hundredfold. She was as sick of him as he was weary of her. Emma found again in adultery all the platitudes of marriage.”

Platitudes of marriage, poetry of adultery! Sometimes it is the blemish of marriage, sometimes they are its platitudes, but it is always the poetry of adultery. Those are the situations, gentlemen, that Flaubert likes to depict, and, unfortunately, he depicts them all too well.

I have narrated three scenes: the scene with Rodolphe and in it you have seen the fall in the forest, the glorification of adultery, and this woman whose beauty becomes greater with this poetry. I have spoken of the religious transition, and you have seen there that prayer borrows its language from adultery. I have spoken of the second fall, I have gone over the scenes that take place with Léon. I have pointed out to you the deleted scene of the cab, but I have showed you the scene of the room and the bed. Now that we believe our convictions firm, let us get to the final scene, the scene of her agony.

The *Revue de Paris* made numerous cuts in it, it appears. Here are the terms in which Flaubert complains about them:

“Considerations that I do not have to take into account: whose value I do not have to gauge, have forced the *Revue de Paris* to make a cut in the issue of the 1st of December. Since its scruples were renewed for the present issue, the review thought it appropriate to remove yet again several passages. As a result, I announce that I decline responsibility for the following sentences; thus, I bid the reader to merely see them as fragments and not as a whole.”²

Let us therefore skip these fragments and let us get to her death. She poisons herself. Why does she poison herself? “‘Ah! It is but a little thing, death!’ she thought. ‘I shall fall asleep and all will be over.’”³ Then, without remorse, without a confession, without a tear of repentance for the suicide that draws to an end and the adulteries of the day before, she will receive the final sacrament. Why the sacrament, since she, in her earlier thought, goes to nothingness? Why, when not a tear is shed, not a Madeleine-like sigh is let out about her crime of incredulity, about her suicide, about her adulteries?

After this scene, comes the one of the extreme unction. These are holy and sacred words for us. With these words, we have sent to sleep our forefathers, our fathers and our relatives, and with these words, one day, our children will send us to sleep. When one wants

2. Flaubert's note accompanied the final installment of *Madame Bovary* in the December 15 issue of the *Revue de Paris*. Dumesnil, introduction, *Madame Bovary*, 279.

3. Page 250.

to reproduce them, it must be done exactly; they must not be accompanied by a voluptuous image of the past life.

As you know, the priest administers the holy anointments to the head, the ears, the mouth, the feet, while pronouncing these liturgical phrases: *Quidquid per pedes, per aures, per pectus*⁴ etc., always followed by the words *misericordia* . . . sin on one side, mercy on the other. They must be reproduced exactly, these holy and sacred words; if you do not reproduce them exactly, then at least do not add anything voluptuous.

"She turned her face slowly, and seemed filled with joy on suddenly seeing the violet stole. She was doubtlessly reminded, in this moment of sudden serenity, of the lost bliss of her first mystical flights, mingling with the visions of eternal beatitude that were beginning.

The priest rose to take the crucifix; then she stretched forward her neck like one suffering from thirst, and gluing her lips to the body of the Man-God, she pressed upon it with all her expiring strength the fullest kiss of love that she had ever given. Then he recited the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*, dipped his right thumb in the oil, and began to give the extreme unction. First, upon the eyes, that had so coveted all worldly goods; then upon the nostrils, that had been so greedy of the warm breeze and the scents of love; then upon the mouth, that had spoken lies, moaned in pride and cried out in lust; then upon the hands that had taken delight in the texture of sensuality; and finally upon the soles of the feet, so swift when she had hastened to satisfy her desires, and that would now walk no more."⁵

Now there are the prayers for the dying that the priest recites in a very low voice, where the words "Christian soul, depart for a higher region" are repeated in each verse. They are whispered at the moment when the last breath of the dying person is exhaled from his lips. The priest whispers them, etc.

"As the death-rattle became stronger, the priest prayed faster; his prayers mingled with Bovary's stifled sobs, and sometimes all seemed lost in the muffled murmur of the Latin syllables that sounded like a tolling bell."⁶

The author has judged it opportune to alternate these words, to

4. Pinard merely mentions a fragment of the liturgical formula that accompanies the ritual of the extreme unction. Pinard includes the anointing of the "pectus," or the chest, to which Sénard draws attention in his defense where he elaborates on the significance of the complete ritual: *Per istam unctionem, et suam piissimam misericordiam, indulgeat tibi Dominus quidquid deliquisti per oculos, per os, per aurem, per manus et per pedes*. This translates: Through this anointing and through his own loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the faults that you have committed through your eyes, mouth, ears, hands, and feet. See page 374 of the trial.

5. Page 256.

6. Page 257.

make them a kind of reply. He lets a blind man on the pavement interrupt, who strikes up a song whose profane words are a kind of response to the prayers for the dying.

"Suddenly from the pavement outside came the loud noise of wooden shoes and the clattering of a stick; and a voice rose—a raucous voice—that sang:

Often the heat of a summer's day,
Makes a young girl dream her heart away.⁷
The wind blew very hard that day,
It blew her petticoat away."⁸

It is at this moment that Mrs. Bovary dies.

Thus, here is the painting: on the one hand, the priest who recites the prayers of the dying; on the other, the organ player, who rouses in the dying woman "an atrocious, frantic, desperate laugh, thinking she saw the hideous face of the poor wretch loom out of the eternal darkness like a menace . . . A final spasm threw her back upon the mattress. They all drew near. She had ceased to exist."⁹

And then, when the body is cold, the thing that must be respected above all is the corpse that the soul has left. When the husband is there, on his knees, shedding tears over his wife, when he has spread the shroud over her, anyone else would have stopped, and this is when Mr. Flaubert has given a final brushstroke.

"The sheet sank in from her breast to her knees, and then rose at the tips of her toes."¹

That was the death scene. I have shortened it and grouped it together, in a way. It is up to you to judge and to assess whether there is a mixture of the sacred and the profane, or whether it would not rather be the mixture of the sacred and the voluptuous.

I have narrated the novel, and afterwards I have accused it. Allow me to say it, the genre that Mr. Flaubert cultivates, that which he realizes without the consideration for the tact of art, but with all the artistic means, is the descriptive genre, it is realist painting. Look at what bounds he reaches. Recently, an issue of the *Artiste* fell into my hands; it does not concern accusing the *Artiste*, but knowing what is Mr. Flaubert's genre, and I ask your permission to quote a few lines of the writing, which do not in any way involve the writing prosecuted against Mr. Flaubert, and in it I saw to which extent Mr. Flaubert excels in painting; he likes to paint temptations, and above all temptations to which Mrs. Bovary suc-

7. Pinard suppresses Emma's response to the blind man's voice before she dies. Flaubert's defense lawyer Sénard draws attention to this negligence in his speech.

8. Pages 257–58.

9. Pages 257–58.

1. Page 260.

cumbed. Well! I find a model of the genre in a few lines that come from the *Artiste* of the month of January, signed Gustave Flaubert, on the temptations of Saint Anthony.² My God! This is a topic on which one can say many things, but I do not believe that it would be possible to give more liveliness to the image, more character to the painting than in these words by Apollinaire³ to Saint Anthony: "Is it science? Is it glory? Do you want to refresh your eyes on moist jasmine leaves? Do you want to feel your body sink as on a swell of a wave into the soft flesh of rapturous women?"

Well! We find here the same color, the same vigorous brush-stroke, the same liveliness of expression!

I must sum up. I analyzed the book, I narrated without forgetting one page, I accused next, this was the second part of my task; I clarified a few portraits, I showed Mrs. Bovary at rest, beside her husband, next to those whom she should not have tempted, and I have made you feel the lascivious colors of this portrait! Then, I analyzed a few big scenes: the fall with Rodolphe, the religious transition, the loves with Léon, the death scene, and in all of them I have found the double offense to public morality and to religion.

I merely need two scenes: the affront to public morality, do you not see it in the fall with Rodolphe? Do you not see it in the glorification of adultery? Do you not see it above all in what takes place with Léon? And then, the affront to religious morality, which I find in the portrayal of the confession, page 30⁴ of the first installment, the issue of the 1st of October, in the religious transition, pages 548 and 550⁵ of the November 15 issue, and, at last, the final death scene.

In front of you, gentlemen, you have three accused men: Mr. Flaubert, the author of the book, Mr. Pichat, who accepted it, and Mr. Pillet, who printed it. In this matter, there is no offense without publicity, and all those who have contributed to publicity must be equally affected. But we hasten to say: the managing editor of the *Revue* and the printer are only of secondary importance. The main accused is the author, Mr. Flaubert, Mr. Flaubert who, informed by editorial note, protests against the cuts that are made in his work. After him comes in second place Mr. Laurent-Pichat, whom you will ask to explain not these cuts that he has made, but those that he should have made, and finally, in the last place, the

2. Flaubert publishes fragments of *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* in the December 1856 and January 1857 issues of the *Artiste*. It is not until 1874 that the work is published in its entirety. Albert Thibaudet, *Chronologie de Flaubert in Madame Bovary*, ed. Dumesnil, xx and xxviii.

3. Apollonius of Tyana.

4. Page 32.

5. Pages 30 and 19.

printer who is the advance sentinel against the scandal. Besides, Mr. Pillet is an honorable man against whom I have nothing to say. We only ask one thing of you: to apply the law to him. Printers must read; when they have not read or have not made read, it is at their risk and peril that they print. Printers are not machines; they have a privilege, they take an oath, they are in a special situation, they are responsible. Once more, they are, if you allow me the expression, the advance sentinels; if they let an infraction pass, it is as if they had let the enemy pass. Mitigate the sentence as much as you shall like with respect to Pillet; be indulgent even towards the managing editor of the *Revue*; as for Flaubert, the principal culprit, it is for him that you should reserve your harshness.

My task is fulfilled; objections must be awaited or avoided. We will be told as a general objection: but, after all, the novel is fundamentally moral, since the adultery is punished?

Two answers to this objection: if I hypothetically assume the work is moral, a moral conclusion could never grant amnesty for the lascivious details that may be in it. And then I say: the work is not fundamentally moral.

Gentlemen, I say that lascivious details cannot be covered up by a moral conclusion, or else one could talk about all imaginable orgies, describe all the base acts of a prostitute, by letting her die on a pallet in the hospital. It would be permitted to study and show lascivious poses! This would go against the rules of common sense. It would amount to putting poison in the reach of all and the antidote in the hands of a very small number, if indeed there were an antidote. Who reads the novel of Mr. Flaubert? Are they men who busy themselves with political or social economy? No! The light pages of *Madame Bovary* fall into lighter hands, into the hands of young women, sometimes of married women. Well! When the imagination will have been seduced, when seduction will have descended into the heart, when the heart will have spoken to the senses, do you believe that good cold reasoning will be good and strong against this seduction of the senses and of sentiment? In addition, men must not drape themselves too much in their force and virtue; men harbor instincts from below and ideas from above and, as with everyone, virtue is the consequence of effort, rather often painful. Lascivious paintings generally have more influence than cold reasoning. That is what I respond to this theory, that is my first response, but I have a second one.

I maintain that the novel *Madame Bovary*, considered from a philosophical point of view, is not in the least moral. No doubt Mrs. Bovary dies from poisoning; she has suffered a lot, it is true; but she dies at her hour and her day, but she dies not because she is adulterous, but because she wanted to die; she dies in all the splen-

dor of youth and her beauty; she dies after having had two lovers, leaving behind a husband who loves her, who adores her, who will find the portrait of Rodolphe, who will find his letters and those of Léon, who will read the letters of a twice-adulterous wife, and who, after that, will love her even more beyond the grave. Who is able to condemn this woman in the book? Nobody. Such is the conclusion. In the book there is not one character that is able to condemn her. If you find in it a wise character, if you find in it a single principal virtue of which adultery is denounced, then I am wrong. Thus if in all the book there is not one character who can make her bend her head; if there is not one idea, one line in virtue of which adultery is denounced, then I am right: the book is immoral!

Would it be in the name of conjugal honor that the book be condemned? But conjugal honor is represented by a felicitous husband, who, after the death of his wife, while meeting Rodolphe, looks on in the face of the lover for traits of the woman that he loves (installment of the 15th of December, page 289).⁶ I ask you, can you denounce that woman in the name of conjugal honor, when in every page in the book the husband bows down before adultery?

Is it in the name of public opinion? But public opinion is personified in a grotesque being, in the pharmacist Homais, who is surrounded by ridiculous characters that this woman dominates.

Would you condemn it in the name of religious sentiment? But you have this sentiment, personified in the curé Bournisien, a priest about as grotesque as the pharmacist, believing only in physical and never in moral suffering, almost a materialist.

Would you condemn it in the name of the author's conscience? I do not know what the author's conscience thinks of it; but in chapter X, the sole philosophical chapter of the work, the installment of December 15, I read the following sentence.

"Someone's death always causes a kind of stupefaction; so difficult is it to grasp this advent of nothingness and to resign ourselves to the fact that it has actually taken place."⁷

This is not a cry of disbelief, but this at least is a cry of skepticism. It is no doubt difficult to understand and to believe; but, still, why this stupefaction that manifests itself at death? Why? Since this onset is something that is a mystery, since it is difficult to understand and to judge, but one has to resign oneself to it. And I myself say that if death is the onset of nothingness, that if the felicitous husband feels his love grow when learning of his wife's adulteries, that if the point of view is represented by grotesque characters, and if religious sentiment is represented by a ridiculous

6. Page 274.

7. Page 258.

priest, one single person is right, rules and dominates: this is Mrs. Bovary. Messalina gets the better of Juvenal.⁸

That is the book's philosophical conclusion, not drawn by the author, but by a man who thinks things over and goes into them, by a man who has looked for a character in the book that could have dominated this woman. There is none. The only character that dominates is Mrs. Bovary. Thus one must look elsewhere than in the book, one must look in this Christian morality that is the foundation of modern civilizations. In light of this morality, everything becomes explained and clarified.

In its name adultery is stigmatized and condemned not because it is an imprudence, which exposes one to disillusionments and regrets, but because it is a crime for the family. You stigmatize and condemn suicide not because it is an act of madness—the madman is not responsible—not because it is an act of cowardice—it at times demands a certain physical courage—but because it is the contempt for one's duty in the life which is ending and a cry of disbelief in the life that begins.

This morality stigmatizes realist literature not because it paints the passions: hatred, vengeance, and love—the world lives for nothing else, and art must paint them—but when it paints them in a fashion that is uncontrolled and lacks moderation. Art without rules is no longer art; it is like a woman who would take off all her clothes. To impose upon art the unique rule of public decency is not to subordinate it but to honor it. One grows greater only in accordance with a rule. Gentlemen, those are the principles that we profess and that is a doctrine that we will defend conscientiously.

SPEECH FOR THE DEFENSE

By the Counsel for the Defense
Marie-Antoine-Jules Sénard, Esq.⁹

Gentlemen, Mr. Gustave Flaubert is accused before you of having written a bad book, of having, in the book, offended public morality and religion. Mr. Gustave Flaubert is next to me; he says in front of

8. Valeria Messalina (22–48 C.E.) was a Roman empress, the wife of Emperor Claudius, who had a reputation for greed and lust, initially unknown to her husband. During Claudius's absence, Messalina married her lover Caius Silius, ultimately resulting in their execution. In Book Six of his *Satires*, Juvenal (55?–127 C.E.) cites an anecdote of Messalina's adulterous ways, in which she is described to shamelessly prostitute herself in a Roman brothel.

9. As former President of the National Assembly and Minister of the Interior, Marie-Antoine-Jules Sénard was a far more seasoned orator than his counterpart Ernest Pinard. The rhetorical weight and length of Sénard's speech may in part be credited with

you that he has written an honorable book; that the idea of his book, from the first to the last line, is a moral and religious idea and that, if it were not misrepresented (we have seen at several instances what a great talent can do to misrepresent an idea) it would be to you (and, in a moment, will again become) what it has already been for the readers of the book, an eminently moral and religious idea that translates into these words: incitement to virtue by the horror of vice.

I provide you here with Mr. Gustave Flaubert's statement and I will boldly compare it with the brief of the Ministry of Justice, for this statement is serious. It is so because of the person who has made it, and it is so because of the circumstances that have governed the execution of the book, which I am about to share with you.

Already, the statement is serious because of the person who makes it, and, allow me to tell you, Mr. Flaubert was not a stranger who needed to be recommended to me, who needed to give me information, I will not say about his morality, but about his dignity. I come here, within this courtroom, to fulfill a duty of conscience, after having read the book, and after having felt emanate from this reading, everything within me that is decent and profoundly religious. But, while I come to fulfill my duty of conscience, I come to fulfill a duty of friendship. I recall, I could not forget that his father, who honored me with his long friendship and honored me with it till his final day, his illustrious father, allow me to tell you, was for more than thirty years the chief surgeon at L'Hôtel-Dieu of Rouen. He was the protector of Dupuytren.¹ While giving great lessons to science, he endowed it with great names. I only want to cite one of them: Cloquet.² Not only did he himself leave behind a fine name in science, he has left in it great memories for enormous services rendered to humanity. And while I remember my relations with him, I want to tell you that, his son, who is brought before criminal court for offense to morality and religion, his son is the friend of my children, as I was the friend of his father. I know his thoughts, I know his intentions and here the lawyer has the right to present himself as a personal guarantor of his client.

the successful outcome of the trial, as LaCapra suggests (34). As a token of his gratitude, Flaubert dedicated the novel to Sénard upon its first integral publication in April 1857. Illustrative of Sénard's powers of persuasion is his gradual assumption of the role of mouthpiece for Flaubert, as the defense speech progresses. Sénard goes from speaking of his "client" to the use of the collective "we" and finally reaches a point of complete identification with the author when the counsel asks: "And I, what have I shown?"

1. Guillaume Dupuytren (1777–1835), the renowned anatomist and surgeon who rose from poverty to become the head surgeon at the Parisian hospital Hôtel-Dieu, which became one of the leading hospitals of Europe under his direction.
2. Jules Germain Cloquet (1790–1883) studied natural sciences in Rouen and pursued medicine in Paris. There he became an established surgery professor and in 1851 he was appointed as consulting surgeon to Emperor Napoleon III.

Gentlemen, a great name and great memories carry obligations. Mr. Flaubert's children have not failed him. They were three: two sons and one daughter who died at twenty-one. The eldest was judged worthy of succeeding his father: and he fulfills today and already for several years, the mission that his father fulfilled for thirty years. Here is the youngest: he is at your bar. In leaving them a considerable fortune and a great name, their father left them the need to be intelligent and kindhearted men: useful men. My client's brother entered into a career where service is rendered each day. This man before you devoted his life to study, to literature and the work that is prosecuted before you at this moment is his first work. This first work, gentlemen, that provokes passions, according to the imperial counsel, is the result of lengthy studies and meditations. Mr. Gustave Flaubert is a man of serious character, who is by nature carried towards serious and sad things. He is not the man that the Ministry of Justice, with fifteen or twenty sentences chewed off here and there, came to present us as a producer of lascivious paintings. No. I repeat, he has in his nature all of the most solemn, serious, but at the same time saddest things in the world that one can imagine. By restoring only one phrase, by putting next to some quoted lines the few lines that precede and that follow, his book will soon regain before you its true color, while making the author's intentions known. And of the overly clever words that you have heard, only a feeling of profound admiration for a talent capable of changing everything will remain.

I have told you that Mr. Gustave Flaubert was a serious and solemn man. In keeping with his frame of mind, his studies have been serious and lengthy. Not only have they encompassed all branches of literature, but also the law. Mr. Flaubert is a man who has not contented himself with observations that could be provided by the milieu in which he lived; he has examined other milieus:

*Qui mores multorum vidit et urbes.*³

After his father's death and his studies at collège, he visited Italy and, from 1848 to 1851, he traveled the regions of the Orient, Egypt, Palestine and Asia Minor, where, undoubtedly, in bringing with him great intelligence, the traveler can acquire something lofty and poetic, those colors and that prestige of style that the Ministry of Justice brought out earlier to establish the crime of which he accuses us. That prestige of style, those literary qualities will remain and will brilliantly emerge from these proceedings, but they will not in any way leave him open to indictment.

Back home since 1852, Mr. Gustave Flaubert wrote and sought

3. He saw the manners and cities of many.

to present the outcome of his careful and serious studies, the outcome of what he had collected during his travels, on a large scale.

What is the setting that he has chosen, the subject that he has picked, and how has he treated it? My client is among those who do not belong to any of the schools of which I earlier found the name in the brief. My God! He belongs to the realist school in the sense that he is attached to the reality of things. He would belong to the psychological school in the sense that it is not the materiality of things that drives him, but human feeling, the development of passions in the milieu in which he is situated. He would belong to the romantic school, perhaps less so than to any other, for if romanticism appears in his book, the same as if realism appears in it, it is merely with a few ironic expressions, thrown here and there, which the Ministry of Justice has taken seriously. What Mr. Flaubert has wanted above all has been to take a subject of study from real life, to create, to make up real middle class types and arrive at a useful result. Yes, what has most preoccupied my client in the study to which he has been devoted, is precisely that purpose of usefulness, that he has pursued by presenting three or four individuals from present-day society living in conditions of real life, and by presenting to the reader's eyes the actual painting of what is most often found in the world.

In summing up its opinion of *Madame Bovary*, the Ministry of Justice has said: The second title of the work is: *History of the Adulteries of a Provincial Woman*. I emphatically protest against this title. Had I not felt throughout your brief the continuous influence of your preoccupation, this alone would be my proof. No! The second title of the work is not: *History of the Adulteries of a Provincial Woman*; if you absolutely need a second title, it is: history of an education given too often in the provinces; history of the perils to which it may lead, history of degradation, of mischief, of suicide considered as the outcome of a first error, and of an error that was itself brought about by the faults to which a young woman is often led; history of an education, history of a deplorable life of which this education is too often the preface. That is what Mr. Flaubert wanted to paint and not the adulteries of a provincial woman; you will soon realize it going over the indicted work.

Now the Ministry of Justice has perceived in all that, above all, lascivious color. If I could take the number of lines of the book that the Ministry of Justice has cut and compare it to the number of other lines that he left aside, we would be in the total proportion of one to five hundred and you will see that this proportion of one to five hundred does not constitute a lascivious color, that it is

nowhere; it merely exists under the condition of cuts and commentaries.

Now, what did Mr. Gustave Flaubert mean to paint? First, an education given to a woman above the station in which she is born, as happens with us, it must be said, too often; next, the mixture of disparate elements that as a result occurs in the woman's mind, and then, when a marriage comes about that corresponds not to the education, but to the station in which the woman is born, that the author explained all the facts that occur in the situation created for her.

What else does he show? He shows a woman going to vice through misalliance, and from vice to the final degree of degradation and unhappiness. In a little while when I will have shared with you the book in full, through reading various passages, I will ask the court for the liberty to accept the question in these terms: If this book were put in the hands of a young woman, could it have the effect of leading towards easy pleasures, towards adultery, or to showing her, on the contrary, the danger from the first steps onward and to make her shudder with horror? With the question thus posed, your conscience will solve it.

I say this with regards to the present: Mr. Flaubert meant to paint a woman who, instead of seeking to manage in the station that is given to her by her situation and her birth; who, instead of seeking to get used to the life that belongs to her, remains preoccupied with a thousand foreign ambitions drawn from an education that was too lofty for her; who, instead of adapting to the duties of her position, instead of being the quiet wife of the countryside doctor with whom she spends her days, instead of seeking happiness in her home, in her marriage, she seeks it in endless daydreams, and then, when she meets a young man on her path who flirts with her and plays the same game with her (My God! they are inexperienced, those two), gets aroused, as it were, in stages, and becomes frightened when, resorting to the religion of her early years, she does not find sufficient strength in it; we will see in a moment why she does not find it there. Yet, the young man's ignorance and her own ignorance keep her from a first danger. But soon a man of whom there are many, of whom there are too many in the world, meets her and takes hold of her, that poor woman who has already veered off course, and he sweeps her away. That is of the utmost importance, that is what needed to be seen and that is what constitutes the book itself.

The Minister of Justice feels annoyed, and I believe that he wrongly feels annoyed, at the perspective on conscience and human feeling, that, in the first scene, Mrs. Bovary finds a kind of

pleasure and delight in having shattered her prison, and she returns home saying: "I have a lover."⁴ Do you think that this is not a first heartfelt, human cry? You and I have the proof. But they should have looked a little further and you would have seen that, if the first moment, the first instant of that fall stirs in that woman a kind of transport of delight and frenzy, a few lines further down deception occurs, and, she seems humiliated in her own eyes, as the author puts it.

Yes, deception, pain and remorse happen to her at the moment itself. The man, in whom she had confided, to whom she had given herself over, had merely taken her to use for just a moment, as if she were a toy; remorse gnaws away at her and tears her up. What has shocked you has been to hear it being referred to as disillusions of adultery; you would have better liked *blemishes* in a writer who made that woman pose, who, because she had not understood marriage, felt stained by a husband's touch; who, had found the disillusions of adultery, in having sought her ideal elsewhere. This word has shocked you; instead of *disillusions*, you would have wanted *blemishes* of adultery. The court will judge. Personally, if I had to make that same character stand out, I would tell her: "Poor woman! If you think that your husband's kisses are something monotonous and tedious, if you merely find in them—this is the word that has been pointed out—platitudes of marriage, if you think you see a blemish in that union over which love did not preside, be careful, your dreams are an illusion, and one day you will be cruelly enlightened." The man who objects rather loudly, gentlemen, who uses the word blemish to express what we have called disillusion, speaks a true but vague word that does not make us understand anything. I prefer the man who does not object loudly, who does not utter the word blemish, but who warns the woman of deception and of disillusion, who tells her: "you will only find libertinage, where you think you will find love; you will only find bitterness, where you think you will find happiness. A husband who quietly goes about his business, who kisses you, who puts on his nightcap and eats soup with you, is a prosaic husband who appalls you; you long for a man who loves you, who idolizes you, poor child! That man will be a libertine, who will have taken you up for a minute to play with you. The illusion will have occurred the first time, maybe the second time; you will have returned home cheerfully, while singing the adulterous song: "I have a lover!" The third time you do not need to reach him, disillusion will have taken place. That man, of whom you had dreamt, will have lost all his prestige; in love you will have found once more the platitudes of marriage; and you will

4. Page 131.

have found them once more along with contempt and disdain, disgust and heartrending remorse.

That, gentlemen, is what Mr. Flaubert has said, what he has depicted, what is in every line of his book; that is what distinguishes his work from all other works of the same kind. In his work, the great faults of society are on every page; for him, adultery proceeds filled with disgust and shame. He has taken from life's customary relations the most striking lesson that can be given to a young woman. Ah! My God, more than one of those young women who do not find in decent and lofty principles, in a strict religion, enough to keep them steadfast in the fulfillment of their motherly duties, who, especially, do not find it in that resignation, in that practical knowledge of life that tells us we must make do with what we have, but who direct their dreams outwards, more than one of those most decent and purest young women, who, in their prosaic households, are sometimes tormented by what goes on around them, will be made to reflect by a book like this, you can be sure. That is what Mr. Flaubert has done.

And be very mindful of one thing: Mr. Flaubert is not a man who depicts a delightful adultery for you to have the *Deus ex machina* follow. No. You jumped too quickly from the page that you read to the last one. In his work, adultery is merely a series of torments, regrets and remorse; and then he gets to the final, appalling expiation. It is excessive. If Mr. Flaubert sins, it is because of his excess and I will tell you in a moment who offers that phrase. The expiation is not a long time coming and because of that, the book is eminently moral and useful, for it does not promise a young woman some of these beautiful years at the end of which she can say: after that, one can die. No! From the second day onwards bitterness and disillusion occur. Destitution for morality appears in every line of the book.

This book has been written with a power of observation to which the imperial counsel has done justice: and I call your attention to it because if the accusation is without basis, it must be dropped. This book is written with a truly remarkable power of observation in the slightest details. An article from the *Artiste* signed by Flaubert has also served as a pretext for the accusation. Imperial counsel, be so kind as to point out first and foremost that this article is foreign to the indictment; and be so kind as to point out next that we think it very innocent and moral in the eyes of the court, on one condition that the imperial counsel will have the kindness to read it in its entirety instead of tearing it up in pieces. What strikes in Mr. Flaubert's book is what some reviews have called a complete accuracy, akin to the daguerreotype, in the imitation of all types of things, in the private nature of the mind and heart—and this imita-

tion becomes even more striking through the magic of style. Note well that if he had only used this accuracy in the scenes of decline you could say with reason: the author has delighted in depicting this decline with the power of description that is peculiar to him. From the first page to the last page of his book, he becomes attached, without any kind of reserve, to all the facts of Emma's life, to her childhood in her father's house and to her education in the convent. He does not spare anything. But those who, like me, have read the book from beginning to end will say—a noteworthy thing for which you will thank him, which will not only be his absolution but which should have kept him free from any sort of prosecution—that when he gets to the difficult parts, specifically to the decline, Mr. Flaubert makes do with one word, instead of proceeding like some classical authors, whom the Ministry of Justice knows well but whom he forgot while he wrote his brief and from who I have brought along passages, not to read them to you but so that you will go over them in the judge's chambers (I shall cite a few of these lines in a moment), instead of proceeding like some classical authors, our great masters, who, when they came upon scenes of the sensual union of a man and a woman, did not fail to describe. That is when all of Mr. Flaubert's descriptive power disappears, because his thoughts are chaste, because where he could write with all the magic of style, he feels that there are things that cannot be taken up and described. The Ministry of Justice finds that he has still said too much. When I show men who delighted in the description of these matters in important philosophical works and when I place in high esteem the man who possesses the science of description to such a high degree and who, far from using it, stops himself and abstains, I will indeed have the right to demand satisfaction for the accusation.

However, gentlemen, just as he likes to describe to us the fragrant paths of the pleasant bower where Emma plays, still a child, with foliage, with little pink and white flowers that have just opened—he should not have told us when she goes from there, when she goes down other paths, down paths where she will find mire, when she will soil her feet there, when the stains themselves splash up higher onto her! But that would mean completely to suppress the book and, I go further, the moral element on the pretext of defending it. If the error cannot be shown, if it cannot be pointed out, if in a picture of real life which aims at showing the danger, the fall and the expiation in thought, if you want to prevent the depiction of all that, that obviously means you must remove from the book its entire conclusion.

For my client, this book has not been the object of a few hours of distraction; it represents two or three years of unremitting studies.

And I will now tell you something more: you will see that Mr. Flaubert of the lascivious colors, who, after so many years of work, so many studies, so many travels, so many notes collected from authors that he has read—My God! You will see from what he has drawn, for it is something strange that will take care of vindicating him—completely imbued with Bossuet and Massillon.⁵ In a moment, we will see him again in the study of these authors, attempting not to plagiarize them but rather to reproduce in his descriptions their thoughts and the color used by them. When, after all this work done with so much love, when his work has its purpose, do you think that, filled with self-confidence and in spite of so many studies and meditations, he wanted to directly jump into the space of contention? Undoubtedly he would have done so, had he been unknown in society, had he been the sole owner of his name and had he thought himself able to dispose of it and to give it over as he saw fit. But, I repeat, he is one of those for whom *noblesse oblige*, his name is Flaubert, he is the second son of Mr. Flaubert, he wanted to mark out a way for himself in literature while having profound respect for morality and religion—not out of concern for the imperial prosecutor's department, such an interest could not come to his mind—but from personal dignity, since he did not want to leave his name at the head of a publication if it did not seem worthy of being published to the few people in whom he had faith. Mr. Flaubert has read the pages, in parts and even in its entirety, that he would one day turn over for printing, in front of some friends highly placed in literature and I tell you that none of them was offended about what currently so vividly incites the imperial counsel's severity. Nobody even thought about it. They only examined and studied the literary value of the book. Its moral purpose meanwhile is so clear and written on each line in terms that are so unambiguous that there was no need even to call it into question. Reassured about the book's worth, and encouraged moreover by the most distinguished men of the press, Mr. Flaubert is only concerned with handing it over for printing and for publicity. I repeat, everyone was unanimous in paying tribute to the literary merit, the style and at the same time the excellent idea that presides over the work, from the first to the last line. And when the legal action occurred, not only he was surprised and deeply distressed. Allow me to tell you, we did not understand this legal action, starting with myself who had read the book with great interest as it was published. These are close friends. My God! Nuances

5. Jacques Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704) was Bishop of Maux and an eloquent pulpit orator, especially celebrated for his funeral orations, which were often used to teach oratory in classical French education. Jean-Baptiste Massillon (1663–1742) was Bishop of Clermont and a renowned preacher.

exist that could sometimes elude us in our habits, but that could not elude women of great intelligence, of great purity and of great chastity. There is not one name that can be uttered in this hearing, but if I told you what Mr. Flaubert was told, what I myself was told by mothers that had read the book, if I told you about their astonishment after having gotten such a good impression that they thought they should thank the author for it, if I told you about their astonishment and their distress when they learned that this book should be considered contrary to public morality, to their religious faith, to the faith of their entire life, my God! But the collection of these very assessments is something to draw strength from, had I needed strengthening when combating the Ministry of Justice's assaults.

Yet, amidst all these assessments from literary contemporaries, there is one that I want to share with you. There is one contemporary who we not only respect for his fine and great character. Even in the midst of adversity and the suffering, that he struggles with courageously every day, there is one who is great because of literary works that must be recalled because that is what constitutes his skill, great above all because of the purity that exists in all his works and for the chastity of all his writings: Lamartine.⁶

Lamartine did not know my client. He did not know he existed. At home at the countryside, Lamartine had read the publication of *Madame Bovary* in each issue of the *Revue de Paris*, and Lamartine had found such impressions in them that they occurred again all the times that I will now tell you about.

A few days ago, Lamartine returned to Paris and the following day he inquired about Flaubert's residence. He sent to inquire at the *Revue de Paris* about the residence of a certain Mr. Flaubert who had published in this collection articles under the title of *Madame Bovary*. He asked his secretary to go congratulate Mr. Flaubert heartily and to express the satisfaction that he had felt when reading his work and to evince his wish to see the author proving himself anew with a similar attempt.

My client went to Lamartine's home; and at his home he found not only a man who encouraged him but also a man who told him: "You have given me the best work that I have read in twenty years."

6. Alphonse de Lamartine was an eminent romantic poet, so popular that he had been elected President following the Revolution of 1848. He was so taken with *Madame Bovary* that he knew the novel by heart. His meeting with Flaubert did not take place on the eve of the trial, as Sénard states, but on January 20, 1857. Albert Thibaudet, *Chronologie de Flaubert*, in Flaubert, *Oeuvres*, ed. Dumesnil and Thibaudet, xx. In his reference to Lamartine, Sénard notably omits the fact that the poet did not write a letter of support for Flaubert, despite his promises to do so (LaCapra 46). Later on in the defense, Sénard in fact cites a passage from the novel in which Lamartine is specifically mentioned as a romantic ideal.

In one word, these were praises such that my client, in his modesty, could hardly repeat them to me. Lamartine proved to him that he had read the installments and he proved it to him in the most gracious manner, by recounting to him entire pages. But Lamartine added: "While I have read you unreservedly up to the final page, I blame you for the last ones. You have hurt me; you have literally made me suffer! The expiation is out of proportion with the crime. You have created a dreadful, appalling death! Most certainly, the woman that soils the conjugal bed must expect expiation, but this one is horrible, it is a death, such as we have never seen. You have gone too far, you have hurt my nerves; this power of description that is applied to the final moments of death has left me with unspeakable suffering!" And when Gustave Flaubert asked him: "But Mr. de Lamartine, do you understand that legal proceedings are brought against me in criminal court for having written such a work, for offense to public and religious morality?" Lamartine answered: "All my life I have thought myself a man who, in his literary as well as other works, has best understood public and religious morality. My dear child, it is not possible to find in France one criminal court that will condemn you. It is already very unfortunate that they have misjudged in this way the nature of your work and that they have ordered legal proceedings against it, but it is not possible, for the honor of our country and our time, that there exists a court that will condemn you."

That is what took place yesterday between Lamartine and Flaubert and I have the right to tell you that this assessment is one of those that are worth being weighed.

Having all agreed on this, let us see how my own conscience could tell me that *Madame Bovary* is a good book and a good deed? And I will ask your permission to add that I am not glib with these sorts of things, glibness is not in my habits. There are literary works that have never caught my eye for two minutes, although they have come from our great writers; I have them in my hand. I will have a few lines passed along to you in the judge's chambers that I have never taken the pleasure to read and I ask your permission to tell you that when I got to the end of Mr. Flaubert's work, I was convinced that a cut made by the *Revue de Paris* was the cause of all this. Furthermore, I will ask your permission to add my assessment to the most lofty and most enlightened assessment that I just mentioned.

Here is a dossier filled with opinions of all men of letters of our times, including the most distinguished, on the work in question and on the wonder that they experienced while reading this new work, that is both so moral and so useful!

Now, how could such a work incur legal proceedings? Will you allow me to tell you? The *Revue de Paris*, whose editorial committee had read the work in full, for the manuscript had been sent to it long before publication, did not find fault with anything. When we came to print the *Revue* the 1st of December 1856, one of the editors of the *Revue* shrank back at the cab scene. He said: "This is not acceptable, we will delete it." Flaubert took offense at the cut. He did not want it to occur without a note put at the bottom of the page. He demanded the note. For the sake of his self-respect as an author, he did not want his work to be mutilated nor, on the other hand, did he want something there that gave the *Revue* cause for worries. He said: "You will delete as you wish, but you will state that you have deleted." And thus we agreed on the following note:

"The direction found it necessary to remove a passage here that could not be acceptable to the editors of the *Revue de Paris*. We formally acknowledge this to the author."

Here is the deleted passage; I will read it to you. We have a page proof, and we have gone through a lot of trouble to obtain it. Here is the first part, which does not contain a single correction. One word has been corrected in the second part:

"'Where to?' 'Where you like,' said Léon, pushing Emma into the cab. The blinds were drawn and the lumbering machine set out.

It went down the Rue Grand-Pont, crossed the Place des Arts, the Quai Napoleon, the Pont Neuf, and stopped short before the statue of Pierre Corneille.

'—Go on!' cried a voice that came from within.

The cab went on again, and as soon as it reached the Carrefour Lafayette, set off downhill, and entered the station at a gallop.

'No! Straight on!' cried the same voice.

The cab came out by the gate, and soon having reached the Mall, trotted quietly beneath the elm trees. The coachman wiped his brow, put his leather hat between his knees, and drove his carriage beyond the side alley by the meadow to the margin of the waters.

It went along by the river, along the towing-path paved with sharp pebbles, and, for a long while, in the direction of Oyssel, beyond the islands.

But suddenly it turned with a dash across Quatremares, Sotteville, la grande-chaussée, the Rue d'Elbeuf, and made its third halt in front of the Jardin des Plantes.

'Get on, will you?' cried the voice more furiously.

And at once resuming its course, it passed by Saint-Sever, by the Quai des Curandiers, the Quai aux Meules, once more over the bridge, by the Place du Champ de Mars, and behind the Hospital gardens, where old men in black coats were walking in the sun

along the ivy covered terraces. It went up the Boulevard Bouvreuil, along the Boulevard Cauchoise, then the whole of Mont-Riboudet to the Deville hills!

It came back; and then, without any fixed plan or direction, wandered about at random. The cab was seen at Saint-Paul, at Leseure, at Mont Gargan, at La Rougue-Marc and Place du Gaillardbois; in the Rue Maladrerie, Rue Dinanderie, before Saint-Romain, Saint-Vivien, Saint-Maclou, Saint-Nicaise—in front of the Customs, at the Basse Vieille Tour, the Trois Pipes, and the Cimetière Monumental! From time to time the coachman on his seat cast despairing eyes at the passing cafés. He could not understand what furious urge prevented these people from ever coming to a stop. Time and again he would try but exclamations of anger would at once burst forth behind him. Then he would whip his sweaty nags, but he no longer bothered dodging bumps in the road; the cab would hook onto things on all sides, but he couldn't have cared less, demoralized as he was, almost weeping with thirst, fatigue and despair.

And on the harbor, amongst the trucks and barrels, and along the street corners and the sidewalks, bourgeois stared in wonder this thing unheard of in the provinces: a cab with blinds drawn, and which reappeared incessantly, more tightly sealed than a tomb, and tossed around like a ship.

One time, at noon, in the open country, just as the sun beat more fiercely against the old plated lanterns, a bared hand passed beneath the small, yellow canvas blinds, and threw out some scraps of paper that scattered in the wind, alighting further off like white butterflies on a field of red clover all in bloom.

Then, at about six o'clock the carriage stopped in a back street of the Beauvoisine Quarter, and a woman got out, who walked with her veil down, and without looking back.

On reaching the inn, Mrs. Bovary was surprised not to see the stagecoach. Hivert had waited for her fifty-three minutes, but finally left without her.

Nothing forced her to go; but she had promised that she would return that same evening. Moreover, Charles expected her, and in her heart she felt already that cowardly docility that is for some women at once the chastisement and the price of adultery.⁷

Mr. Flaubert reminds me that the Ministry of Justice has accused him for the last phrase.

Imperial counsel: No, I have pointed it out.

Mr. Sénard: What is certain is that if there were an accusation, it would have foundered before these words: "at once the

7. Pages 193–94.

chastisement and the price of adultery." Moreover, this could be the ground of an accusation as well founded as the others. For in all that you have accused, there is nothing that could seriously be upheld.

Now, gentlemen, since that kind of a fantastic ride displeased the editors of the *Revue*, it was deleted. You see there excessive reservations from the *Revue* and excessive reservations could most certainly not be the basis for legal proceedings. You will however see how it was the basis for legal proceedings. What we do not see, what has thus been removed seems a very strange thing. They have assumed many things that did not exist, as you have seen with the reading of the original passage. My God, do you know what they assumed? That in the deleted passage there probably was something similar to what you will have the kindness to read in one of the most wonderful novels from the pen of an honorable member of the Académie française, Mr. Mérimée.

In a novel entitled *La Double Méprise*, Mr. Mérimée narrates a scene that takes place in a post chaise.⁸ The geographical position of the carriage is not important, but as it is here, the detail of what goes on inside is. I do not want to impose it on the hearing, I will have it passed along to the Ministry of Justice and the court. If we had written half or a quarter of what Mr. Mérimée has written, I would feel some embarrassment concerning the task given to me, or rather, I would alter it. Instead of saying what I have said, and what I continue to say, that Mr. Flaubert has written a good book, a decent, useful and moral book, I would say: literature has its rights. Mr. Mérimée has created a most outstanding literary work and we must not be so difficult about details when the whole is irreproach-

8. Sénard's mention of Prosper Mérimée's novel *La Double Méprise* (1833) is relevant for Flaubert's defense on several levels. As Sénard indicates, the writer Mérimée was a highly respectable as well as celebrated contemporary, who had been elected to the Académie française, the government institution sanctifying the practice of literature and language in France, and who was a good friend of the reigning Empress, Eugénie. Mérimée's novel depicts a young woman, Julie de Chaverny, who is unhappily married, like Emma Bovary. Mérimée's treatment of this subject is, however, far bolder than Flaubert's, as follows from the opening lines of *La Double Méprise*: "Julie de Chaverny was married for approximately six years and for roughly five years and six months she had not only recognized the impossibility of loving her husband, but also the difficulty of having any respect for him." Prosper Mérimée, *La Double Méprise* in *Théâtre de Clara Gazul: Romans et Nouvelles*, ed. Jean Mallion and Pierre Salomon (Paris: Gallimard, 1951) 605–668: 605, my translation. Different from Flaubert, Mérimée openly mentions the rumored infidelities of Julie's husband, Monsieur Chaverny (615). One day, when Julie's carriage breaks down, she accepts a chaise ride from Monsieur Darcy, a man that she had some slight amorous interest in before her marriage. At the end of Chapter XI the two are described as giving in to their mutual but doomed attraction. Immediately following this transgression, their passion for one another wanes. Aside from thematic similarities between Flaubert's and Mérimée's novel, it is important to note that *La Double Méprise* also initially appeared in the *Revue de Paris*, also not in its entirety. Although the journal did not print Mérimée's chaise scene, it did publish the first chapter of the novel, as cited above. Jean Mallion and Pierre Salomon, Notice to *La Double Méprise*, 1411.

able. I would keep it at that, I would dismiss the case and you would dismiss it. Well! My God! An author cannot sin by omission in such a matter. And besides, you will have the detail of what happened in the cab. But since my client was satisfied with depicting a ride, the interior was only revealed through “a bared hand passed beneath the small, yellow canvas blinds, and which threw out some scraps of paper that scattered in the wind, alighting further off like white butterflies on a field of red clover all in bloom.” Since my client was satisfied with that, nobody knew anything and everyone assumed—because of the very cut—that he had said at least as much as the member of the Académie française. You have seen that this was not the case.

Well! That unfortunate cut constitutes the trial, that is to say that when the offices that have the task, completely merited, with watching over all writings that could offend public morality, saw that cut, they were alerted. I am forced to acknowledge, and the gentlemen of the *Revue de Paris* will allow me to say it, that they cut two words too many. They should have cut it before they got into the cab; cutting after that was no longer worthwhile. The cut has been very unfortunate, but if you, gentlemen of the *Revue*, committed that small mistake, you are most certainly paying for it today.

In the offices they said: let us watch for what will follow. When the next issue came out, they waged war on syllables. The people in the offices are not required to read everything, and when they saw it written that a woman had taken off her clothes, they were shocked without going any further. It is true that Flaubert, unlike our great masters, did not bother to describe the alabaster of her naked arms, of her bosom etc. He did not say as did a poet that we love:

I saw on her beautiful sides the ardent and pure alabaster,
Lilywhite, ebony, coral, roses, sky blue veins,
In short such a woman as you once showed me,
Embellished and adorned by her mere nudity,
When our nights were vanishing, when the soft pillow
Saw her sleep and awake covered with your kisses.⁹

9. This is an excerpt from André Chenier's late eighteenth-century poem *La Lampe* in my prose translation. In this elegy, the poet addresses the bed light, the tacit witness of his lover's tender promises that she later betrayed with another man. *Poésies d'André Chenier, précédées d'une notice par H.M. de Latouche* (Paris: Charpentier, 1858) 142–144: 143. Here Sénard alters the punctuation of the poem to fit his purpose. The use of a period at the end of this citation seems to suggest that these lines constitute a textual entity, while in fact two more lines precede the use of a period in the poem. They read as follows:

And when your joyful cries praised my complacency,
And she, smiling, cursed my presence.

He did not say anything similar to André Chenier. But Mr. Flaubert did say: "She let herself go. . . . Her clothes fell."¹ She let herself go! What! All description is then forbidden? But when one accuses, one should read the whole thing and the imperial counsel has not read the whole thing? The passage that he indicts does not stop where he has stopped. Here is the rectification:

"Yet there was upon that brow covered with cold drops, on those stammering lips, in those wild eyes, in the grip of those arms, something extreme, vague and sinister that seemed to Léon to be subtly gliding between them to force them apart."²

They did not read that in the offices. The imperial counsel did not heed it earlier. He only saw this: "She would let her clothes fall at once to the ground"³ and he cried out: offense to public morality! Truly, it is too easy to accuse with such a method. May God be with the authors of dictionaries that fall into the hands of the imperial counsel! Who would escape a sentence if, by means of excisions not of words but of phrases, they suddenly dare to make a list of all words that could offend morality or religion?

My client's first idea, which unfortunately met with resistance, had been this: "There is only one thing to do: to at once print the work, not with cuts but in full, such as came out of my hands, while restoring the cab scene." I completely agreed; the complete printing of the work with a few notes, to which we would have urged the court to turn its attention, was my client's best defense. I myself had given this publication the title: *Memorandum of Gustave Flaubert against the charge of offense to religious morality brought against him*. I had written in my handwriting: *Criminal Court, Sixth Chamber*, with the mention of the presiding judge and Ministry of Justice. There was a preface which read: "They accuse me with phrases taken here and there in my book. I can only defend myself with my book." Asking the judges to read a book in full is asking a lot, but we are in front of judges who like the truth and who want it; who do not shrink back from any strain to know it. We are in front of judges who emphatically want justice and who will read without any kind of hesitation all that we entreat them to read. I had said to Mr. Flaubert: "Send all this to print and put my name next to yours at the bottom: Sénard, *attorney at law*." They started printing, one hundred copies of the memorandum that we wanted to have printed were made. The printing progressed with extreme speed, and we spent days and nights on it, when we were presented with the prohibition to continue printing, not of a book, but of a memorandum in which the indicted work was accompanied by

1. Page 222.

2. Page 222.

3. Page 222.

explanatory notes! We complained to the imperial counsel's prosecuting department, who told us that the prohibition was uncompromising and that it could not be lifted.

Well, so be it! We have not published the book with our notes and observations, but if your first reading, gentlemen, had left you with any doubts, I beg a favor: that you read it a second time. You like and you want the truth. You cannot be like those who, when they are given two lines of a man's writing, are sure to have him hang, whatever the circumstance. You do not want a man judged on the basis of more or less skillfully made excisions. You do not want that; you do not want to deprive us of the defense's usual resources. Well! You have the book and although it is less convenient than what we wanted to do, you will make your own divisions, observations and connections because you want the truth and it must be the truth that serves as the basis of your judgment, and the truth will come out of the serious examination of the book.

Yet, I cannot confine myself to that. The Ministry of Justice attacks the book, I must take up the book myself to defend it, I must make the quotations it has cited complete and for each indicted passage I must show the emptiness of the indictment. That will be my entire defense.

Most certainly, I shall not attempt to offer the same kind of assessments in response to the lofty, lively and pathetic assessments that have surrounded all that the Ministry of Justice has said. The defense would not be allowed to take on such ways. It will just cite the texts as they are.

And first I declare that nothing is more spurious than what was said earlier about the lascivious color. Lascivious color! Where have you found that? What kind of woman has my client depicted in *Madame Bovary*? Well! My God! Sad to say, but true, she is a young lady, born decent as they are nearly all; at least the great majority, but rather fragile when their education, instead of strengthening them, has weakened them or plunged them down the wrong path. He has taken a young lady; does she have a depraved nature? No, she has an impressionable nature; she is open to enthusiasm.

The imperial counsel has said: This young lady is constantly shown as lascivious. Of course not! She is shown born in the countryside, born on a farm, where she takes care of all of her father's work and where no kind of lasciviousness could have entered her mind or heart. Next she is shown, instead of following the destiny that belonged to her quite naturally of being raised for the farm where she ought to have lived or in a similar environment, she is shown under the careless authority of a father who thinks he can have that daughter raised in the convent, though she was born on the farm, and should marry a farmer, a countryside man. There she

is, led to a convent, beyond her sphere. All is serious in the Ministry of Justice's speech, thus nothing must be left without a response. Ah! You have spoken of her little sins; while citing a few lines from the first installment you have said: "When she went to confession, she invented little sins in order that she might stay longer, kneeling in the shadows . . . beneath the whispering of the priest."⁴ Already you are seriously mistaken on the assessment of my client. He has not committed the error that you have accused him of; the mistake is entirely on your side, first and foremost about the age of the young lady. Since she only entered the convent at thirteen years old, she was obviously fourteen years old when she goes to confession. Therefore she was not a ten-year-old child, as you supposed. In that respect you were positively mistaken. But I am not dwelling on the implausibility of a ten-year-old child who likes to stay at confession "beneath the whispering of the priest." What I want is to read you the lines that precede, which, I admit, is not easy. And there is the drawback that we do not have the memorandum: with a memorandum we would not have to look through six issues.

I called your attention to this passage to restore the true character of *Madame Bovary*. Will you allow me to tell you what looks rather serious to me, what Mr. Flaubert has understood and brought out? There is a kind of religion, one that is generally preached to young girls and that is the worst of all. In this respect, we can have different assessments. As far as I am concerned, I clearly state that I knew of nothing finer, more useful and more necessary to support not only women on the path of life, but also men themselves who sometimes have quite painful hardships to undergo; that I knew of nothing more useful and more necessary than religious sentiment, but it should be serious and, allow me to add, strict religious sentiment.

I want my children to understand a God, not a God in the abstractions of pantheism, no, but rather as a supreme being with whom they have a relationship, towards whom they turn to pray and who makes them grow and strengthens them at the same time. That idea, you see, which is my idea and yours, constitutes strength during bad days, the strength that we call the refuge of the world, or even better, the strength of the weak. That thought gives woman the strength to relinquish the thousand little things of life, makes her report to God what she may suffer, and ask him for the grace to fulfill her duty. Christianity is the religion, gentleman, that establishes relationships between God and man. By having a kind of intermediary power to intervene between God and us, Christianity makes God

more available to us and facilitates our communication with him. Let the mother of the one who became Man-God also receive the woman's prayers; there I don't see anything yet that distorts the purity, the religious sanctity or the feeling itself. But that is where the distortion begins. To adapt religion to all kinds of characters, all sorts of puny, wretched and petty little things are introduced. Instead of that great pomp, the pomp of ceremonies takes a hold of our heart and that pomp degenerates into the petty trade of relics, medals, petty gods and virgins. Gentlemen, to what do the mind of curious, passionate and innocent children, especially of young girls, succumb? All these faded, watered-down and wretched pictures of religious sentiment. Thus they make up little cults of observance, petty devotions of tenderness and love and instead of having in their soul the feeling of God and the feeling of duty, they abandon themselves to daydreams, to little observances and devotions. And then comes poetry, and then come, it must be said, a thousand thoughts of charity, tenderness and mystical love, a thousand forms that mislead young girls and that sensualize religion. Those poor children, naturally credulous and weak, take to all that, to poetry and to daydreaming, instead of becoming attached to something reasonable and strict. Hence there are many very devout women, which are not at all religious. And when the wind pushes them off the road that they should walk on, instead of finding strength, they merely find any kind of sensuality that leads them astray.

Ah! You have accused me of mingling religious element and sensualism in the painting of modern society! Accuse therefore the society in which we live, but do not accuse the man who cries out, like Bossuet: Wake up and watch out for danger! But come and say to the fathers: Watch out, these are not good habits to give to your daughters, in all these blends of mysticism there is something that sensualizes religion. To come and say that would be telling the truth. That is why you accuse Flaubert and that is why I praise his behavior. Yes, he has done well to warn families of the dangers of enthusiasm in these young persons, who take to petty observances instead of becoming attached to a strong and strict religion that would support them in time of weakness. And now you will see where the invention of little sins "beneath the whispering of the priest" comes from. Let us read page 30:⁵

"She had read *Paul et Virginie*, and she had dreamed of the little bamboo-house, the black man Domingo, the dog Fidèle, but above all of the sweet friendship of some dear little brother, who seeks red fruit for you on trees taller than steeples, or who runs barefoot over the sand, bringing you a bird's nest."

Is that lascivious, gentlemen? Let us go on.

Imperial counsel: I did not say that this passage was lascivious.

Mr. Sénard: I do beg your pardon, it is precisely from this passage that you have lifted a lascivious phrase and you could only have found it lascivious by cutting it off from what preceded and followed it:

“Instead of following mass, she looked at the pious vignettes with their azure borders in her book, and she loved the sick lamb, the sacred heart pierced with sharp arrows, or the poor Jesus sinking beneath the cross he carried. She tried, by way of mortification, to eat nothing a whole day. She puzzled her head to find some vow to fulfill.”

Do not forget that. When one invents little sins at confession and one puzzles ones head to find some vow to fulfill, which you will find in the previous line, clearly one has had one’s ideas a bit twisted somewhere. And I now ask you if I need to discuss your passage! But I go on:

“In the evening, before prayers, there was some religious reading in the study. On weeknights it was some abstract of sacred history or the Lectures of the Abbé Frayssinous, and on Sundays passages from *Le Génie du Christianisme*,⁶ as a recreation. How she listened at first to the sonorous lamentations of its romantic melancholies re-echoing through the world and eternity! If her childhood had been spent in the shops of a busy city section, she might perhaps have opened her heart to those lyrical invasions of Nature, which usually come to us only through translation in books. But she knew the country too well; she knew the lowing of cattle, the milking, the ploughs. Accustomed to the quieter aspects of life, she turned, instead, to its tumultuous parts. She loved the sea only for the sake of its storms, and the green fields only when broken up by ruins. She wanted to gain personal profit out of things and she rejected as useless all that did not contribute to the immediate satisfaction of her heart’s desires, being of a temperament more sentimental than artistic, looking for emotions, not landscapes.”

You will see with what careful precautions the author introduces that pious old maid, and how a new element will slip into the convent to teach religion: the introduction of the novel brought along by an outsider. Never forget this when it is a question of assessing religious morality:

“At the convent there was an old maid who came for a week each month to mend the linen. Patronised by the clergy, because she belonged to an ancient family of noblemen ruined by the Revolution, she dined in the refectory at the table of the good sisters, and after

6. See note 9, page 32.

the meal had chatted with them before going back to her work. The girls often slipped out from the study to go and see her. She knew by heart the love songs of the last century, and sang them in a low voice as she stitched away. She told stories, gave them news, ran their errands in the town, and on the sly lent the big girls some of the novels, that she always carried in the pockets of her apron, and of which the good lady herself swallowed long chapters in the intervals of her work."

This is not just marvellous in a literal sense: absolution cannot be refused to a man, who writes these admirable passages to point out all the dangers of this kind of education and to show a young woman all the pitfalls of the life that she is about to enter. Let us go on:

"They were all about love, lovers, sweethearts, persecuted ladies fainting in lonely pavilions, postilions killed at every relay, horses ridden to death on every page, somber forests, heartaches, vows, sobs, tears and kisses, little boat rides by moonlight, nightingales in shady groves, *gentlemen* brave as lions, gentle as lambs, virtuous as no one ever was, always well dressed, and weeping like fountains. For six months, then, a fifteen-year-old Emma dirtied her hands with books from old lending libraries. With Walter Scott, later on, she fell in love with historical events, dreamed of old oak chests, guardrooms and minstrels. She would have liked to live in some old manor-house, like those long-waisted chatelaines who, in the shade of pointed arches, spent their days leaning on the stone, chin in hand, watching a white plumed galloping knight on his black horse from the distant fields. At this time she had a cult for Mary Stuart and enthusiastic veneration for illustrious or unhappy women. Joan of Arc, Héloïse, Agnès Sorel, the beautiful Ferronière, and Clemence Isaure stood out to her like comets in the dark immensity of history, where also were seen, lost in shadow, and all unconnected, St. Louis with his oak, the dying Bayard, some cruelties of Louis XI, a little of St. Bartholomew's, the plume of the Bernais, and always the remembrance of the painted plates glorifying Louis XIV.

In the music-class, in the ballads she sang, there was nothing but little angels with golden wings, madonnas, lagunes, gondoliers; harmless sounding compositions that in spite of the inanity of the style and the vagues of the melody enabled one to catch a glimpse of the tantalizing phantasmagoria of sentimental realities."

What! You did not remember that, when this poor country girl, having come back to the farm, and having found a country doctor to marry, was invited to a party at a chateau, to which you sought to attract the court's attention, in order to show something lascivious in a waltz she just danced! You did not remember this education

when this poor woman was carried away by an invitation that caught her in the ordinary home of her husband to take her to that chateau, when she saw those handsome gentlemen, those beautiful ladies and that old duke who, it was said, had had good fortune at court! . . . The imperial counsel made some fine maneuvers with regards to Queen Antoinette! In thought, all of us indeed agreed with you. Like you, we shuddered at the name of that victim of revolutions. But here it does not concern Marie-Antoinette but the chateau de la Vaubyessard.

There was an old duke who—it was said—had had relations with the Queen and on whom all eyes fell. And when this young woman, in seeing all the fantastic dreams of her youth come true, finds herself thus transposed in the midst of that society, you are amazed at the intoxication she experienced. You accuse her of having been lascivious! Rather accuse the waltz itself, that dance of our great modern balls where the woman, says the author who has described her, “rested her head upon the gentleman’s shoulder, whose leg embraces her.”⁷ You find that Mrs. Bovary is lascivious in Flaubert’s description. But there is not one man, and I don’t make an exception of you, who, having attended a ball and having seen that kind of waltz, has not had wished that his wife or daughter abstain from that pleasure that is somewhat wild. If we sometimes let a young girl give herself over to that pleasure that fashion has sanctioned, counting on the chastity draped around her, we need to count a lot on that covering of chastity and although we count on it, it is not impossible to convey the impressions that Mr. Flaubert has conveyed in the name of morals and chastity.

There she is at the chateau de Vaubyessard, there she looks at the old duke and studies everything with delight and you cry out: What details! What does that mean? Details are everywhere when only one passage is cited.

“Mrs. Bovary noticed that many ladies had not put their gloves in their glasses.

Yet at the upper end of the table, alone amongst all these women, bent over his full plate, and his napkin tied round his neck like a child, an old man sat eating, letting drops of gravy drip from his mouth. His eyes were bloodshot, and he wore in his hair a little queue tied with a black ribbon. He was the Marquis’s father-in-law, the old Duke de Laverdière, a one time favorite of the Count d’Artois, in the days of the Marquis de Conflans’ hunting-parties at le Vaudreuil, and had been, it was said, the lover of Queen Marie-Antoinette, between Mr. de Coigny and Mr. de Lauzun.”

7. Sénard appears to be paraphrasing here, rather than citing directly from the text.

Defend the Queen, defend her particularly in the presence of the scaffold and say that she, because of her title, deserved respect, but withdraw your accusations when we restrain ourselves to saying that he was said to have been the Queen's lover. Will you seriously accuse us of having insulted the memory of that wretched woman?

"He had lived a life of noisy dissipation full of duels, bets, elopements; he had squandered his fortune and frightened all his family. A servant behind his chair shouted, in reply to his mutterings, in his ear the names of the dishes that he pointed to. Constantly Emma's eyes turned involuntarily to this old man with hanging lips, as to something extraordinary and august. He had lived at court and slept in the bed of queens!

Iced champagne was poured out. Emma shivered all over as she felt it cold in her mouth. She had never seen pomegranates nor tasted pineapples."⁸

You see that these descriptions are unquestionably charming, but that it is not possible to take a line here or there in order to create a kind of color against which my conscience protests. This is not lascivious color; this is the color of the book; this is the literary element and, at the same time, the moral element.

There is that young lady whom you have educated; there she has become a woman. The imperial counsel has said: does she even try to love her husband? You have not read the book. Had you read it, you would not have raised that objection.

Gentlemen, there is that poor woman. She will first daydream. At page 34⁹ you shall see her daydreams. And there is more, there is something of which the imperial counsel has not spoken and that I need to tell you: her impressions when her mother died. You will see whether that is lascivious! Have the kindness to take page 33¹ and to follow me:

"When her mother died she cried much the first few days. She had a funeral picture made with the hair of the deceased, and, in a letter sent to the Bertaux full of sad reflections on life, she asked to be buried later on in the same grave. The old man thought she must be ill, and came to see her. Emma was secretly pleased that she had reached at a first attempt the rare ideal of delicate lives, never attained by mediocre hearts. She let herself meander along with Lamartine, listened to harps on lakes, to all the songs of dying swans, to the falling of the leaves, the pure virgins ascending to heaven, and the voice of the eternal discoursing down the valleys. She soon grew tired of it, would not admit it, continued from habit,

8. Page 42.

9. Pages 34–35.

1. *Idem*.

and then out of vanity, and at last was surprised to feel herself consoled, and with no more sadness at heart than wrinkles on her brow."

I want to respond to the imperial counsel's accusations that she makes no effort to love her husband.

Imperial counsel: I did not accuse her of that. I have said that she did not succeed.

Mr. Sénard: If I have misunderstood, if you have not made that accusation, that is the best answer you could have given. I thought I heard you make it; let's just say that I have been mistaken. Moreover, here is what I read at the end of page 36.²

"And yet, in accord with theories she believed right, she wanted to experience love with him. By moonlight in the garden, she recited all the passionate rhymes she knew by heart, and, sighing, sang to him many melancholy adagios; but she found herself as calm after this as before, and Charles seemed neither more amorous nor more moved.

When she had thus for a while struck the flint on her heart without getting a spark, incapable, moreover, of understanding what she did not experience or of believing anything that did not take on a conventional form, she persuaded herself without difficulty that Charles's passion was no longer ardent. His outbursts became regular; he embraced her at certain fixed times. It was one habit among other habits, and, like a familiar dessert, after the monotony of dinner."

On page 37³ we will find a host of similar things. Now here is the peril about to begin. You know how she had been raised. I entreat you not to forget this for a moment.

There is not one man, who, having read it, does not say with the book in hand that Mr. Flaubert is not only a great artist but also a kindhearted man for having in the last ten pages poured out all horror and contempt over the woman and all interest over the husband. He is also a great artist, as we have said, because he has not altered the husband, because he has left him until the end as he was: a good man, coarse and mediocre, fulfilling the duties of his profession, fond of his wife, but lacking manners and loftiness in his ideas. He is the same at his wife's deathbed. And yet, there is not one character that is remembered with more interest. Why? Because, until the end, he kept his simplicity and honesty of heart, because until the end he fulfilled his duty, from which his wife had strayed. His death is as beautiful and moving as his wife's death is hideous. On the corpse of the woman, the author has shown the

2. Page 37.

3. Page 38.

stains that the vomit of the poison left behind. It has stained the white shroud in which she will be buried and he has wished to make of it an object of disgust; but there is a man who is sublime and it is the husband at the side of that grave. There is a man who is great and sublime, and whose death is admirable, it is the husband who, with the death of his wife, after having successively seen dashed all illusions that could remain in his heart, embraces his wife in thought beyond the grave. Remember this, I beg you; the author has gone beyond what was allowed—as Lamartine told him—to make the death of the woman hideous and the expiation more terrible. The author has been able to focus all interest on the man who had not strayed from the line of duty, who remained with his mediocre character, doubtlessly the author could not change his character. But with all his heart's kindness, he has amassed all the horrors onto the death of the woman who betrayed and ruined him, who gave herself over to usurers, who put forged notes into circulation and who finally succeeded in committing suicide. See if the death is natural of that woman who, if she had not found the poison to make an end to her life, would have been shattered by the very excess of unhappiness that gripped her. That is what the author does. His book would not be read had he done it differently, had he not lavished the charming images and the lively pictures that he is accused of, in order to show where an education as dangerous as Mrs. Bovary's may lead.

Mr. Flaubert constantly brings out the husband's superiority over the wife, and what kind of superiority if you please? That of duty fulfilled, while Emma strays from it! And there she is, situated on the downward path of that bad education; and there she is after the scene of the ball, gone off with a young child, Léon, who is as inexperienced as she. She will flirt with him, but she won't dare going any further. Nothing will occur. After having looked at her for a moment, he tells himself: She is attractive that woman! And she will be his for she is flighty and without experience. As to the fall, reread pages 42, 43 and 44.⁴ I only have one word to say to you about that scene, there are no details, there is no description, no picture that depicts the turmoil of the senses for us. One lone word points to the fall: "she abandoned herself to him." I will beg you, once more, to have the kindness to reread the details of Clarissa Harlow's fall, which, to my knowledge, has not been described in a bad book.⁵ Mr. Flaubert has substituted Rodolphe for Lovelace and Emma for Clarissa. Compare the two authors and the two works and assess.

4. Pages 129–30.

5. In Samuel Richardson's influential novel *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* (1747–48), the female protagonist Clarissa defies marriage, imposed by her family, and falls prey to the rake Robert Lovelace, who rapes her and ultimately causes her death.

But here I meet the indignation of the imperial counsel. He is shocked that remorse does not closely follow the fall, that instead of expressing its bitterness, she says to herself with satisfaction: "I have a lover."⁶ But the author would not be right if he made her feel all the bitterness of the bewitching potion, when the cup is still at her lips. The man who would write, as the imperial counsel understands it, could be moral, but he would recount what is not in human nature. No, the feeling of wrongdoing does not awaken at the moment of the first error; without that, it would not have been committed. No, the woman cannot be warned by that very intoxication about the huge error that she has committed at the moment when she is in the illusion that intoxicates her. From it she takes away intoxication. She returns home, happy and dazzling and she sings in her heart: "Finally I have a lover." But does it last a long time? You have pages 424 and 425.⁷ Two pages down, if you please, at page 428,⁸ the feeling of disgust for the lover is not yet apparent, but she is already under the impression of fear and restlessness. She examines him, she looks at him and she would never want to leave Rodolphe:

"Something stronger than herself drew her to him, until one day, seeing her come unexpectedly, he frowned as one put out.

'What is the matter with you?' she said. 'Are you ill? Tell me!'

He ended up declaring earnestly that her visits were becoming imprudent—that she was compromising herself.

Yet gradually Rodolphe's fears took possession of her. At first, love had intoxicated her, and she had thought of nothing beyond. But now that he was indispensable to her life, she feared losing the smallest part of his love, or upsetting him in the least. When she came back from his house, she looked all about her, anxiously watching every form that passed in the horizon, and every village window from which she could be seen. She listened for steps, cries, the noise of the ploughs, and she stopped, white, and trembling more than the aspen leaves swaying overhead."⁹

You clearly see that she does not misunderstand it, she indeed feels that there is something that is not what she had dreamt. Let us take pages 433 and 434¹ and your will be even more convinced:

"When the night was rainy, they took refuge in the consulting room between the cart-shed and the stable. She would light one of the kitchen candles that she had hidden behind the books. Rodolphe settled down there as if at home. Yet the sight of the li-

6. Page 131.

7. Page 131.

8. *Idem.*

9. Page 135.

1. Page 138.

brary, of the desk, of the whole apartment, in fine, would arouse his mirth, and he could not refrain from making jokes at Charles' expense, which embarrassed Emma. She would have liked to see him more serious, and even on occasions more dramatic; as, for example, when she thought she heard a noise of approaching steps in the alley.

'Some one is coming!' she said.

He blew out the light.

'Have you your pistols?'

'Why?'

'Why, to defend yourself,' replied Emma.

'From your husband? Oh, the poor fellow!'

And Rodolphe finished his sentence with a gesture that said: 'I could crush him with a flip of my finger.'

She was awed at his bravery, although she felt in it a sort of indecency and a naïve coarseness that scandalized her.

Rodolphe reflected a good deal on the pistol incident. If she had spoken in earnest, he thought it most ridiculous, even odious; for he had no reason whatever to hate the good Charles, not being exactly devoured by jealousy; and on this subject Emma had made him a solemn promise that he did not think of the best taste.

Besides, she was becoming dreadfully sentimental. She had insisted on exchanging miniatures; handfuls of hair had been cut off, and now she was asking for a ring—a real wedding ring, in token of eternal union. She often spoke to him of the evening chimes, of the voices of nature. Then she talked to him of their respective mothers."

At last she bored him.

Next, page 453:²

"No longer, did he (Rodolphe), as before, find words so tender that they made her cry, nor passionate caresses that drove her into ecstasy; their great love, in which she had lived immersed, seemed to run out beneath her like the water of a river absorbed by its own bed; and she could see the bottom. She would not believe it; she redoubled in tenderness, and Rodolphe concealed his indifference less and less.

She did not know if she regretted having yielded to him, or whether she did not wish, on the contrary, to love him even more. The humiliation of having given in turned into resentment, tempered by their voluptuous pleasures. It was not tenderness; it was like a continual seduction. He held her fully in his power; she almost feared it."

2. Page 139.

And you fear, imperial counsel, that young women read this! I am less frightened and less shy than you. Personally, I understand perfectly that a father tells his daughter: "Young woman, if your heart, your conscience, your religious sentiment, the voice of duty are not enough to make you go down the straight path, look, my child, how much trouble, suffering, sorrow and distress await the woman who will seek happiness elsewhere than at home!" Well! This language from a father's mouth would not offend you. Mr. Flaubert does not say anything different; he offers the truest and the most grasping painting of what a woman, who dreams of happiness outside her home, immediately meets with.

But let us keep going; we are getting to all the adventures of disillusion. You object to Léon's caresses on page 60.³ Alas! She will soon pay the price of adultery; and you find that price awful a few pages further into the work that you indict. She has sought happiness in adultery, the unfortunate woman! She has found in it disillusion and the contempt for the man to whom she had given herself, besides disgust and exhaustion, which the monotony of marriage may confer to a woman who does not follow the path of duty. Is there anything missing from this contempt? O no! And do not deny it, the book is right in front of you: Rodolphe, who has proven himself so vile a man, gives her one final proof of egoism and cowardice. She tells him: "Take me away! Carry me off! I am choking, I can no longer breathe in my husband's house which I have put to shame and ill fortune."⁴ He wavers, she insists and finally he promises and the next day she receives from him a devastating letter that makes her collapse, crushed and destroyed. She falls ill and she is dying. The following installment shows her in the complete turmoil of a struggling soul, a woman who perhaps could have been brought back to duty through the excess of her suffering, but unfortunately she soon meets the child with whom she played when she was inexperienced. That is the development of the novel and the expiation comes next.

But the imperial counsel stops and tells me: "If it were true that the novel's purpose is good from start to finish, could you allow obscene details, like the ones that you have allowed?"

Most likely I could not allow such details, but have I allowed them? Where are they? I now get to the most severely indicted passages. I no longer speak of the cab adventure; the court has been satisfied in that respect. I am getting to the passages that you have pointed out as counter to public morality and that take up a certain number of pages of the December 1 issue. And, in order to make

3. Page 99.

4. Emma's request to be taken away can be found on page 156. The following elaboration on her motivations appears to be inferred by Sénard himself.

the entire construction of your accusation disappear, I only need to do one thing: restore what precedes and what follows your citations, in one word substitute your excisions with the full text.

At the bottom of page 72,⁵ after having been put into contact with Homais the pharmacist, Léon comes to the Hôtel de Bourgoigne and then the pharmacist comes to look for him.

“But Emma had just left in exasperation. This failure to come as he had promised she took as an insult.

Later when she was calmer, she realized that she had doubtlessly been unjust to him. But the picking apart of those we love always alienates us from them to some extent. One must not touch one's idols; a little of the guilt always comes off on one's fingers.

They gradually began to talk more frequently of matters outside their love . . .”

My God! It is because of these lines that I just read to you that we have been brought before you. Now listen:

“They gradually began to talk more frequently of matters outside their love, and in the letters that Emma sent him she spoke of flowers, verses, the moon and the stars, naïve resources of a waning passion striving to keep itself alive by all external aids. She was constantly promising herself a profound felicity on her next trip; then she confessed to herself that she felt nothing extraordinary. But this disappointment quickly gave way to a new hope, and Emma returned to him more avid, breathless, enflamed than before. She undressed brutally, ripping off the thin laces of her corset so violently that they would whistle round her hips like a gliding snake. She went on tiptoe, barefooted, to see once more that the door was locked, then with one movement, she would let her clothes fall at once to the ground;—then, pale and serious, without a word, she would throw herself against his breast with a long shudder.”

You have stopped there, imperial counsel. Allow me to continue:

“Yet there was upon that brow covered with cold drops, on those stammering lips, in those wild eyes, in the grip of those arms, something extreme, vague and sinister that seemed to Léon to be subtly gliding between them to force them apart.”

You call this lascivious color; you say that this would confer the taste for adultery; you say that these pages can rouse and stir the senses—lascivious pages! But death resides in these pages. You do not think of it, imperial counsel, you become upset at finding in them words like *corset* and *clothes that fall*; and you cling to these three or four words like *corset* and *clothes that fall*! Do you want me to show you how a corset may appear in a classic, a very classic book? That is what I will delight in doing later.

5. Page 222.

"She undressed . . . (Ah! Imperial counsel, you have misunderstood this passage so!) the unfortunate woman, she undressed brutally, ripping off the thin laces of her corset so violently that they would whistle round her hips like a gliding snake: and, pale and serious, without a word, she would throw herself against his breast with a long shudder . . . There was upon that brow covered with cold drops . . . in the grip of those arms, something vague and sinister. . . ."

Here one has to ask oneself: where is the lascivious color? And where is this color harsh? And if the senses of the young lady in whose hands this book would fall can be stirred and roused—as is the case with the reading of one classic book amidst all classics, which I will do in a moment, and which has been reprinted a thousand times, without the imperial or royal prosecutor ever dreaming of prosecuting him. Is there something similar in what I have just read to you? Isn't it, to the contrary, incitement to the horror of vice, "this sinister thing that slides between them to separate them?"⁶ Let us go on please.

"He did not dare to question her; but, finding how experienced she was, he told himself that she must have passed, he thought, through all the hardships of suffering and pleasure. What had once charmed now frightened him a little. Furthermore, he revolted against the daily absorption of his personality into hers. He resented Emma because of this constant victory. He even strove not to love her; then, when he heard the creaking of her boots, he felt his courage desert him, like drunkards at the sight of strong liquor."⁷

Is that lascivious?

And next, take the final paragraph:

"One day, when they had parted early and she was returning alone along the boulevard, she saw the walls of her convent; she then sat down on a bench in the shade of the elms. How calm her life had had been in those days! How she envied her first indefinable sentiments of love, which she had tried to construct from the books she read!

The first months of her marriage, her rides in the forest, the viscount that waltzed with her, and Lagardy singing, all repassed before her eyes."

Imperial counsel, do not forget this, when you want to judge the author's thoughts, when you absolutely want to find lascivious color where I can only find an excellent book.

"And Léon suddenly appeared to her as far off as the others. 'I do love him,' she said to herself. She was not happy, she never had

6. Although Sénard appears to be citing the text here, he in fact formulates his own reading.

7. Pages 222–23.

been. Why was her life so unsatisfactory, why did everything she leaned on instantly rot and give way?"

Is that lascivious?

"But suppose there existed somewhere someone strong and beautiful, a man of valor, passionate yet refined, the heart of a poet, in the form of an angel, a bronzed stringed lyre, playing elegiac epithalamia to the heavens, why might she not some day happen on him? Ah! What a vain thought! Besides, nothing was worth the trouble of seeking it, everything was a lie. Every smile concealed a yawn of boredom, every pleasure its own disgust, all pleasure satiety, and the sweetest kisses left upon your lips only the unattainable desire for a greater delight.

A metallic rattle droned through the air, and the convent clock struck four. Four o'clock! And it seemed to her that she had been sitting there on that bench since the beginning of time."⁸

One should not look for something in one end of an issue to explain what is in the end of another. I have read the accused passage without adding one word to it in order to defend a work that defended itself. Let us continue the reading of this passage that is indicted from a moral standpoint:

"Madame was in her room. No one was allowed to enter. There she stayed from morning to night, listless, and hardly dressed, and from time to time lighting a tablet of Turkish incense she had bought at the shop of an Algerian. In order to get rid of this sleeping man stretched at her side at night, she finally managed by continual badgering to relegate him to the third floor; and she would read until morning, lurid novels where there would be scenes of orgies, violence and bloodshed." This makes you want to commit adultery, doesn't it? "Often, she would be seized by a sudden terror and cry out. And Charles would come running. 'Ah! Leave me alone!' she would say. Or at other times, when she was burnt more fiercely by that inner flame which her adultery kept feeding, panting and overcome with desire, she would throw open the window, breathing in the chill air, letting the wind blow back her hair, which hung too heavy on her neck, and, looking up at the stars, she would long for the love of a prince. She thought of him, of Léon. She would then have given anything for a single one of those meetings which would appease her.

These were her gala days. She was determined that they should be magnificent! When he could not pay all the expenses himself, she made up the deficit liberally, which happened pretty well every time. He tried to convince her that they would be just as well off somewhere else, in a more modest hotel, but she always found some objection."⁹

8. Pages 223–24.

9. Pages 227–29.

You see how simple this is when we read everything. But with the imperial counsel's excisions the slightest word turns into a mountain.

Imperial counsel: I did not cite any of those sentences and since you want to cite what I have not indicted you should not leap over page 50.¹

Mr. Sénard: I don't pass over anything, I stress the accused sentences in the summons. We have been indicted for pages 77 and 78.²

Imperial counsel: I am speaking of the citations quoted at the hearing and I thought you blamed me for having cited the lines that you just read.

Mr. Sénard: Imperial counsel, I have cited all the passages with the help of which you wanted to constitute an offense that is now in ruins. At the hearing you elaborated upon what you saw fit and you have had it easy. Fortunately we had the book and the defense knew the book. Had it not known it, allow me to tell you, its position would have been rather strange. I have been called upon to explain such and such passage and at the hearing they substitute other passages for it. Had I not known the book inside and out the way I do, the defense would have been difficult. Presently I show you through a faithful analysis that far from being lascivious, the novel must on the contrary be considered an eminently moral work. After having done that, I take the passages that have motivated the summons to appear before criminal court. And after having your excisions be followed by what precedes and what goes after them, the accusation is so weak that you are appalled by it yourself when I read them! I nevertheless have the right to cite these same passages that you pointed out as indictable just a moment ago to make you see the emptiness of your accusation.

I take up my citation where I left off, at the bottom of page 78.³

"He (Léon) was bored now when Emma suddenly began to sob on his breast; and his heart, like the people who can only stand a certain amount of music, which became drowsy through indifference to vibrations of a love whose subtleties he could no longer distinguish.

They knew one another too well to experience any of those sudden surprises which multiply the enjoyment of a possession a hundredfold. She was as sick of him as he was weary of her. Emma found again in adultery all the platitudes of marriage." *Platitudes of marriage!* He who has cut out this has said: "What? Here's a man

1. This page number of one of the installments of the serial publication of *Madame Bovary* in the *Revue de Paris* is not identified in the French trial transcripts.

2. Page 229.

3. Page 229.

who says that there are only platitudes in marriage! It is an assault on marriage, it is an offense to morality! Imperial counsel, you have to admit that making artful excisions can take one far in the way of accusation. What did the author call platitudes of marriage? That monotony that Emma had dreaded, that she had wanted to escape from, and that she continuously found again in adultery, which precisely constituted her disillusion. You thus see clearly that when one reads what precedes and what follows, instead of cutting sentences and words, nothing remains of the indictment. And you understand perfectly that my client, who knows his own ideas, must be a bit appalled at seeing it misrepresented in such a way. Let us go on:

“She was as sick of him as he was weary of her. Emma found again in adultery all the platitudes of marriage.

But how to get rid of him? Then, though she felt humiliated by the sordidity of such a happiness, she clung to it out of habit or out of degeneration; she pursued it more desperately than ever, destroying every pleasure by always wishing for it to be too great. She blamed Léon for her disappointed hopes, as if he had betrayed her; and she even longed for some catastrophe that would bring about their separation, since she had not the courage to do it herself.

She nonetheless went on writing him love letters, in keeping with the notion that a woman must write to her lover.

But while writing to him it was another man she saw, a phantom, fashioned out of her most ardent memories.” The following is no longer indicted: “Then she would fall back to earth, again shattered; for these vague ecstasies of imaginary love would exhaust her more than the wildest orgies.

She now felt a constant pain throughout her body. . . . Often she even received summonses, papier timbré that she barely looked at. She would have liked not to be alive, or to be always asleep.”⁴

I call that an incitement to virtue through the horror of vice, which the author announces himself and which the most distracted reader cannot overlook, without a little bad faith.

And now something more to make you see what kind of man you are to judge. In order to show you, not what kind of a justification I can make, but if Mr. Flaubert has used lascivious color and to show you what inspired him, let me put on your desk the book he used and whose passages inspired him to depict the lust and the impulses of this woman who seeks happiness in illicit pleasures, who cannot find it there, who seeks again, who seeks once more and once more but never finds it. Gentlemen, where did Flaubert find his inspiration? In this very book. Listen:

“Illusion of the senses:

Thus anyone who becomes attached to the sensual must necessarily wander from object to object and by changing places he is as if were mistaken; thus concupiscence, that is to say the love of pleasure, is always changing since all its ardor languishes and dies in continuity and change brings it back to life. Therefore what is the life of the senses but an alternative motion from appetite to disgust and from disgust to appetite, while the unsettled soul is always hesitating between ardor that slackens and ardor that is renewed? *Inconstantia, concupiscentia*.⁵ This is the life of the senses. However, in this perpetual motion, one does not let oneself be entertained by the image of a wandering freedom.”

This is the life of the senses. Who said this? Who wrote the words you just heard about these incitements and these continuous ardors? What book does Mr. Flaubert glance through day and night and what inspired the passages that the imperial counsel indicts? It's Bossuet! What I have just read to you is an excerpt from a discourse by Bossuet on *illicit pleasures*.⁶ Let me make you see that all the indicted passages are not plagiarized—the man who takes over an idea is not a plagiarist—but imitations of Bossuet. Do you want another example of this? Here it is:

“On Sin:

And Christians, do not ask me in what way this great transformation of our pleasures into agonies will come about. The Scriptures prove the matter. The True One says it; the Almighty does it. However, if you look at the sort of passions to which you give over your heart, you shall easily understand that they can become an intolerable torment. They all have within them cruel sadness, disgust and bitterness. They all have an infinity that is angered for being insatiable, which mingles rage within them all, which generates into a kind of fury that is no less painful than unreasonable. Love, if I am allowed to call it that in this pulpit, has its uncertainties, its violent agitations, and its unresolved solutions and its hellish jealousies.”

And, further on:

“Well! What is then easier than to turn our passions into an intolerable sadness of our sins, by taking away, as is very just, that bit of sweetness with which they seduce us, leaving them only cruel

5. These terms signify infidelity and lust.

6. Although the precise location of the passages cited here has not been identified, Bossuet's posthumously published *Traité de la Concupiscence* (1731) reflects similar thoughts on the trappings of carnal lust. Chapter II of this work, for instance, sets out to explain “What concupiscence of the flesh is and to what extent it weighs down the soul.” In Chapter IV, entitled “That our attachment to pleasures is bad and vicious,” Bossuet defines this fondness as a state of servility: “[. . .] one gives oneself over completely to that violent love of pleasure of the senses and one turns oneself into a slave of flesh and sin [. . .].” Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, *Traité de Concupiscence; Lettres et Maximes sur la Comédie; La Logique; Traité du Libre Arbitre* (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1879) 4 and 8.

worries and overflowing bitterness? Our sins are against us, our sins are on us, our sins are amidst us, they are a sharp arrow against our breast, an unbearable weight on our head and a poison that devours our guts."

Is not all that you just heard there to show you the bitterness of passion? I leave you this book all marked up, and that is withered by the thumb of the studious man who derived his thoughts from it. And the man who drew from such a source, who has described adultery in the terms that you just heard, is persecuted for offense to public and religious morality!

Here are a few more lines about the *Sinful Woman* and you will see how Mr. Flaubert has been able to draw his inspiration from his model, in painting those ardors:

"But punished for our fault without being freed from its illusions we seek in change a remedy for our error. We wander from object to object. And if there finally is someone that makes us settle down, we are not content with our choice, but are praised for our infidelities."

.....
 "All appears empty, false and disgusting to her in human creatures: far from finding there those first charms, against which her heart had had such difficulty defending itself, she only sees frivolity, danger and vanity."

.....
 "I am not speaking of how passion begins; such fright that the mystery might shatter! So many measures to take with respect to decorum and praise! So many eyes to avoid! So many watchful folk to deceive! So many reversals to fear concerning the loyalty of those chosen as ambassadors and confidants of one's passion! So many unwanted things to endure from the man to whom, perhaps, honor and freedom have been sacrificed, and of whom one would not dare complain! To all this, add those cruel moments when passion, less intense, leaves us the leisure to fall back onto ourselves and to feel all the shamefulness of our state. That moment when the heart, born for sounder pleasures, grows weary of its own idols, and finds its torment in its revulsions and infidelity. Profane world! If this is the bliss that you tout so highly, encourage it in your worshippers, and, in making them happy this way, punish them for the faith that they have so thoughtlessly added to your promises."

Let me tell you this: when a man has pondered the reasons for a woman's impulses in the silence of night; when he found them in her education and when, in order to express them, since he mistrusts his personal observations, he went to nurture them in the sources that I have just pointed out; when he only lets himself take up the pen after having drawn from the thoughts of Bossuet and

Massillon, allow me to ask you if there exists a phrase to express to you my surprise and my pain in seeing this man brought before the criminal court—for a few passages in his book, and precisely for the truest and loftiest ideas and sentiments that he could have gathered together! That is what I beg you not to forget regarding the accusation of the offense to religious morality. And next, if you allow me, let me put before you concerning all of this, what I myself call offenses to morality, that is to say the satisfaction of the senses without those big *drops of sweat* turned cold that fall from the forehead of those who give themselves over to it; and I shall not cite for you from licentious books in which authors have sought to rouse the senses, I shall cite for you from a book that is given as a prize in collège, only I will ask your permission not to tell you the name of the author until after I have read a passage from it. Here's the passage. I will pass the volume around for you. It is a copy that was given as a prize to a student at collège. I'd rather hand this copy to you than Mr. Flaubert's copy:

"The next day, I was escorted back to her apartments. There I felt all that can excite sensual pleasure. The most pleasant scents had been spread around the room. She was on a bed which was only dressed with garlands of flowers. There she appeared, languidly lying. She held out her hand to me and made me sit down near her. All was graceful, even the veil that concealed her face. I saw the shape of her beautiful body. A simple cloth that moved with her made me in turn lose and find her ravishing charms." To you a simple cloth, when it is spread over a corpse, seemed a lascivious picture; here it is spread over a living woman. "She saw that my eyes were engaged and when she saw my gaze grow warm, the cloth seemed to come undone by itself. I saw all the treasures of her divine beauty. At that moment she pressed my hand and my eyes wandered all over. Only my dear Ardasire could be so beautiful, I cried out. But I call the gods to witness that my fidelity . . . She fell on my neck and held me in her arms. All of a sudden, the room darkened and her cloth came undone. She gave me a kiss. I was completely beside myself. A sudden flame ran through my veins and excited my senses. The thought of Ardasire faded. A remnant of a memory . . . but it merely seemed a dream to me . . . I was about . . . I was about to betray her with herself. Already I had put my hands on her bosom. They quickly wandered all over. Love showed itself only in its fury. She was rushing to victory. One moment longer and Ardasire could no longer defend herself."⁷

7. Sénard omits the significant final words of this sentence, which read: "when all of a sudden she made an effort. She was saved, she slipped away and I lost her." Charles Louis de Secondat de Montesquieu, *Arsace et Isménie: Histoire Orientale*, in Montesquieu, *Oeuvres Complètes*, ed. Roger Caillois, Vol. I (Paris: Gallimard, 1949) 464–498: 480. Ar-

Who has written this? It is not even the author of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*,⁸ it is His Honor de Montesquieu! No bitterness and revulsion here, all is sacrificed for literary beauty, and that is given to students of rhetoric as a prize, probably to serve them as a model for developments and descriptions that they are set to write. In *Les Lettres Persanes*, Montesquieu describes a scene that cannot even be read. It concerns a woman, which the author situates between two men that quarrel over her. Thus placed between two men, this woman has dreams—that seem quite pleasant to her.

Have we come to this, imperial counsel? Will we also have to cite you Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Les Confessions* and elsewhere!⁹ No, let me only tell the court that if Mr. Mérimée were persecuted for his description of the cab in *La Double Méprise* he would have been acquitted at once. They would only see in his book a work of art of great literary beauty. They would not condemn him any more than they would condemn painters or sculptors that do not just translate all bodily beauty, but all ardors and passions. I will not leave it at that; I ask you to recognize that Mr. Flaubert has not overdone his images, and that he only does one thing: draw with the firmest hand the scene of decline. With each line of his book he foregrounds disillusion, and, instead of ending with something charming, he endeavors to show us this woman arriving at the most appalling death, after the scorn, abandonment and ruin of her home. In one word, I can only repeat what I have said at the beginning of the speech for the defense, that Mr. Flaubert is the author of a good book, of a book that constitutes the incitement to virtue through the horror of vice.

I now need to examine the offense to religion. The offense to religion committed by Mr. Flaubert! And in what does it consist, if you please? The imperial counsel thought to see in him a skeptic. I can reply to the imperial counsel that he is mistaken. I do not need to make a profession of faith here, I merely need to defend the book, which is why I restrict myself to this simple word. But, regarding the book, I challenge the imperial counsel to find in it anything at all that resembles an offense to religion. You have seen how religion was introduced in Emma's education, and how this religion, dis-

sace et Ismérie was posthumously published by Montesquieu's son in 1783. Roger Callois, Notes, 1611. This scene depicts an apparent act of adultery committed by the tale's protagonist Arsace with a woman who resembles his great love Ardasire, and who in fact turns out to be her. After many misunderstandings, mistaken identities and disguises, the tale ends with the happy reunion of the lovers Arsace and Ismérie—which is Ardasire's real name—who, as it turns out, never betrayed each other after all.

8. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's novel of extramarital love, *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*, was first published in 1761.

9. *Les Confessions* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau were written between 1765 and 1770 and posthumously published between 1782 and 1789. It depicts the most intimate details of the author's private life, including his sexuality.

torted in a thousand ways, could not keep Emma from the downward path that carried her away. Do you want to know in what language Mr. Flaubert speaks of religion? Listen to a few lines that I take from the first installment, pages 231, 232 and 233.¹

“One evening when she was sitting by the open window, watching Lestibouois, the sexton, trim the boxwood, she suddenly heard the *Angelus* ringing.

It was the beginning of April, when the primroses are in bloom, and a warm wind blows over the newly turned flower-beds, and the gardens, like women, seem to be getting ready for the summer dances. Through the bars of the arbor and away beyond, the river could be seen in the fields, meandering through the grass in wandering curves. The evening vapors rose between the leafless poplars, touching their outlines with a violet tint, paler and more transparent than a subtle gauze caught amidst their branches. Cattle moved about in the distance; neither their steps nor their lowing could be heard; and the bell, still ringing through the air, kept up its peaceful lamentation.

This repeated tinkling stirred in the young woman distant memories of her youth and school days. She remembered the great candlesticks that rose above the vases full of flowers on the altar, and the tabernacle with its small columns. She would have liked to be once more lost in the long line of white veils, marked off here and there by the stiff black hoods of the good sisters bending over their praying chairs.”

This is the language in which religious sentiment is expressed; and, to listen to the imperial counsel, skepticism pervades Mr. Flaubert’s book from start to finish. I beg you, where then do you find skepticism there?

Imperial counsel: I did not say that there was any there.

Mr. Sénard: If there isn’t any there, then where is it? Evidently in your excisions. But here the work is presented in full; let the court judge and it will see that religious sentiment is so strongly imprinted in it that the accusation of skepticism is real slander. And now, will the imperial counsel allow me to tell him that there was no need to accuse the author of skepticism with so much fuss? Let us continue:

“At mass on Sundays when she looked up, she saw the gentle face of the Virgin amid the blue smoke of the rising incense. The image then awoke a tender emotion in her; she felt limp and helpless, like the down of a bird whirled by the tempest, and it was unconsciously that she went towards the church, ready for any

1. Pages 91–92.

devotions, provided that she could humble her soul and lose all sense of selfhood."

Gentlemen, this is the first appeal to religion in order to keep Emma from the downward path of passions. She has fallen, the poor woman, and then has been kicked away by the man to whom she has abandoned herself. She is near death, she recovers and she comes back to life. And you will now see what has been written in the issue of November 15, 1856, page 548.²

"Once, at the height of her illness, she thought she was about to die and had asked for the communion; and, while they were making the preparations in her room for the sacrament, while they were clearing the night-table of its medicine bottles and turning it into an altar, and while Félicité was strewing dahlia flowers on the floor, Emma felt some power passing over her that freed her from her pains, from all perception, from all feeling. Her body, relieved, no longer thought; another life was beginning; it seemed to her that her being, mounting toward God. . . ." (You see in what language Mr. Flaubert speaks of religious matters.) "It seemed to her that her being, mounting toward God would be annihilated in that love like a burning incense that melts into vapor. The bedclothes were sprinkled with holy water, the priest drew the white host from the holy pyx and she fainting with celestial joy as she advanced her lips to accept the body of the Savior presented to her."

I interrupt this passage, for which I apologize to the imperial counsel and to the court, but I need to say that it is the author who speaks here and who draws your attention to his terms for expressing the mystery of communion. Before resuming my reading, I need the court to grasp the literary value derived from this picture. I need to stress the expressions that belong to the author:

"And she was fainting with celestial joy as she advanced her lips to accept the body of the Savior presented to her. The curtains of the alcove floated gently round her like clouds, and the rays of the two tapers burning on the night table seemed to shine like dazzling halos. Then she let her head fall back, fancying she heard in space the music of seraphic harps, and perceived in an azure sky, on a golden throne in the midst of saints holding green palms, God the Father, resplendent with majesty, who ordered to earth angels with wings of fire to carry her away in their arms."

He goes on:

"This splendid vision dwelt in her memory as the most beautiful thing that it was possible to dream, so that now she strove to recall her sensation; it was still with her, albeit in a less overpowering

2. Pages 170-71.

manner and with a same profound sweetness. Her soul, tortured by pride, at length found rest in Christian humility, and, tasting the joy of weakness, she saw within herself the destruction of her will opening wide the gates for heavenly grace. She realized the existence of a bliss that could replace happiness, another love beyond all loves, without pause and without end, one that would grow forever! Amid the illusions of her hope she saw a state of purity floating above the earth, mingling with heaven, to which she aspired. She wanted to become a saint. She bought rosaries and wore holy medals; she wished to have in her room, by the side of her bed, a reliquary set in emeralds that she might kiss it every evening."

Those are religious sentiments! And if you would like to stop for a moment at the author's main idea, I would ask you to turn the page and to read the following three lines of the second paragraph:³

"She grew provoked at the doctrines of religion; the arrogance of the polemic writings displeased her by their ferocious attacks on people she did not know and the secular stories, sprinkled with religious seasoning, seemed to her written in such ignorance of the world, that they rather led her away from the truths she wanted to see confirmed."

That is the language of Mr. Flaubert. Now, if you please, we are getting to another scene, to the scene of the extreme unction. Ah! Imperial counsel, how mistaken you were when you accused my client of mingling the sacred and the profane, by stopping at the first words, when he had simply translated those beautiful phrases of the extreme unction, when the priest touches all the organs of the senses, when he says, in accordance with the expression of the ritual: *Per istam unctionem, et suam piissimam misericordiam, indulgeat tibi Dominus quidquid deliquisti.*⁴

You have said: One must not tamper with sacred things. With what right do you misrepresent these sacred words: "May God in his holy mercy forgive you of all the sins that you have committed through sight, the sense of taste, hearing etc.?"

Look, let me read you the indicted passage and that will be my complete revenge. I dare say my revenge, for the author needs to be avenged. Yes, Mr. Flaubert must get out of here not only an acquitted but also an avenged man! You are about to see what readings have nurtured him. The accused passage is at page 271 of the December 15 issue.⁵ It is conceived as follows:

"Pale as a statue and with eyes red as fire, Charles, beyond weeping, stood opposite her at the foot of the bed, while the priest, bending one knee, was muttering words in a low voice. . . ."

3. See page 172.

4. See n. 4, p. 330.

5. Page 256.

This entire picture is magnificent and I cannot resist reading it; but calm yourselves, I shall not extend it beyond measure. Now here is the indicted passage:

“She turned her face slowly, and seemed filled with joy on suddenly seeing the violet stole. She was doubtlessly reminded, in this moment of sudden serenity, of the lost bliss of her first mystical flights, mingling with the visions of eternal beatitude that were beginning.

The priest rose to take the crucifix; then she stretched forward her neck like one suffering from thirst, and gluing her lips to the body of the Man-God, she pressed upon it with all her expiring strength the fullest kiss of love that she had ever given.”

The extreme unction has not yet begun but they blame me for this kiss. I will not look for it in Saint Theresa,⁶ whom you perhaps know but whose memory is too far removed. I will not even look for Mrs. Guyon's mysticism in Fénelon,⁷ or for more modern mysticisms in which I find a great deal of reasons. I do not wish to ask these schools, which you describe as sensual Christianity, to explain this kiss. It is Bossuet, Bossuet himself that I wish to ask:

“Obey and what is more, try to come into the graces of Jesus by receiving communion, which are the graces of union, pleasure and love: the entire Gospel proclaims it. Jesus wants us to be with him; he wants to take pleasure, he wants us to take pleasure in him. His holy flesh is at the center of this union and this chaste bliss: He gives himself.” Etc.⁸

Again, I take up the reading of the indicted passage:

“Then he recited the *Misereatur* and the *Indulgentiam*, dipped his right thumb in the oil, and began to give extreme unction. First, upon the eyes, that had so coveted all worldly goods; then upon the nostrils, that had been so greedy of the warm breeze and the scents

6. Saint Theresa of Ávila (1515–1582) was a Spanish Carmelite nun whose zeal was credited with the revival of religious fervor in sixteenth-century Spain.
7. This mysticism is known as quietism. According to Georges Hacquard, the seventeenth-century priest Molinos, who postulated that a soul that had reached perfection through its continuous love of good no longer needed to battle bad inclinations, originally formulated this mystical doctrine. In turn, Madame Guyon (1648–1717) proposed that complete passivity and inertia with regard to eternal bliss was needed for total obedience to God. François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715) advised Madame Guyon to submit her writings to Bossuet, who accepted them. In 1695, Bossuet consecrated Fénelon as Archbishop of Cambrai. Fénelon later vexed Bossuet with his comments on the quietist quarrels. Bossuet responded with orthodox theology in his *Relation sur le quietisme* (1698). *L'Oeuvre de Bossuet*, ed. Georges Hacquard (Paris: Hachette, 1953) 89–90.
8. These words are reminiscent of Bossuet's conclusion to his *Traité sur la Concupiscence* (1731) where he invokes the love of God in chaste but sensual terms: “O Lord, whom I owe everything, I shall love you forever. I shall love you O Lord, who is my strength. Ignite this love in me. Send me your Holy Spirit, my love God, from the highest heavens and from your eternal bosom, which makes just one heart and soul of those you bless. May the invisible flame that consumes my heart be a holy and pure love. A love which takes nothing for itself, not the least indulgence, but which returns to you all the good he receives from you.” (94)

of love; then upon the mouth, that had spoken lies, moaned in pride and cried out in lust; then upon the hands that had taken delight in the texture of sensuality; and finally upon the soles of the feet, so swift, when she hastened to satisfy her desires, and that would now walk no more.

The curé wiped his fingers, threw the bit of oil-stained cotton into the fire, and came and sat down by the dying woman, to tell her that she must now blend her sufferings with those of Jesus Christ and abandon herself to the divine mercy.

Pronouncing his exhortations, he tried to place in her hand a blessed candle, symbol of the celestial glory with which she was soon to be surrounded. Emma, too weak, could not close her fingers, and if it had not been for Mr. Bournisien the taper would have fallen to the ground.

Yet, she was not quite so pale, and her face had an expression of serenity as if the sacrament had cured her.

The priest did not fail to point this out; he even explained to Bovary that the Lord sometimes prolonged the life of persons when he thought it useful for their salvation; and Charles remembered the day when, so near death, she had received the communion. Perhaps there was no need to despair, he thought."⁹

Now, when a woman dies and the priest is about to administer extreme unction, when we make of this a mystical scene and we translate sacramental words with scrupulous accuracy, they say that we tamper with sacred things. We have laid a reckless hand on sacred things because we have added to *deliquisti per oculos, per os, per aurem, per manus, et per pedes* the sin that each of these organs had committed. We are not the first ones to have gone down that path. In a book that you know, Mr. Sainte-Beuve also presents a scene of the extreme unction and this is the way in which he expresses himself:

"Oh! Yes then, let it be given to the eyes first, as to the noblest and the keenest of senses; to these eyes, for what they have seen and perceived of tenderness, of what is too treacherous and too deadly in the eyes of others; for what they have read and reread that is captivating and cherished too dearly; for shedding vain tears over fragile objects and over faithless creatures; for the sleep that they have so often forgotten, evenings, in dreaming of them!

To the sense of hearing also, for what it has heard and has allowed to be spoken that was too sweet, too flattering and too intoxicating; for the sound that the ear steals from deceiving words; for drinking from them their hidden honey!

Next to the sense of smell, for the all too subtle and voluptuous

9. Pages 256–57.

scents of spring evenings in the depths of the woods, for the flowers received in the morning and everyday breathed in with such indulgence!

To the lips, for what they have uttered that was too muddled or too pronounced; for what they have not answered in certain moments or what they have not revealed to certain people, for what they have sung in solitude that was too melodious or too full of tears; for their inarticulate murmur, for their silence!

To the neck instead of the breast, for the ardor of desire, in accordance with the consecrated expression (*propter ardorem libidinis*);¹ yes, for the pain of affections and rivalries, for too much anguish in human tenderness, for the tears that choke a throat without a voice, for all that makes a heart beat and eats away at it!

To the hands also for having clasped a hand not bound by holy bonds; for having received tears that were too impassioned; for having perhaps begun to write some forbidden response without finishing it!

To the feet, for not having fled, for having sufficed for long solitary walks, for not having wearied soon enough in the midst of conversations that continuously began again!"²

You did not put this on trial. Here are two men who, each in their own sphere, have taken the same thing and who have added sin and error to each one of the senses. Would you have liked to forbid them from translating the phrase of the ritual: *Quidquid deliquisti per oculos, per aurem, etc.*?³

Mr. Flaubert did what Mr. Sainte-Beuve has done, without being a plagiarist at that. He used the right that belongs to each writer, to add to what another writer has said, to complement a subject. The final scene of the novel *Madame Bovary* has been fashioned like any study of that type, with the help of religious documents. Mr. Flaubert has created the scene of the extreme unction with a book lent to him by a venerable clergyman who is one of his friends, who read that scene, who was moved to tears by it, and who did not imagine that the majesty of religion could be offended. That book is entitled: *Historical, dogmatic, moral, liturgical and canonical explanation of the catechism, with the response to objections drawn from the sciences against religion, by the Abbot Ambroise Guillois, parish priest of Notre-Dame-du-Pré, at Le Mans, 6th edition, etc.* a work

1. Due to the ardor of desire.

2. This is a citation from chapter XXIV of the novel *Volupté* (1834) by Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve. The novel is a confession of a priest named Amaury who loves the wife of his patron the Marquis de Couaën, but is simultaneously the object of affection of another woman. In the passage cited here, the priest is described as administering extreme unction to the Marquise. Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, *Volupté* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986) 371–372.

3. See n. 4, p. 330.

approved by His Eminence Cardinal Gousset, and by Their Reverences the Bishops and Archbishops of Le Mans, Tours, Bordeaux, Cologne, etc. third volume, printed at Le Mans by Charles Monnoyer, 1851. Now, you will see in this book, as you have seen earlier in Bossuet, the principles and in some ways the text of the passages that the imperial counsel indicts. I no longer quote Mr. Sainte-Beuve, an artist and a literary eccentric; listen to the Church herself:

“Extreme unction can restore the health of a body if it is useful for the glory of God . . .” and the priest says that this often happens. Now here is the extreme unction:

“The priest addresses a brief exhortation to the person who is ill, if he is able to hear it, in order to prepare him to receive with dignity the sacrament that is about to be administered to him.

The priest then applies the unction on the sick person with a stilet, or with the end of his right thumb which he soaks each time in the oil of the sick. These unctions must especially be applied on the five parts of the body that nature has given to man as sensory organs, notably: on the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and hands.

As the priest applies the unctions (we have followed the *Ritual* point by point, we have copied it), he pronounces the words that correspond to it.

To the eyes, on the closed eyelids: Through this holy anointing and through his own loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through sight. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the sins that he has committed through sight: so many indiscreet glances, so much criminal curiosity, so many readings that have generated a host of thoughts contrary to faith and morals in him.”

What did Mr. Flaubert do? By combining two parts, he put in the priest’s mouth what must be on his mind and simultaneously on the mind of the sick person. He purely and simply copied.

“To the ears: Through this holy anointing and through his own loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through hearing. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the errors of which he has been guilty while listening with pleasure to gossip, slander, dishonest words and obscene songs.

To the nostrils: Through this holy anointing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through the sense of smell. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the sins that he has committed through the sense of smell, all the refined and voluptuous pursuits of scents, all sensualities, all of the smells of evil that he has breathed in.—*To the mouth, on the lips:* Through this holy anoint-

ing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through the sense of taste and through speech. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the sins that he has committed by uttering curses and blasphemies . . . by overindulging in drink and food. . . .—*On the hands*: Through this holy anointing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through sense of touch. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the thefts, all the injustices of which he may have been guilty, all the more or less criminal liberties that he has taken. . . . The priests receive the unction on the outside of the hands, since they have already received it on the inside at the time of their ordination, and sick people on the inside.—*On the feet*: Through this holy anointing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through your steps. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all the steps that he has taken on the roads of evil, so many scandalous walks, so many criminal meetings . . . The anointing of the feet is done on top or under the sole of the foot, depending on the comfort of the sick person, and also depending on the custom of the diocese where one is. The most common practice seems to be to do it on soles of the feet.”

And finally on the chest (Mr. Sainte-Beuve has copied it, we have not done so since it concerned the chest of a woman). *Proper ardorem libidinis*, etc.

“*On the chest*: Through this holy anointing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through the heat of passion. At this moment, the sick person must detest once more all evil thoughts, all evil desires to which he has abandoned himself, all feelings of hate and vengeance that he has nurtured in his heart.”

According to the *Ritual* we could speak of other things besides the chest, but God knows what holy rage we would have ignited in the Ministry of Justice, had we talked about the waist:

“*To the loins (ad lumbos)*: Through this holy anointing and through his own great mercy, may the Lord forgive you all the sins that you have committed through dissolute movements of the flesh.”

Had we said that, with what kind of thunderbolt wouldn't you have tried to damn us, imperial counsel! And even so, the *Ritual* adds:

“At this moment, the sick person must detest once more so many illicit pleasures, so many carnal delights . . .”

That is the *Ritual*, and you have seen in it the indicted article; there is not one mockery there, all is serious and touching. And, I

repeat to you, the man who gave my client this book, and who has seen my client use it in the way he has done, shook his hands in tears. Mr. Imperial Counsel, you then see the recklessness—so as not to use an expression that, to be precise, would be more severe—of the accusation that we tampered with sacred things. You now see that we did not mingle the profane with the sacred, when for each one of the senses we showed the sin committed by that sense, since it is the language of the Church herself.

Shall I now stress the other details of the crime of offense to religion? The Ministry of Justice tells me: "It is no longer religion, it is the morality of all times that you have offended; you have insulted death!" How have I insulted death? Because at the moment that woman dies, a man walks down the street, whom she had met more than once when he asked for alms near the cab she used to return from her adulterous meetings. It is the blind man that she was used to seeing, the blind man who sang his song while the cab slowly went up the hill, to whom she threw some change and whose appearance made her shiver. This man walks down the street; and, at the moment when divine mercy forgives or promises forgiveness to the unfortunate woman who atones for the errors of her life with an awful death, human ridicule comes to her in the shape of the song that goes past her window. My God! You find an offense in this. But Mr. Flaubert merely does what Shakespeare and Goethe have done, who, at the very instant of death, are sure to make heard some song of complaint or of mockery which reminds the one passing into eternity of some pleasure that he will no longer enjoy or of some error to atone.

Let us read:

"In fact, she looked around her slowly, as one awakening from a dream; then in a distinct voice she asked for her mirror, and remained bent over it for some time, until the big tears fell from her eyes. Then she turned her head with a sigh and fell back upon the pillows.

Her chest soon began heaving rapidly."⁴

I am unable to read it, I am like Lamartine: "For me, the expiation goes beyond truth. . . ." Imperial counsel, I did not believe, however, to be doing something wrong when I read these pages to my daughters, who are married and respectable ladies, who received good examples and good lessons, and who have never ever been brought outside the strictest path by indiscretion, besides things that can and must be understood. . . . It has become impossible for me to continue this reading, I will confine myself strictly to the indicted passages:

4. Page 257.

“His arms outstretched and as the death-rattle became stronger (Charles was on the other side, that man that you never see and who is admirable) as the death-rattle became stronger, the priest prayed faster; his prayers mingled with Bovary’s stifled sobs, and sometimes all seemed lost in the muffled murmur of the Latin syllables that sounded like a tolling bell.

Suddenly from the pavement outside came a loud noise of wooden shoes and the clattering of a stick; and a voice rose, a raucous voice—that sang:

Often the heat of a summer’s day
Makes a young girl dream her heart away

Emma raised herself like a galvanized corpse, her hair streaming, her eyes fixed, staring.

To gather up all the new-cut stalks
Of wheat left by the scythe’s cold swing.
Nanette bends over as she walks
Toward the furrows from where they spring.

‘The blind man!’ she cried.

And Emma began to laugh, an atrocious, frantic, desperate laugh, thinking she saw the hideous face of the poor wretch loom out of the eternal darkness like a menace.

The wind blew very hard that day,
It blew her petticoat away!

A spasm threw her back upon the mattress. They all drew near. She had ceased to exist.”⁵

Gentlemen, you see in this hour of reckoning the reminder of her error and remorse in all its poignancy and dreadfulness. This is not artistic imagination that merely wants contrast without usefulness and morality, it is the blind man that she hears singing that awful song, which he sang when she returned all sweaty and hideous from the adulterous meetings; it is the blind man that she sees at each of these meetings: it is that blind man that haunted her with his song, with his importunity. When divine mercy is there, he comes to personify the human rage that haunts her at the hour of reckoning! And they call that an offense to public morality! I can say, on the contrary that it is an homage to public morality, that there is nothing more moral; I can say that in this book the vices of education are brought to life, that they are taken from the true and living flesh of our society, and that with each stroke the author asks us this question: “Have you done what you should

5. Pages 257–58.

for the education of your daughters? Have you given them that religion that can sustain them amidst in the storms of life, or is it merely a mass of carnal superstitions that leaves them without support when the thunder rumbles? Have you taught them that life is not the fulfillment of fanciful dreams and that it is something prosaic to which we must adapt ourselves? You, have you taught them that? Have you done what you should for their happiness? Have you told them: Poor children, outside the path that I show you, in the pleasures that you pursue, there is only disgust that awaits you, desertion of your home, trouble, disorder, squandering, turmoil, seizure of your property . . ." If something is missing from this picture, you see that the usurer is present; present too is the Jew who sold to satisfy the whims of this woman, the furniture is seized and the sale is about to take place; and the husband still knows nothing. All that is left to the unfortunate woman is to die!

But, the Ministry of Justice says, her death is voluntary, that woman dies at her time.

Could she live? Was she not doomed? Had she not exhausted the final degree of shame and baseness?

Yes, on our stage, we are shown gracious, smiling and happy women who have strayed and I do not wish to say what they have done. *Questum corpore fecerant*.⁶ I would just like to say this. When we are shown happy and charming women, veiled in muslin and offering a gracious hand to counts, marquis and dukes, who often themselves answer to the name of marquise or duchess: that's what you call respecting public morality. And the man who shows the adulterous woman dying in shame commits an offense to public morality!

Look, I do not want to say that you have not expressed your thoughts, since you have expressed them, but you have given in to a great concern. No, that is not you, the husband, the father, the man that is there, it is not possible that this is you; you would not have come to say that Mr. Flaubert is the author of a bad book, without the concern of the brief and preconceived idea! Yes, left to your inspirations, your appreciation would be the same as mine. I am not speaking from a literary point of view, you and I cannot differ in that respect, but from the perspective of moral and religious sentiment, such as you understand it and such as I understand it.

They have also told us that we have portrayed a materialistic curé. We have taken the curé as we have taken the husband. He is not a distinguished clergyman; he is an ordinary clergyman, a country priest. Just as we have insulted no one, and we have not expressed any feeling or thought that could have been offensive to the

6. They did this with the body.

husband, nor have we insulted the clergyman found there. I only have one word to say to that.

Would you like some books in which clergymen play an appalling role? Take *Gil Blas*, *Le Chanoine* by Balzac, *Notre-Dame de Paris* by Victor Hugo.⁷ If you would like priests that are the shame of the clergy, take them elsewhere, you will not find them in *Madame Bovary*. And what have I shown? A country curé, who, in fulfilling his duties of a parish priest in the countryside, is what Mr. Bovary is: an ordinary man. Have I represented him as a libertine, a glutton or a drunkard? I have not said one word of that. I have represented him as fulfilling his ministry, not with lofty intelligence, but as his nature called him to fulfill it. I have brought him into contact and into a state of nearly perpetual discussions with a type who will live on—as has the creation of Mr. Prudhomme⁸—as will a few other creations of our time, studied and taken from reality to such a degree that is impossible to forget them. I mean the country pharmacist, the disciple of Voltaire, the skeptic, the non-believer, and the man who carries on an eternal quarrel with the curé. But in his quarrels with the curé, who is constantly defeated, scoffed and ridiculed? It is Homais, he has been given the most comical role because he is the most real, he best depicts our skeptical era, he is a fanatic, what they call a priestophobe. Allow me once more to read page 206.⁹ We see the kind lady of the inn who offers something to her curé:

“What can I do for you, Mr. le curé?” asked the hostess, as she reached down a copper candlestick from the row of candles. “Will you have something to drink? A thimbleful of Cassis? A glass of wine?”

The priest declined very politely. He had come for his umbrella, that he had forgotten the other day at the Ernemont convent, and after asking Mrs. Lefrançois to have it sent to him at the rectory in the evening, he left for the church; the *Angelus* was ringing.

When the pharmacist no longer heard the noise of his boots along the square, he confessed that he had found the priest's behavior just now very unbecoming. This refusal to take any refreshment seemed to him the most odious hypocrisy; all priests tumbled on the sly, and were trying to bring back the days of the tithe.

7. Sénard refers here to the picaresque novel *L'Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* by Alain-René Lesage, first published between 1715 and 1735, and to Victor Hugo's 1831 novel *Notre-Dame de Paris*. Sénard may have also used *Le Chanoine* to refer to other clergymen studied in Balzac's *Comédie Humaine: Le Curé de Tours* (1832) and *Le Curé de Campagne* (1839).

8. Joseph Prudhomme is a character created by caricaturist, lithographer, and writer Henri Monnier. The successful stage production of Monnier's *Grandeur et Décadence de Joseph Prudhomme* in 1852 established Prudhomme as the type of French bourgeois whose declamatory style of speech appears enlightened but in reality consists of mere clichés.

9. Pages 65–66.

The landlady took up the defense of her curé.

'Besides, he could double up four men like you over his knee. Last year he helped our people to bring in the hay; he carried as many as six bales at once, he is so strong.'

'Bravo!' said the pharmacist. 'Now just send your daughters to confess to such vigorous fellows! I, if I were the Government, I'd have the priests bled once a month. Yes, Mrs. Lefrançois, every month—a good phlebotomy, in the interests of the police and morals.'

'Be quiet, Mr. Homais. You are a godless man; you have no religion.'

The pharmacist replied:

'I have a religion, my religion, and I even have more than all these others with their mummeries and their juggling. I adore God, on the contrary. I believe in the Supreme Being, in a Creator, whatever he may be. I care little who has placed us here below to fulfill our duties as citizens and fathers of families; but I don't need to go to church to kiss silver plates, and fatten, out of my pocket, a lot of good-for-nothings who live better than we do. For one can know him as well in a wood, in a field, or even contemplating the ethereal heavens like the ancients. My God is the God of Socrates, of Franklin, of Voltaire, and of Béranger! I am for *La Profession de foi du vicaire savoyard* and the immortal principles of '89! And I can't admit of an old boy of a God who takes walks in his garden with a cane in his hand, who lodges his friends in the belly of whales, dies uttering a cry, and rises again at the end of three days; things absurd in themselves, and completely opposed, moreover, to all physical laws, which proves to us, by the way, that priests have always wallowed in squalid ignorance, and tried to drag whole nations down after them.'

He stopped, looked as if expecting to find an audience, for in his enthusiasm the pharmacist had for a moment fancied himself in the midst of the town council. But the landlady no longer heard him."

What have we here? A dialogue, a scene, such as occurs each time that Homais had the opportunity to speak of priests. Now, there is something better in the last passage, page 271.¹

"Public attention was distracted by the appearance of Mr. Bourisien, who was going across the square carrying the holy oil. Homais, as due to his principles, compared priests to ravens attracted by the smell of death. The sight of an ecclesiastic was personally disagreeable to him, for the cassock made him think of the shroud, and his dislike of the one matched his fear of the other."

Our old friend who lent us the catechism was quite content with this passage. He told us: This is of a striking truthfulness; this is in-

1. Pages 255–56.

deed the portrait of a priestophobe whom "the cassock reminds of the shroud, and who matched his dislike of the one with his fear of the other." He was an ungodly person and he loathed the cassock, perhaps a bit due to impiety, but much more because it made him think of the shroud.

Allow me to sum this all up.

I defend a man who, had he met with literary criticism concerning the form of his book, on some expressions, on the excess of detail, on this or that point, would have most willingly accepted that literary criticism. But to find himself accused of offense to morality and to religion! Mr. Flaubert cannot get over it; and he protests here in front of you with all the astonishment and all the vigor that he is capable of against such an accusation.

You are not among those who condemn books for a few lines, you belong to those who above all judge the idea and the means of execution and who shall ask yourselves this question with which I have begun my defense: Does the reading of such a book make you love vice or does it inspire horror of vice? Does such a terrible atonement for an error not persuade and incite us to virtue? The reading of this book cannot make any impression on you other than the one it has made on us, namely that this book is excellent as a whole and that its details are beyond reproach. All classical literature authorized paintings and scenes quite other than those that we have allowed ourselves. In that respect, we could have taken it as a model, we have not done so; we have imposed on ourselves a restraint that you shall take into account. Had it been possible that, with this or that word, Mr. Flaubert had overstepped the mark that he had set for himself, I would not only have reminded you that this is a first work, but I would have told you that although he might have been mistaken, his fault would have been without damage to public morality. By making him go before criminal court—he, whom you now know a little through his book, he whom you already like a little, I am sure, and whom you would like even more if you knew him better—he is quite sufficiently and already too cruelly punished. Now it is up to you to give a verdict. You have judged the book as a whole and in its details. You cannot hesitate!

VERDICT²

The court devoted part of last week's hearing to the legal proceedings brought against Mr. Léon Laurent-Pichat and Mr. Auguste-Alexis Pillet, the former, managing editor, the latter,

2. The verdict was published in the issue of February 9, 1857, of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*. The actual acquittal was pronounced in court two days earlier, on February 7,

printer of the periodical the *Revue de Paris*, and Mr. Gustave Flaubert, man of letters, all three are charged: 1) Laurent-Pichat with having committed the crime of offense to public and religious morality and to decency, by publishing in 1856, in the issues of the 1st and the 15th of December of the *Revue de Paris*, parts of a novel entitled *Madame Bovary* and, particularly, various passages contained in pages 73, 77, 78, 272, 273;³ 2) Pillet and Flaubert with having—Pillet by printing the passages of a novel entitled *Madame Bovary* so that they were published, Flaubert by writing and handing them over to Laurent-Pichat to be published—aided and assisted Laurent-Pichat, in full cognizance, in the facts that prepared, facilitated and perpetrated the aforementioned crimes, and with having thus made themselves accomplices of those crimes provided for in articles 1 and 8 of the law of May 17, 1819, and 59 and 60 of the Penal Code.

Mr. Pinard, deputy imperial counsel laid out the charge.

After having heard the defense, presented by Mr. Sénard for Mr. Flaubert, Mr. Demarest for Mr. Pichat, and Mr. Faverie for the printer, the court deferred to today's hearing (February 7) pronouncing the verdict, which has been given in these terms:

"Whereas Laurent-Pichat, Gustave Flaubert and Pillet are charged with having committed the crimes of offense to public and religious morality and to decency; the former, as a perpetrator, by publishing in the periodical entitled the *Revue de Paris*, of which he is managing editor, and in the issues of the 1st and 15th of October, the 1st and the 15th of December 1856, a novel entitled *Madame Bovary*; Gustave Flaubert and Pillet, as accomplices, the one by providing the manuscript, the other by printing the aforementioned novel;

And whereas the specifically indicated passages of the novel that is concerned, which encompasses nearly 300 pages, are contained, in terms of the indictment before criminal court, on pages 73, 77, and 78 (issue of the 1st of December) and 271, 272 and 273 (issue of the 15th of December, 1856);

And whereas the indicted passages, viewed abstractly and separately, indeed show expressions, pictures, or paintings that good taste condemns and that are likely to infringe on legitimate and honorable sensibilities;

And whereas the same observations may be justly applied to other passages not defined by the indictment that, at first glance, seem to present the exposition of theories that would not be less

1857. Albert Thibaudet, *Chronologie de Flaubert in Flaubert, Oeuvres*, ed. Dumesnil and Thibaudet, xx.

3. Pages 255 and passim.

contrary to decency, to the institutions that are the foundation of society, than to the respect for the most august ceremonies of worship;

And whereas on grounds of those various qualifications the work referred to court deserves a harsh rebuke, for the task of literature must be to embellish and to amuse the mind, by elevating understanding and by refining morals, more so than to publish the disgust for vice by offering a painting of the disorderly conduct that can exist in society;

And whereas the accused, and in particular Gustave Flaubert, emphatically dismiss the charge brought against them, by stating that the novel submitted for the court's judgment has an eminently moral purpose; that the author mainly meant to expose the dangers that result from an education unsuited for the milieu in which one must live, and that, pursuing this idea, he showed the woman who is the main character of his novel, longing for a world and a society for which she was not made, unhappy with the modest condition in which fate would have placed her, first forgetting the duties as a mother, then her duties as a wife, successively introducing into her home adultery and ruin, and ending her life wretchedly with suicide, after having descended all steps of the most complete degradation and having stooped to theft;

And whereas these facts, undoubtedly moral in their principle, should have been supplemented by a certain harshness of language and by a restrained reserve, particularly as it affects the development of scenes and situations that the author's project made him place before the public's eyes;

And whereas it is not allowed, under pretext of painting character or local color, to reproduce in their deviations the facts, words and gestures of characters that a writer has set himself the task of depicting; that such a method applied to works of the mind as well as to the fine arts, would lead to a realism that would be the negation of the beautiful and the good and which, bringing forth equally offensive works for the eyes and the mind, would commit continual offenses to public morality and to decency;

And whereas there are limits that literature, even of the lightest kind, must not overstep and of which Gustave Flaubert and the co-charged appear to have been insufficiently aware;

But whereas the work of which Flaubert is the author is a work that appears to have been at length and seriously worked on, from the standpoint of literature and of character study; and whereas those passages challenged in the indictment, as reprehensible as they may be, are so few if one compares them to the length of the work; and whereas those passages either in the ideas that they portray or in the situations that they represent, are part of the group of

characters that the author has wanted to depict, while exaggerating them and imbuing them with a vulgar and often shocking realism;

And whereas Gustave Flaubert declares his respect for the accepted standards of good behavior and all that relates to religious morality; and whereas it does not appear that his book has been written, as certain other works, with the sole aim of giving satisfaction to sensual passions, or in the spirit of license and debauchery or to ridicule things that must be surrounded by the respect of all;

And whereas he only has made the mistake of sometimes losing sight of the rules that every writer who respects himself must never transgress, and of forgetting that literature, like art, in order to carry out the good that it is called upon to produce, must not only be chaste and pure of form and expression;

Under these circumstances, whereas it has not been sufficiently established that Pichat, Gustave Flaubert and Pillet have found themselves guilty of the crimes of which they have been accused;

The court acquits them of the accusation brought against them and dismisses them without cost."

CRITICAL RECEPTION



PAUL DE MAN

[Contemporary Critical Reception of
Madame Bovary]†

* * *

The critical reception of the book was mixed, though on the whole not unfavorable. The violence of tone and action upset many critics, but their strictures were almost always accompanied by expressions of admiration for the style. Cuvillier-Fleury, the rival of Sainte-Beuve at the *Journal des Débats*, was one of the few critics to attack Flaubert's style as marred by a romantic flamboyance that does not blend with the harshness of the realism. Most of the other hostile critics preferred to attack the political subversiveness associated with realism rather than *Madame Bovary* itself: "*Madame Bovary*," writes A. de Pontmartin in the *Correspondant*, "is the pathological glorification of the senses and of the imagination in a disappointed democracy * * * it proves once and for all that realism means literary democracy."¹ Sainte-Beuve's own article reflects many of the hesitations with which a late romantic temperament reacts to the new sound of the novel; he did, however, recognize the historical importance of the occasion. Flaubert's fellow-Norman, the novelist and critic Barbey d'Aureville (who was to react very negatively to Flaubert's later work), wrote a penetrating article in which he rather overemphasizes the impersonal objectivity of the style in terms that are reminiscent of some of Flaubert's own statements in his correspondence. The deepest understanding was to come from Baudelaire, whose article was the only one to satisfy Flaubert completely: "You have penetrated the inner mystery of the work as if you and I shared the same mind," he wrote to Baudelaire: "You have felt and understood me entirely."²

Flaubert remained aloof from the public debates stirred up by *Madame Bovary*. He was to go on to even harsher, more ironic and uncompromising works, *The Sentimental Education* and *Bouvard and Pécuchet*, none of which found an even remotely comparable response among the general public.

† From "Introduction" to *Madame Bovary* (New York: Norton, 1965). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

1. Quoted by René Descharmes and René Dumesnil in *Autour de Flaubert. Etudes historiques et documentaires* (Paris: Mercure, 1922).

2. From Flaubert, *Correspondence* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973). Vol. 3. p. 148.

CHARLES AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE

Madame Bovary, by Gustave Flaubert†

Monday, May 4th, 1857

I have not forgotten that this work has recently been the object of a debate that is in no way literary; what stands out foremost in my memory, however, are the conclusions and the wisdom of the judges. Henceforth, this work belongs to the realm of art and of art alone; it is accountable to literary critics only and critics can deal with it in full independence.

They can and they should. Often enough, we labor hard at resuscitating things of the past, older writers, works no longer read to which we restore a flash of interest, a semblance of life; but when genuine and live works pass within our grasp, with full canvas flying and banners floating in the breeze as if taunting with the question: *What do you think of us?*—a true critic, in whose veins flows a drop of the blood of Pope, Boileau, Johnson, Jeffrey,¹ Hazlitt or simply Monsieur de la Harpe,² will burn with impatience, frustrated at having to remain silent, eager to speak up, to herald and salute the work as it passes by. Long ago, Pindar said about poetry: I hail old wine and youthful songs!—youthful songs: this means last night's new play, the novel of the day, all what is being discussed by the young the very moment it appears.

I had not read the first version of *Madame Bovary* when it appeared in serial form in a periodical. Striking as some parts may have been, the general idea and structure must have suffered from this mode of publication. Startled by some daring episode, the reader must have wondered if worse was still to come: he might well have assumed that the work was heading for perilous regions and that the author intended something which, in fact, he did not intend at all. Reading the book as one continuous unit, one finds each scene falling back into place. *Madame Bovary* is first and foremost a book, a carefully composed book, amply premeditated and totally coherent, in which nothing is left to chance and in which the author or, better, the painter does exactly what he intends to do from beginning to end.

The writer has obviously lived a great deal in the country, in the region of Normandy which he describes so truthfully. Generally,

† The article first appeared as Sainte-Beuve's weekly book review (always published on Monday) on May 4, 1857. It was later included in his *Causeries du Lundi* ("Monday Talks"), XIII. Translated by Paul de Man.

1. Francis Jeffrey (1773–1850) was a Scotch critic and essayist, one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review* [Editor].

2. J. F. de la Harpe (1724–1805) was a French neo-classical critic [Editor].

those who stay in the country and respond to nature with enough sensitivity to describe it well, tend to love it or, at least, to stress its beauty, especially after they have moved away; they are tempted to make it into an idyllic setting, an idealized world of nostalgically remembered happiness and well-being. As long as he lived there, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre was bored to tears by the Ile de France but, once he had left the region he fondly remembered the beauty of the landscapes, the peaceful serenity of the valleys; he made it the dwelling place of his chosen creatures and wrote *Paul and Virginia*. Without going as far as Bernardin de Sainte-Pierre, George Sand probably thought her Berry was pretty dull; later, however, she chose to show only the attractive aspects of the place and certainly did not try to disenchant her readers with the Creuse Valley. Even when she peopled it with passion-driven and theorizing characters, she preserved a rural, pastoral element, poetic in the Hellenic sense of the term. But here, in the case of the author of *Madame Bovary*, we come upon an altogether different manner, another kind of inspiration and, in truth, upon a different generation. The ideal is gone, the lyrical has died out; it can no longer hold us. Stern and implacable truth has entered art as the last word of experience. The author of *Madame Bovary* stayed in the provinces and in the country, in villages and small towns; he did not merely cross the region on a spring day, like the traveller mentioned by la Bruyère who, standing on a hill, composes his dream as a painter would, along the slope of the hillside—he actually lived there. And what did he see? Pettiness, poverty, conceit, stupidity, routine, monotony and boredom—and so he tells us. Those genuine and faithfully rendered landscapes inhabited by the rural spirit of the region become the setting for boorish lovers, for vulgar, prosaic, foolishly pretentious, totally ignorant or half-educated beings. One single creature capable of the nobility of dreams and aspiring to a better world is thrown into this milieu; she feels alien and oppressed; she suffers so much in solitude that she is altered and degraded. In pursuing her false dream and absent beauty she gradually reaches ruin and depravation. Is this moral? Is it consoling? The question does not seem to have occurred to the writer; his only concern was: is this true? I presume that he himself witnessed something similar, or that, at any rate, he chose to condense on a tightly composed canvas the outcome of various observations, against a background of bitterness and irony.

Another equally surprising anomaly: among all those very real and alive characters, not a single one seems to be the kind of person the author himself would have wanted to be; the care he lavishes on them is only aimed at relentless precision; none are treated with the consideration one would show towards a friend.

The novelist entirely refrains from taking sides; he is present only in order to watch, to reveal and to say everything, but not even his profile appears in a single corner of the novel. The work is entirely impersonal. This, in itself, demonstrates remarkable strength.

Next to Madame Bovary, the most important character is Monsieur Bovary. We meet the young Charles Bovary (for his father, too, is very accurately portrayed) from his very first days in school: he is a docile and well-behaved but awkward boy, a hopelessly mediocre nonentity, rather stupid, thoroughly undistinguished, tame, passive, submissively destined to follow step by step a previously mapped out path or to walk in the footsteps of his guides. Son of a somewhat rakish army surgeon, he shows none of his father's dash or vices. His mother's savings enable him to undertake rather pale studies in Rouen, leading to a painfully earned medical degree. Having to decide in which town to set up practice, he selects Tostes, a smallish place not far from Dieppe. He is married off to a much older widow rumored to have a small yearly income. He allows himself to be pushed into such arrangements without even seeming to realize how remote he remains from happiness.

One night, he finds himself summoned to les Bertaux, a farm located at a good six miles' distance from his home. He is to set the broken leg of a wealthy farmer, widowed father of a single daughter. This sequence of episodes, the trip through the night on horseback, the arrival at the large farm, his first encounter with the young girl who has nothing of the farmer's daughter, having instead been raised as a well-bred young lady in a convent, the attitude of the rich man—all this is admirably rendered in minute detail, as if we were present at the scene: it is like a Dutch or Flemish painting of Normandy. Bovary gets into the habit of returning to the Bertaux farm, more often than his attendance upon his patient requires, and he keeps going there even after Rouault is cured. Unnoticed even to himself, his frequent visits to the farm gradually grow into a habit, a delightful distraction from his painful routine.

On these days he rose early, set off at a gallop, urging on his horse, then got down to wipe his boots in the grass and put on black gloves before entering. He liked the courtyard, seeing himself enter and noticing the gate turn against his shoulder, the cock crow on the wall, the farmboys run to meet him. He liked the granary and the stables; he liked old Rouault, who pressed his hand and called him his savior; he liked the small wooden shoes of Mademoiselle Emma on the scoured flags of the kitchen—her high heels made her a little taller; and when she walked in front of him, the wooden soles springing up quickly struck with a sharp sound against the leather of her boots.

She always reconducted him to the first step of the porch. When his horse had not yet been brought round she stayed there. They had said "Good-bye"; there was no more talking. The open air wrapped her round, playing with the soft down on the back of her neck, or blew to and fro on her hips her apron-strings, that fluttered like streamers. Once, during a thaw, the bark of the trees in the yard was oozing, the snow melted on the roofs of the buildings; she stood on the threshold, went to fetch her sunshade and opened it. The parasol, made of an iridescent silk that let the sunlight sift through, colored the white skin of her face with shifting reflections. Beneath it, she smiled at the gentle warmth; drops of water fell one by one on the taut silk.

It would be hard to imagine a picture of greater freshness and precision, so well composed and delicately lighted, in which the memory of the classical is so well disguised to appear modern. The noise of the melting snow dripping down on the umbrella reminds me of a similar noise: the tinkle of ice drops as they fall from the branches on the dry leaves of the path in William Cowper's "Winter walk at noon."³ One invaluable quality distinguishes Monsieur Flaubert from many other more or less talented observers who nowadays lay claim, at times legitimately, to the faithful portrayal of mere reality: he possesses style. At times, he even has too much style, and his pen may then indulge in oddities and minutiae of continued description that sometimes interfere with the general effect. His objects and his faces, even those that seem best suited to catch our eye, are somewhat flattened and overshadowed by the excessive relief of surrounding accessories. Madame Bovary herself, the Mademoiselle Emma who seemed so charming on our first encounter with her, is so often described in minute detail that I fail to visualize her physical appearance clearly in its totality, or in a distinct and decisive manner.

The first Madame Bovary soon dies and Emma becomes the second and only Madame Bovary. The chapter of the wedding at Bertaux is pictorially perfect, particularly rich in truthful details, combining spontaneity with stiff formality, at times ugly and awkward, but ribald and graceful as well, ranging from delicacy to sheer gluttony. The scene is balanced by the dance at the La Vaubyessard castle and, with the later chapter on the Agricultural Fair, the three episodes are like so many pictures which, if they had been painted on canvas, would belong in a gallery with the best works of this kind.

3. Cowper's lines are as follows: "The redbreast warbles still, but is content / * * * and flitting light / From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes / From many a twig the pendant drops of ice / That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below" [*Editor*].

Emma becomes Madame Bovary, settles in the little home in Tostes, with its crammed rooms, a small garden longer than it is wide looking out over the fields. She immediately creates order, cleanliness, and an atmosphere of elegance around her. Her husband, eager to please her, buys her a secondhand carriage that will allow her to travel on the neighboring roads whenever she wishes. For the first time in his life, Charles Bovary is happy and he knows it; after looking after his patients all day, he finds joy and contentment on his return home. He is in love with his wife and only wishes this bourgeois and tranquil happiness to last forever. She, however, has known headier dreams. As a young girl, she has often wondered how to achieve happiness, and she soon realizes, even during her honeymoon, that this is not the way.

Here begins a profound, sensitive, and tightly knit analysis, a cruel dissection that will only end with the book. We enter into the heart of Madame Bovary. How to describe it?—she is woman; at first she is merely romantically inclined, by no means corrupt. Her portrayer, Monsieur Flaubert, does not spare her. He denounces without pity the overrefined tastes of her childhood, the coquettish little girl, the dreamy schoolgirl overindulging her fancies. Shall I confess it? one often feels more tolerant towards her than the author himself. Thrust in a situation to which she ought to adjust, she always has a quality too much and a virtue too little: all her errors and her undoing stem from there. The quality she has in excess consists not only in being a romantic nature, but of having needs of heart and mind as well as ambition, aspirations towards a higher, more refined and more ornate existence than what befell her. The virtue she lacks stems from her failure to learn that the necessary condition to make life possible is the ability to tolerate *ennui*, the shapeless frustration resulting from the absence of a pleasant life better suited to our own tastes. She cannot silently and discreetly resign herself to the impossibility of finding a purpose, a meaningful course of action, in being useful to others or in the love for her child. She does not relent easily, she struggles to remain in the path of virtue; it will take her years of unsuccessful attempts before she gives in to evil. She comes closer every day, and at last she is uncontrollably lost. But I am rationalizing, whereas the author of *Madame Bovary* merely wants to show us, day by day, minute by minute, the thoughts and actions of this heroine.

The long and melancholy days spent in loneliness as Emma is left by herself during the first months of her married life, her walks to the beechgroves of Banneville in the company of her faithful little greyhound Djali, the endless questioning of her own destiny as she asks herself *what might have been*—all this is unravelled and argued with the same delicacy and analytical subtlety we meet with

in the most intimate and dream-inducing of the older novels. As in the days of René or Obermann,⁴ nature mingles at times its unpredictable and irregular movements with the longings and vague desires of the soul:

Occasionally there came gusts of wind, breezes from the sea rolling in one sweep over the whole plateau of the Caux country, which brought to these fields a salt freshness. The rushes, close to the ground, whistled; the branches of the birch trees trembled in a swift rustling, while their crowns, ceaselessly swaying, kept up a deep murmur. Emma drew her shawl round her shoulders and rose.

In the avenue a green light dimmed by the leaves lit up the short moss that crackled softly beneath her feet. The sun was setting; the sky showed red between the branches, and the trunks of the trees, uniform, and planted in a straight line, seemed a brown colonnade standing out against a background of cold. A fear took hold of her; she called Djali, and hurriedly returned to Tostes by the highroad, threw herself into an armchair, and for the rest of the evening did not speak.

It is around this time that the marquis of Andervilliers, a neighbor aspiring to political office, invites all people of note or influence in the region to a dance at the castle. He met the doctor by chance when, for lack of another surgeon, Bovary cured him of a mouth infection; on one of his visits to Tostes, he caught a glimpse of Madame Bovary and judged her sufficiently acceptable to be invited. Hence the visit of Monsieur and Madame Bovary to the Vaubyessard castle, one of the crucial scenes of the book, and masterfully handled.

Emma is received with the politeness that a young and attractive woman is bound to encounter. On entering, she breathes the perfume of elegance and aristocracy, the chimera for which she has always been longing and which she considers her proper destiny. She waltzes without ever having been taught, guesses all there is to guess and succeeds beyond expectations in making an impression. All this will contribute to her downfall. She is poisoned by the air she has breathed there: the poison will act slowly but it has penetrated into her blood and will never leave her. All the details, even the most trivial, of this memorable evening are locked forever in her heart and will start their relentless action. "Her journey to Vaubyessard had made a gap in her life, like the huge crevasses that a thunderstorm will sometimes carve in the mountains, in the course of a single night." The morning after the dance, having left

4. Heroes of Romantic *mal-du-siècle* novels of the same name by Chateaubriand and Senancour [Éditeur].

Vaubyssard in the early hours of the day, Monsieur and Madame Bovary find themselves seated again in their small home, before their humble dinner table, with the smell of onion soup and veal stew rising from the plates; when Charles, happily rubbing his hands, exclaims, "How glad I am to be back home!" she stares at him with utter contempt. Her mind has come a long way since last night, and it has travelled in the opposite direction. When they left together, driving their carriage to the party, they were at most two very different human beings, but now, after their return, a boundless gap keeps them apart.

I summarize briefly what takes many pages and will stretch over years. It must be said in Emma's favor that her downfall is by no means speedy. She casts around for help in her effort at constraint: she looks for it in herself and in others. In herself:—she has a serious shortcoming: she lacks all capacity for sympathy as if, at an early date, the imagination has consumed all other faculties and sentiments. In others:—another misfortune! the hapless Charles, who loves her and whom she, at moments, tries to love, entirely fails to understand her. If, at least, he were an ambitious man, concerned with earning a reputation in his profession, forcing himself through study or hard work, to make his name an honored one—but he is nothing of the sort: he has neither drive, nor curiosity, none of the inner powers that propel a man beyond the circle of his daily existence, help him to move ahead and make his wife proud to bear his name. "He is not a man," she exclaims in anger. "What a sorry creature he is!" She will never forgive him for having humiliated her.

At last, she is seized by a kind of disease; they call it a nervous condition, but it is like a nostalgia, a homesickness for an *unknown country*. Always as blind as he is eager to help, Charles tries everything to cure her and can think of nothing better than a change of residence; as a result, he abandons the practice he was acquiring at Tostes for another far corner of Normandy, the town of Yonville-l'Abbaye in the county of Neufchâtel. Until now the entire novel has been a prelude; the real action only begins with the move to Yonville, and except for the continued careful analysis, it now proceeds at a somewhat faster pace.

At the moment of the move, Madame Bovary is pregnant with her first and only child, a girl. The child will bring a slight counterweight into her life; sudden and capricious outbursts of tenderness slow down the progress of evil. However, Emma's motherly feelings have been poorly prepared: her heart is already too deeply ravaged by barren passions and sterile ambitions to allow happy, natural, and self-sacrificing instincts to develop fully.

The new region where the Bovarys are settling down, bordering

on the Picardie, "a mongrel area where the language is devoid of intonation, as the landscape is devoid of character," is described with pitiless truthfulness; the town and its main inhabitants, the priest, the innkeeper, the sacristan, the lawyer, etc. are taken from reality and haunt one's memory. Among those who will henceforth occupy the front of the stage and remain there till the end, filling it with their busy emptiness, we must single out Monsieur Homais, a creation which Monsieur Flaubert raises to the level of a type. We have all known and met Monsieur Homais, though perhaps never in such a towering and triumphant incarnation: he is the weighty, self-important man-about-town, with a ready phrase for every situation, boastful of his own enlightenment, insistently commonplace, but devious and tricky, managing to enlist stupidity itself in the service of his interests. Monsieur Homais is the Monsieur Prudhomme of pseudo-science.

Monsieur and Madame Bovary meet some of the main villagers upon their arrival at the Lion d'Or inn. One of the regular customers, Monsieur Léon Dupuis, a lawyer's clerk, engages Madame Bovary in conversation. In a tightly handled, very natural sounding but deeply ironic dialogue, the author shows them outdoing each other in false sentiments, their taste for vague poetry and fake romanticism covering up for their real designs; it is only a beginning, but a damaging passage for those who believe in a poetry of the heart and have tried their hand at sentimental elegies: their devices are revealed, imitated and parodied, leaving one disgusted with love conversations that take themselves seriously.

Things do not quite work out as one would expect after this first encounter: the insignificant Monsieur Léon will make headway in Madame Bovary's heart, but not so soon or so far, and not yet. For a while, Madame Bovary remains in fact an honest woman, although her secret name, as one would read it imprinted in her inner self, would already spell "betrayal" and "adultery." Monsieur Léon, in fact, is a very small personage, but he is young, amiable, and he thinks that he is in love. At times, she thinks that she, too, loves him. All this is stimulated as well as hampered by their closely watched existences, by the difficulty of seeing each other, by their respective shyness. She wages inner battles, with no one present to appreciate the honor of her victories: "What exasperated her more than anything was that her husband seemed totally oblivious of her torture." One day, she tries to confide in the well-meaning priest, Monsieur Bournisien, a vulgar and crude man who has no inkling of the moral distress that confronts him. Fortunately, Monsieur Léon leaves town to pursue his studies in Paris. The embarrassed farewells, the stifled regrets, later magnified for her by memory and inflamed by the workings of her imagination, the uneven shades of

feeling which they assume to be despair, all lend themselves to perfectly consistent and clearly constructed analysis. The underlying foundation is always one of irony.

The great day at Yonville-l'Abbaye comes with the agricultural fair of the Seine-Inférieure. The description of this momentous event constitutes the third large group scene in the book, and it is richly successful in its genre. Madame Bovary fulfills her destiny on this occasion. A reputedly handsome gentleman of the vicinity, the pseudo-aristocratic Monsieur Rodolphe Boulanger de la Huchette, had noticed her at home a few days earlier, while bringing over one of his farmers to see the doctor. He is thirty-four years old, crude but with a veneer of elegance, a great chaser of women preoccupied by little else in life; her handsome eyes make him wish to add her to the list of his conquests. Although he is one of the judges, he sacrifices his official position to her company and never leaves her side on the day of the fair. This leads to a well-constructed and piquant scene: while the presiding official is delivering the inaugural address, solemnly propounding the political, economic and moral platitudes which the occasion calls for, Rodolphe, looking in from a window in the town hall, whispers in Emma's ears the eternal phrases that have so often led to the downfall of daughters of Eve. The pompous official speech, properly filled with pathos, counterpointed in a minor key by the equally banal and shopworn sentimentality of Rodolphe's cooings, make for a particularly effective and ironic scene. Convincingly enough, Madame Bovary, who withstood Léon but whose heart is shaken by the secret regret that she perhaps withstood him too well, now gives in from the very first day to this stranger—while Rodolphe is enough of a lout to think of himself as her sole conqueror. Such quirks and inconsistencies of Emma's feminine nature are excellently observed.

Once the decisive step had been taken, Madame Bovary will make up for lost time. She is hopelessly in love with Rodolphe, she pursues him and does not hesitate to compromise her reputation for his sake. From now on, we will no longer follow her so closely. The episode of the clubfoot, an inept operation undertaken and bungled by her husband, destroys once and forever whatever love or esteem she might have preserved towards him. Completely possessed by her passion, she reaches the point where she cannot stand to be away for a day from Rodolphe; she demands an elopement, begs for a cabin hidden in the woods or by the seashore. We come upon a touching and poignant scene: the unsuspecting Bovary, returning late at night from calling on his patients, dreams before the cradle of his daughter of all the happiness he foresees in her future, while next to him his wife, pretending to be asleep, dreams only of fanciful elopement in horse-drawn carriages, of ro-

mantic bliss, imaginary voyages, the Orient, Granada, Alhambra, etc. This double dream, treated as an extended juxtaposition, the abused father whose only thought is of sweet and joyful domesticity, side by side with the beautiful and determinedly destructive adulteress, is the work of an artist who, when he gets hold of a theme, extracts from it the maximum effect.

Many particularly true-to-nature phrases and expressions deserve to be singled out. One night, Rodolphe has come to visit Madame Bovary and is sitting in the empty consulting room; when a noise is heard, Emma asks him: "Have you got your gun?" The question makes him laugh. Against whom would he have to use his weapon if not against Bovary—and this is certainly the least of his intentions. All the same, the word has been said. Madame Bovary said it without thinking, but it reveals her to be the kind of woman who, in the grip of passion, would stop at nothing. She shows it again later, after Rodolphe, who was willing enough to make love to a pretty neighbor but never even considered eloping, has abandoned her. During a trip to Rouen she meets Léon again; his former shyness has now completely disappeared and his corruption hastens Emma's. She ruins her household and goes into debt without her husband's knowledge; one day, pursued by her creditors, she urges Léon to find her 3000 francs at once: "If I were in your place, I'd know where to find them.—Where?—At your office." Madame Bovary is ready to demand murder and theft, the ultimate degradation, from her lovers, if they were willing to heed her. But Flaubert is right in merely suggesting such possibilities by means of violent utterances of this kind.

The last half of the work is not less carefully or less precisely expressed than the first, yet I must mention an all too apparent weakness: although it was certainly not the author's deliberate intention, his very method, describing everything and leaving nothing out, leads him to include many too vividly suggestive details, which come close to appealing to the reader's erotic sensuality. He should definitely not have gone so far. After all, a book is not and could never be reality itself. At certain points, description can overreach the aim, not of the moralist, but of the discriminating artist. I know that even at the most daring moments, Monsieur Flaubert's feeling remains thoroughly critical and ironic; his tone is never seductive or tender; nothing, in fact, could be less tempting than his descriptions of sin. But he is dealing with a French reader all too eager to look for licentiousness and likely to discover it at the slightest provocation.

Madame Bovary's terrifying death, which could well be called her punishment, is presented in relentless detail. The author here dares to sound dark chords that verge on dissonance. Monsieur Bovary's

death, which follows immediately, is a touching episode and revives our sympathy for this good and unhappy man. I have mentioned earlier the presence of strikingly apt and natural phrases: in his grief at the death of his wife, Bovary, who has done the utmost not to learn of her guilt, continues to refer all events back to her person; on receiving the announcement of Léon's wedding, he exclaims, "How happy this would have made my poor wife!" Later, he finds both Léon's and Rodolphe's letters but forgives everything and never ceases to love the deceitful creature he has lost; he finally dies brokenhearted.

Frequently, in the course of the narrative, the author has the opportunity to make a character fulfill and, so to speak, redeem himself and thus to add the ideal to the real. It would have taken very little. Charles Bovary near the end, for instance: with one slight pressure of the hand, leaving a mark in the clay he was moulding into shape, the artist could have made this vulgar face into a noble and touching figure. The reader would have consented; he almost demands it. But the writer never relents; he has chosen not to.

When the old Rouault comes to the burial of his daughter, in the midst of his desperate grief, he is given a line both grotesque and sublime in its veracity: every year, he used to send Charles Bovary a turkey in memory of his cured leg; upon leaving him, with tears in his eyes, his last heartfelt words are: "Don't worry, I will keep sending you your turkey!"

Although I am fully aware of the particular bias which constitutes the method and *ars poetica* of the author, I have one reproach to make: virtue is too absent from this book; no one represents it. The little Justin, who loves Emma in silence, is the only devoted, disinterested character, but he goes by almost unnoticed. Why did Flaubert not include a single character who, by the spectacle of his virtue, would have offered some comfort, some repose to the reader and become a friendly presence? He deserves to be told: "Moralist, you know everything but you are cruel." The book is certainly not without a moral; the author has not spelled out the lesson, but the reader can reach his own frightening conclusions. Yet, is it the true function of art to refuse all consolation, to reject all clemency and gentleness for the sake of total truth? Moreover, even if truth were the only aim, can it be said that truth resides entirely with evil, with human stupidity and perverseness? Even in the provinces, full as life is of wranglings, persecutions, petty frustrations and meddling hostility, there also remain good and beautiful souls who have preserved their innocence, perhaps better and more deeply than elsewhere; instances of modesty, resignation, helpfulness extending over many years—we all know some of them. Even in your so-truthful characters, you cannot deny that you artfully collect and

assemble ridiculous and evil traits; why not gather with equal art traits of virtue on at least one head, one charming or beloved brow? Hidden in the provinces, in the center of France, I have known a young woman of superior intelligence and feeling: married but childless, with no one to love or to care for, she could easily have succumbed to boredom. Instead, she adopted other children, and became the benefactor of the neighborhood, a civilizing influence in the somewhat backward region where destiny had led her. She taught the village children to read and initiated them to the principles of morality. She would walk for miles on foot accompanied by one of her pupils, and would teach him under a tree, on a footpath, in the heath. Such souls exist in the provinces and in the country: why should they not also be shown? Their presence elevates and consoles while broadening our view of humanity.

On the whole, this book bears the imprint of the times. I am told that it was begun several years ago, but it appears at the right moment. It is the right kind of book to read after hearing the precise and caustic dialogue of an Alexandre Dumas comedy, after applauding *The Fake Gentlemen*, or between two articles by Taine. In many places and under many different forms, I detect symptoms of a new literary manner: scientific, experimental, adult, powerful, a little harsh. Such are the outstanding characteristics of the leaders of the new generation. Son and brother of distinguished surgeons, Monsieur Flaubert handles the pen like others the scalpel. Anatomists and physiologists, I meet you at every turn!

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

Madame Bovary, by Gustave Flaubert†

I

In the field of criticism, the writer who comes after everybody else is not without possessing certain advantages over the prophetic reviewer who predicts, ordains and, one might say, creates success with the authority born from his courage and his loyalty.

Monsieur Gustave Flaubert is no longer in need of loyalty, if ever he was. Some of the subtlest and most authoritative critics have added luster and distinction to his excellent book. All that remains to be done is perhaps to point out some aspects that have remained

† The article first appeared in *L'Artiste* on October 18, 1857. It can now be found in editions of Baudelaire's complete works, such as, for instance, *Oeuvres*, edited by Y. G. Le Dantec (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1951), pp. 995–1005. Translated by Paul de Man.

unnoticed and to emphasize certain traits and insights which, in my opinion, have not been sufficiently praised and commented upon. Moreover, as I was suggesting, the situation of the latecomer who follows in the wake of established opinion, possesses a paradoxical charm. Being alone and in no hurry, he enjoys more freedom than his predecessors; he seems to be summarizing an earlier debate; consequently, he must avoid the excesses of the prosecution as well as of the defense and seek for a new approach, with no other incentive than his love for Beauty and for Justice.

II

I have just pronounced the splendid and frightening word: Justice; may I be allowed—as it is my pleasure—to thank the magistrates of France for the splendid example of fairness and good taste which they have displayed in this circumstance. On the one hand, they confronted a blind and violent moral zeal, misguidedly acting on the wrong terrain; on the other, a novel by an as yet unknown writer—and what a novel!—the most loyal, the most objective of novels, comparable in its banality to a field in the country, soaked and lashed like nature itself by endless storms and winds. Between the two, the judges chose to be as loyal and impartial as the book that had been offered them as a scapegoat. Better still, if we may be allowed to conjecture on the basis of the written opinions that accompanied the judgment, it now seems that even if they had discovered something truly objectionable in the book they would nevertheless have absolved it in recognition of the *Beauty* that clothes it. This striking concern for Beauty, coming from men whose faculties are primarily called upon to serve the Rightful and True, is a very moving symptom, especially if one compares it with the burning appetites of a society that has entirely forsworn all spiritual love and, forgetting its ancient entrails, now only cares for its visceral organs. It can be said, because of its highly poetic tendency, that this decision is a definitive one; the Muse has won her case in court and all writers worthy of that name have been exonerated once and forever in the person of Monsieur Gustave Flaubert.

I do not agree with those who claim, perhaps with a slight and unconscious envy, that the book owes its popular success to the trial and subsequent acquittal. Left unmolested, it would have created the same turmoil, awakened the same curiosity and amazement. Enlightened readers had long since given it their praise. Even when an earlier version appeared in the *Revue de Paris*, marred by harmful excisions that destroyed the inner balance, it had created quite a stir. Gustave Flaubert grew famous overnight and found himself in a situation both favorable and harmful; his ex-

ceptional and genuine talent was able to overcome this equivocal predicament, caused by circumstances which I will try to analyze as well as I can.

III

Flaubert's situation can be called favorable because, ever since the death of Balzac—this prodigious meteor whose passage covered our country with a cloud of glory, like a bizarre and unusual sunlight, a polar dawn throwing its magic light over a frozen desert—all curiosity about the novel had been appeased and dormant. Some amazing experiments, it must be admitted, had been tried.¹

* * *

I would be the last to reproach these writers, some of them inspired by Dickens, others molded after Byron or Bulwer, because their pride or an excess of talent prevented them from equaling even a Paul de Kock² in stepping upon the unsteady threshold of popular success—this indecent slut asking only to be violated. Nor will I praise them for their failure, as little as I praise Monsieur Gustave Flaubert for succeeding at once where others have tried for a lifetime. I see there, at most, an additional proof of strength and I will try to determine the reasons which lead the author in that particular direction rather than another.

But I also stated that the situation of the newcomer-novelist is a dangerous one due, alas, to a dismally simple reason. For many years, the interest which the public is willing to devote to matters of the spirit has considerably diminished and the allotment of its available enthusiasm has steadily decreased. The last years of Louis-Philippe's reign saw the final outbursts of a spirit still willing to be stimulated by the display of imaginative powers; the new novelist, however, is confronted with a completely worn-out public or, worse even, a stupefied and greedy audience, whose only hatred is for fiction, and only love for material possession.

In these circumstances, the reaction of a cultured mind, devoted to beauty but trained to fight in its defense, must have been to evaluate the good as well as the bad of the situation and to reason as follows:

"How can I most effectively stir up all these decrepit souls? They do not know what they would like; they only know that they positively hate greatness and consider the naïveté, the ardor of passion and the spontaneity of poetry embarrassing and insulting. There-

1. Baudelaire then mentions a group of novelists who enjoyed popular success in his day [Editor].

2. Paul de Kock (1793–1871) was an immensely successful author of popular fiction [Editor].

fore, since the nineteenth century reader considers the choice of great subject-matter to be in poor taste, let us resolve to be vulgar. Let us beware above all of giving away our real feelings and of speaking in our own name. In narrating passions and adventures which would tend to kindle sympathetic fires in the ordinary reader, we will remain icily detached. We will remain objective and impersonal as the realists tell us.

“Moreover, since of late our ears have been assaulted by infantile chatter of a group of theory-makers and since we have heard of a certain literary device called *realism*—a degrading insult flung in the face of all analytical writers, a vague and overflexible term applied by indiscriminate minds to the minute description of detail rather than to a new method of literary creation—we shall take advantage of the general ignorance and confusion. We shall apply a nervous, picturesque, subtle and precise style to a banal canvas. We shall make the most trivial of plots express the most ebullient and ardent feelings. Solemn and definitive words will be uttered by the silliest of voices.

“And where we can find the breeding-ground of stupidity, the setting that produces inane absurdities and is inhabited by the most intolerant imbeciles?

“In the provinces.

“What characters, in the provinces, are particularly insufferable?

“Petty people in petty positions, with minds distorted by their actions.

“What is the tritest theme of all, worn out by repetition, by being played over and over again like a tired barrel-organ?

“Adultery.

“Neither do I have to make my ‘heroine’ heroic. Provided she be sufficiently handsome, daring, ambitious, irresistibly drawn to a higher world, she cannot fail to awaken interest. This will make the *tour de force* even nobler and give our sinful heroine the—comparatively speaking—rare distinction of differing entirely from the self-complacent gossips to which previous writers had accustomed us.

“I do not have to concern myself any longer with the style, the picturesque backgrounds, the description of the setting; I can do all this with almost excessive skill. I will proceed instead by fine logic and analysis, and thus demonstrate that all subjects are equally good or bad depending on how they are treated, and that the most vulgar ones can become the best of all.”

Madame Bovary was born from these resolutions as the impossible task, the true *gageure*, the wager which all works of art must be.

In order to complete his exploit to the full, it remained for the author to relinquish, so to speak, his actual sex and make himself

into a woman. The result is miraculous, for in spite of the zeal at wearing masks he could not help but infuse some male blood into the veins of his creation; the most energetic and ambitious, but also the most imaginative part of Madame Bovary's personality have definitely remained masculine in kind. Like weapon-bearing Pallas issuing forth from the forehead of Zeus, this bizarre and androgynous creature houses the seductiveness of a virile soul within the body of a beautiful woman.

IV

Several critics who called the book beautiful because of the precision and liveliness of its descriptions, have claimed that it lacks the central character who acts as a moral judge and expresses the author's conscience. Where can we find the proverbial and legendary figure whose task it is to explain the fable and to guide the reader's judgment? In other words, where is the lesson, the cause?

What an absurdity! The eternal and incorrigible confusion of genres and of purposes is not yet overcome! A true work of art does not need to make moral pleas. The inner logic of the work suffices for all moral implications and it is the reader's task to draw the right conclusions from its outcome.

As for the intimate, deeper center of the book, there is no doubt that it resides in the adulterous woman; she alone possesses all the attributes of a worthy hero, albeit in the guise of a disgraced victim. I have just stated that she is almost masculine and that, perhaps unconsciously, the author had bestowed upon her all the qualities of manliness.

Let the reader carefully consider the following characteristics:

1. The imagination, the highest and most tyrannical of faculties, takes the place of the heart or what is called the heart: that from which reason is generally excluded; most of the time, women, like animals, are dominated by the heart.
2. Sudden forcefulness and quickness of decision, a mystical fusion of reason and passion typical of men created for action.
3. An unlimited urge to seduce and to dominate, including a willingness to stoop to the lowest means of seduction, such as the vulgar appeal of dress, perfume and make-up—all summarized in two words: dandyism, exclusive love of domination.

And yet, Madame Bovary gives in to her lovers; carried away by the sophistry of her imagination, she gives herself with magnificent

generosity, in an entirely masculine manner, to fools who don't begin to measure up to her, exactly as poets will put themselves at the mercy of foolish women.

As another proof of the masculine qualities which she carries in her arteries, one should notice that she is much less incensed by the obvious physical shortcomings of her husband or by his glaring provincialism, than by his total absence of genius, his intellectual ineptness forcefully brought home by the stupid operation of the clubfoot.

One should reread the pages that deal with this episode; some are shortsighted enough to consider it superfluous but it serves precisely to bring the central character fully into light. Her fierce anger, pent up for years, suddenly bursts into the open; doors slam; the awed husband, who was never able to give his romantically inclined wife the slightest spiritual satisfaction, is relegated to his room; he is locked up in punishment for his guilty ignorance while Madame Bovary, in despair, cries out like a smaller Lady Macbeth mismated with an inadequate captain: "Ah! if *only* I were the wife of one of those balding and stooping scholars whose eyes, sheltered by dark glasses, are forever fixed on the archives of science! I would be proud to be seen at his arm; I would be the companion of a prince of the spirit—but to be chained forever, like a convict, to a fool who is not even capable of mending a crippled foot, bah!" Caught in her petty surroundings, stifled by a narrow horizon, this woman is a truly sublime example of her kind.

I find proof of Madame Bovary's ambiguous temperament even in her convent education.

The nuns have observed that the young girl is endowed with an amazing power to enjoy life, to anticipate all the pleasures she will be able to extract from it. This characterizes the man of action.

Meanwhile, she becomes intoxicated with the color of the stained-glass windows, with the Oriental shades that the ornate windows cast on her schoolgirl prayer book; she gorges herself on the solemn music of Vespers and obeying the impulse of her nerves rather than of her mind, she substitutes in her soul for the real God a God of pure fantasy, a God of the future and of chance, a picture-God wearing spurs and mustaches. This is characteristic of the hysterical poet.

The Academy of Medicine has not as yet been able to explain the mysterious condition of hysteria. In women, it acts like a stifling ball rising in the body (I mention only the main symptom), while in nervous men it can be the cause of many forms of impotence as well as of a limitless ability at excess. Why could this physiological mystery not serve as the central subject, the true core, of a literary work?

V

When all is said, this woman has real greatness, and she provokes our pity. In spite of the author's systematic tough-mindedness, in spite of his efforts to retreat entirely from the stage and manipulate his characters rather like a puppeteer handles his puppets, all *intellectual* women owe him a debt of gratitude. By endowing them with a talent for dreaming as well as for calculating—a combination that constitutes the perfect human being—he has elevated the female species to new heights, far above the realm of the purely animal and close to the ideal realm of men.

Madame Bovary has been called ridiculous by some. Indeed, we meet her at times mistaking some species of gentleman—could he even be called a country squire?—dressed in hunting vests and contrasting dress for a hero out of Walter Scott! At another moment, she is enamored of an insignificant little clerk who is not even capable of performing a dangerous action for his mistress. Trapped finally within the narrow confines of a village, this bizarre Pasiphae, now a poor exhausted creature, still pursues the ideal in the country bars and taverns. But does it matter? Even then, we must admit, she is, like Caesar at Carpentras, in pursuit of the ideal!

I will not echo the Lycanthrope,³ remembered for a subversiveness which no longer prevails, when he said: "Confronted with all that is vulgar and inept in the present time, can we not take refuge in cigarettes and adultery?" But I assert that our world, even when it is weighed on precision scales, turns out to be exceedingly harsh considering it was engendered by Christ; it could hardly be entitled to throw the first stone at adultery. A few cuckolds more or less are not likely to increase the rotating speed of the spheres and to hasten by a second the final destruction of the universe. The time has come to put a stop to an increasingly contagious hypocrisy; we should expose the ridicule of men and women, themselves perverted to a point of utter triviality, who dare to attack a defenseless writer after he has deigned, with the chastity of an ancient teacher of rhetoric, to cast a mantle of glory over a bedroom-farce subject that would be repulsive and grotesque if it had not been touched by the opalescent light of poetry.

If I allowed myself to pursue this analytical bent any further, I would never finish; the book is so suggestive that one could fill a volume with one's observations. For the moment, I merely wish to indicate that the critics have overlooked or even attacked several of the most important passages in the novel. This is the case, for in-

3. Pétrus Borel, alias Le Lycanthrope ("the Wolf-man") (1809–1859), was a friend of Gautier and Nerval, author of *Madame Putiphar*, a novel much admired by Baudelaire, who described him as "one of the stars in the somber sky of romanticism" [*Editor*].

stance, of the section dealing with the bungled clubfoot operation. And nothing could be more authentically *modern* than the desolate and remarkable scene in which the future adulteress—for the poor woman, at that point, is still in the earliest stages of her downfall—calls on the Church for assistance. We expect the Church to be like the divine Mother, ready at all times to extend a helping hand, like a pharmacist who always has to be available. Yet Emma finds the attention of Father Bournisien, the parish priest, primarily taken up by the gymnastics of catechism pupils scattered among the stalls and chairs of the church; his candid reply to Emma is, “If you are unwell, madame, and since Monsieur Bovary is a doctor, why don’t you speak to your husband?”

Thus absolved by the ineptness of the priest, what woman would not wish to immerse herself in the swirling waters of adultery—and which one of us, in a more naïve age in troubled circumstances, did not find himself confronted with similarly incompetent priests?

VI

Since I happen to have at hand two books by this same author (*Madame Bovary* and the as yet still uncollected fragments of the *Temptation of Saint Anthony*), my original intent had been to establish a kind of parallel between both. I meant to point out identities and correspondences. It would have been easy enough to uncover beneath the tight texture of *Madame Bovary*, the elements of high lyricism and irony that abound in the *Temptation of Saint Anthony*. Here the author appears without disguise; his Saint Anthony is Madame Bovary tempted by all the demons of illusion and heresy, by all the obscenities of matter that encompass her; harassed by all the aberrations that lead to our downfall, Saint Anthony thus becomes a stronger apologist than his smaller and fictional bourgeois equivalent. This work, which unfortunately exists only in fragments, contains dazzling passages. I am not only referring to the prodigious feast given by Nebuchadnezzar, the marvelous apparition of a frivolous Queen of Sheba dancing in miniature shape on the retina of an ascete, or the conspicuously overdone setting in which Apollonius of Tyana appears, escorted by his keeper, the idiotic millionaire whom he is dragging after him around the world. I mostly want to direct the reader’s mind toward the *subcurrent* that runs through the entire book, the subterranean, rebellious painful level, the darker strain that serves as a guide in traversing this pan-demonic capharnaüm of solitude.

As I said before, I could easily have shown that in *Madame Bovary* Monsieur Flaubert deliberately muted the high ironic and lyrical faculties which he gave full rein in the *Temptation*; the latter

work, truly the secret chamber of his mind, evidently remains the most interesting of the two for poets and philosophers.

Maybe I will some day have the pleasure of performing this task.

HENRY JAMES

[Style and Morality in *Madame Bovary*][†]

Flaubert's imagination was great and splendid; in spite of which, strangely enough, his masterpiece is not his most imaginative work. *Madame Bovary*, beyond question, holds that first place, and *Madame Bovary* is concerned with the career of a country doctor's wife in a petty Norman town. The elements of the picture are of the fewest, the situation of the heroine almost of the meanest, the material for interest, considering the interest yielded, of the most unpromising; but these facts only throw into relief one of those incalculable incidents that attend the proceedings of genius. *Madame Bovary* was doomed by circumstances and causes—the freshness of comparative youth and good faith on the author's part being perhaps the chief—definitely to take its position, even though its subject was fundamentally a negation of the remote, the splendid and the strange, the stuff of his fondest and most cultivated dreams. It would have seemed very nearly to exclude the free play of the imagination, and the way this faculty on the author's part nevertheless presides is one of those accidents, manœuvres, inspirations, we hardly know what to call them, by which masterpieces grow. He of course knew more or less what he was doing for his book in making Emma Bovary a victim of the imaginative habit, but he must have been far from designing or measuring the total effect which renders the work so general, so complete an expression of himself. His separate idiosyncrasies, his irritated sensibility to the life about him, with the power to catch it in the fact and hold it hard, and his hunger for style and history and poetry, for the rich and the rare, great reverberations, great adumbrations, are here represented together as they are not in his later writings. There is nothing of the near, of the directly observed, though there may be much of the directly perceived and the minutely detailed, either in *Salammbô* or in *Saint Anthony*, and little enough of the extravagance of illusion in that indefinable last word of restrained evocation and cold execution the *Sentimental Education*. Monsieur Faguet has of course excellently noted this—that the fortune and felicity of the book were assured by the stroke that made the central figure an em-

[†] From *Notes on Novelists With Some Other Notes* by Henry James (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914) 59–66.

bodiment of helpless romanticism. Flaubert himself but narrowly escaped being such an embodiment after all, and he is thus able to express the romantic mind with extraordinary truth. As to the rest of the matter he had the luck of having been in possession from the first, having begun so early to nurse and work up his plan that, familiarity and the native air, the native soil, aiding, he had finally made out to the last lurking shade the small sordid sunny dusty village picture, its emptiness constituted and peopled. It is in the background and the accessories that the real, the real of his theme, abides; and the romantic, the romantic of his theme, accordingly occupies the front. Emma Bovary's poor adventures are a tragedy for the very reason that in a world unsuspecting, unassisting, unconsoling, she has herself to distil the rich and the rare. Ignorant, unguided, undiverted, ridden by the very nature and mixture of her consciousness, she makes of the business an inordinate failure, a failure which in its turn makes for Flaubert the most pointed, the most *told* of anecdotes.

There are many things to say about *Madame Bovary*, but an old admirer of the book would be but half-hearted—so far as they represent reserves or puzzlements—were he not to note first of all the circumstances by which it is most endeared to him. To remember it from far back is to have been present all along at a process of singular interest to a literary mind, a case indeed full of comfort and cheer. The finest of Flaubert's novels is today, on the French shelf of fiction, one of the first of the classics; it has attained that position, slowly but steadily, before our eyes; and we seem so to follow the evolution of the fate of a classic. We see how the thing takes place; which we rarely can, for we mostly miss either the beginning or the end, especially in the case of a consecration as complete as this. The consecrations of the past are too far behind and those of the future too far in front. That the production before us *should* have come in for the heavenly crown may be a fact to offer English and American readers a mystifying side; but it is exactly our ground and a part moreover of the total interest. The author of these remarks remembers, as with a sense of the way such things happen, that when a very young person in Paris he took up from the parental table the latest number of the periodical in which Flaubert's then duly unrecognized masterpiece was in course of publication. The moment is not historic, but it was to become in the light of history, as may be said, so unforgettable that every small feature of it yet again lives for him: it rests there like the backward end of the span. The cover of the old *Revue de Paris* was yellow, if I mistake not, like that of the new, and *Madame Bovary: Moeurs de Province*, on the inside of it, was already, on the spot, as a title, mysteriously arresting, inscrutably charged. I was ignorant of what

had preceded and was not to know till much later what followed; but present to me still is the act of standing there before the fire, my back against the low beplushed and begarnished French chimney piece and taking in what I might of that installment, taking it in with so surprised an interest, and perhaps as well such a stir of faint foreknowledge, that the sunny little salon, the autumn day, the window ajar and the cheerful outside clatter of the Rue Montaigne are all now for me more or less in the story and the story more or less in them. The story, however, was at that moment having a difficult life; its fortune was all to make; its merit was so far from suspected that, as Maxime Du Camp—though verily with no excess of contrition—relates, its cloth of gold barely escaped the editorial shears. This, with much more, contributes for us to the course of things to come. The book, on its appearance as a volume, proved a shock to the high propriety of the guardians of public morals under the second Empire, and Flaubert was prosecuted as author of a work indecent to scandal. The prosecution in the event fell to the ground, but I should perhaps have mentioned this agitation as one of the very few, of any public order, in his short list. *The Candidate* fell at the Vaudeville Theatre, several years later, with a violence indicated by its withdrawal after a performance of but two nights, the first of these marked by a deafening uproar; only if the comedy was not to recover from this accident the misprised lustre of the novel was entirely to reassert itself. It is strange enough at present—so far have we travelled since then—that *Madame Bovary* should in so comparatively recent a past have been to that extent a cause of reprobation; and suggestive above all, in such connections, as to the large unconsciousness of superior minds. The desire of the superior mind of the day—that is the governmental, official, legal—to distinguish a book with such a destiny before it is a case conceivable, but conception breaks down before its design of making the distinction purely invidious. We can imagine its knowing so little, however face to face with the object, what it had got hold of; but for it to have been so urged on by a blind inward spring to publish to posterity the extent of its ignorance, that would have been beyond imagination, beyond everything but pity.

And yet it is not after all that the place the book has taken is so overwhelmingly explained by its inherent dignity; for here comes in the curiosity of the matter. Here comes in especially its fund of admonition for alien readers. The dignity of its substance is the dignity of Madame Bovary herself as a vessel of experience—a question as to which, unmistakably, I judge, we can only depart from the consensus of French critical opinion. Monsieur Faguet for example commends the character of the heroine as one of the most living and discriminated figures of women in all literature, praises it as a

field for the display of the romantic spirit that leaves nothing to be desired.¹ Subject to an observation I shall presently make and that bears heavily in general, I think, on Flaubert as a painter of life, subject to this restriction he is right; which is a proof that a work of art may be markedly open to objection and at the same time be rare in its kind, and that when it is perfect to this point nothing else particularly matters. *Madame Bovary* has a perfection that not only stamps it, but that makes it stand almost alone; it holds itself with such a supreme unapproachable assurance as both excites and defies judgment. For it deals not in the least, as to unapproachability, with things exalted or refined; it only confers on its sufficiently vulgar elements of exhibition a final unsurpassable form. The form is in *itself* as interesting, as active, as much of the essence of the subject as the idea, and yet so close is its fit and so inseparable its life that we catch it at no moment on any errand of its own. That verily is to *be* interesting—all round; that is to be genuine and whole. The work is a classic because the thing, such as it is, is ideally *done*, and because it shows that in such doing eternal beauty may dwell. A pretty young woman who lives, socially and morally speaking, in a hole, and who is ignorant, foolish, flimsy, unhappy, takes a pair of lovers by whom she is successively deserted; in the midst of the bewilderment of which, giving up her husband and her child, letting everything go, she sinks deeper into duplicity, debt, despair, and arrives on the spot, on the small scene itself of her poor depravities, at a pitiful tragic end. In especial she does these things while remaining absorbed in romantic intention and vision, and she remains absorbed in romantic intention and vision while fairly rolling in the dust. That is the triumph of the book as the triumph stands, that Emma interests us by the nature of her consciousness and the play of her mind, thanks to the reality and beauty with which those sources are invested. It is not only that they represent *her* state; they are so true, so observed and felt, and especially so shown, that they represent the state, actual or potential, of all persons like her, persons romantically determined. Then her setting, the medium in which she struggles, becomes in its way as important, becomes eminent with the eminence of art; the tiny world in which she revolves, the contracted cage in which she flutters, is hung out in space for her, and her companions in captivity there are as true as herself.

I have said enough to show what I mean by Flaubert's having in this picture expressed something of his intimate self, given his heroine

1. Emile Faguet (1847–1916) was a prolific literary critic influenced by Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve and Hippolyte Taine. He is best-known for his essay on French intellectual history in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries and for his monographs on Flaubert and Rousseau [*Editor*].

something of his own imagination: a point precisely that brings me back to the restriction at which I just now hinted, in which Monsieur Faguet fails to indulge and yet which is immediate for the alien reader. Our complaint is that Emma Bovary, in spite of the nature of her consciousness and in spite of her reflecting so much that of her creator, is really too small an affair. This, critically speaking, is in view both of the value and the fortune of her history, a wonderful circumstance. She associates herself with Frédéric Moreau in the *Education* to suggest for us a question that can be answered, I hold, only to Flaubert's detriment. Emma taken alone would possibly not so directly press it, but in her company the hero of our author's second study of the "real" drives it home. Why did Flaubert choose, as special conduits of the life he proposed to depict, such inferior and in the case of Frédéric such abject human specimens? I insist only in respect to the latter, the perfection of Madame Bovary scarce leaving one much warrant for wishing anything other. Even here, however, the general scale and size of Emma, who is small even of her sort, should be a warning to hyperbole. If I say that in the matter of Frédéric at all events the answer is inevitably detrimental I mean that it weighs heavily on our author's general credit. He wished in each case to make a picture of experience—middling experience, it is true—and of the world close to him; but if he imagined nothing better for his purpose than such a heroine and such a hero, both such limited reflectors and registers, we are forced to believe it to have been by a defect of his mind. And that sign of weakness remains even if it be objected that the images in question were addressed to his purpose better than others would have been: the purpose itself then shows as inferior. The *Sentimental Education* is a strange, an indescribable work, about which there would be many more things to say than I have space for, and all of them of the deepest interest. It is moreover, to simplify my statement, very much less satisfying a thing, less pleasing whether in its unity or its variety, than its specific predecessor. But take it as we will, for a success or a failure—Monsieur Faguet indeed ranks it, by the measure of its quantity of intention, a failure, and I on the whole agree with him—the personage offered us as bearing the weight of the drama, and in whom we are invited to that extent to interest ourselves, leaves us mainly wondering what our entertainer could have been thinking of. He takes Frédéric Moreau on the threshold of life and conducts him to the extreme of maturity without apparently suspecting for a moment either our wonder or our protest—"Why, why *him?*?" Frédéric is positively too poor for his part, too scant for his charge; and we feel with a kind of embarrassment, certainly with a kind of compassion, that it is somehow the business of a protagonist to prevent in his designer an excessive waste of faith. When I speak of the faith in Emma

Bovary as proportionately wasted I reflect on Monsieur Faguet's judgment that she is from the point of view of deep interest richly or at least roundedly representative. Representative of what? he makes us ask even while granting all the grounds of misery and tragedy involved. The plea for her is the plea made for all the figures that live without evaporation under the painter's hand—that they are not only particular persons but types of their kind, and as valid in one light as in the other. It is Emma's "kind" that I question for this responsibility, even if it be inquired of me why I then fail to question that of Charles Bovary, in its perfection, or that of the inimitable, the immortal Homais. If we express Emma's deficiency as the poverty of her consciousness for the typical function, it is certainly not, one must admit, that she is surpassed in this respect either by her platitudinous husband or by his friend the pretentious apothecary. The difference is none the less somehow in the fact that they are respectively studies but of their character and office, which function in each expresses adequately *all* they are. It may be, I concede, because Emma is the only woman in the book that she is taken by Monsieur Faguet as *femininely* typical, typical in the larger illustrative way, whereas the others pass with him for images specifically conditioned. Emma is this same for myself, I plead; she is conditioned to such an excess of the specific, and the specific in her case leaves out so many even of the commoner elements of conceivable life in a woman when we are invited to see that life as pathetic, as dramatic agitation, that we challenge both the author's and the critic's scale of importances. The book is a picture of the middling as much as they like, but does Emma attain even to *that*? Hers is a narrow middling even for a little imaginative person whose "social" significance is small. It is greater on the whole than her capacity of consciousness, taking this all round; and so, in a word, we feel her less illustrational than she might have been not only if the world had offered her more points of contact, but if she had had more of these to give it.

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA

From The First Modern Novel†

* * *

As the author of *Madame Bovary* saw it, these two preoccupations—how to use a banal subject to maximum effect and an obses-

† From *The Perpetual Orgy*, trans. Helen Lane (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1986). Translation copyright © 1986 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

sive concern for form—were indissociable. Curiously enough, his disciples—both close and distant—were to separate the two and *take sides for the one against the other*. Even in our own day we can distinguish two lines of descent among novelists, irreconcilable enemies, yet both recognizing Flaubert as their master. The battle between “realists” and “formalists,” who have in common only their regard for *Madame Bovary* as a precursor of their own works, is one that began during Flaubert’s own lifetime. The most immediate influence exercised by the novel was on the generation of Zola, Daudet, Maupassant, Huysmans, writers who considered it a model of the type of realism that they officially enthroned in French literature. In the prologue of his *Pierre et Jean*, Maupassant states that the following NATURALIST AXIOM has been passed on to him by Flaubert himself: that everything has the possibility of being a good literary subject, no matter how insignificant and trivial, since “the least thing has within it a touch of the unknown,” and Emile Zola devotes the most enthusiastic study of his *Les Romanciers naturalistes* to Flaubert. For this movement which made everyday subjects the major theme of narrative art and which had as one of its primary aims the replacing of exceptional characters by ordinary people who are the faithful reflection of a social milieu, the great literary fresco in which Charles Bovary, Homais, Bournisien, Rodolphe, Léon, and above all Emma had been portrayed was an object of worship and a model to emulate. The same is true of other literatures that embraced the theses of the naturalists: in Spain, for instance, where the best nineteenth-century novel, *La Regenta*, by Leopoldo Alas, owes a great deal to *Madame Bovary*. The naturalists, however, did not prove to be orthodox practitioners of the concept of realism embodied in Flaubert’s novel. *Madame Bovary* won for fiction certain new areas of human experience, without thereby excluding those which for centuries had constituted the principal domain of the art of narrative. This totalizing process was arrested, and novelistic art impoverished, because the naturalists concentrated exclusively on the description of everyday life and the social, and because they adopted formal devices which they repeated mechanically in novel after novel. A few of Zola’s books are still readable and there is no question that the artistic quality of Maupassant’s stories is remarkable, but taken all in all, naturalism represented a loss rather than a gain, for its practitioners often neglected form. “For a thing to be interesting, one need only observe it for a long time,” Flaubert had said.¹ Quite true, but in his case what proved to be interesting as literary material was then subjected to scrupulous formal treatment, capable of giving it the sta-

1. Undated letter to Le Poittevin, September 1845, *Correspondance*, Vol. 1. p. 192.

tus of art. The ordinary—the normal—takes on a literary life only if the creator succeeds in imbuing it with a certain exceptional character (just as the exceptional lives in literature only if it takes on the outward appearance of a certain normality), that is to say, if it seems to be a unique, privileged experience. What is remarkable in *Madame Bovary* is that its mediocre beings, with their earthbound ambitions and pedestrian problems, impress us, by virtue of the structure and the writing that create them, as *beings who are out of the ordinary within their ordinary manner of being*. Many movements that proclaimed themselves realist failed because for them realism consisted of taking bits and pieces of ordinary everyday reality and describing them with the greatest fidelity but a minimum of art. The one thing does not exclude the other: the choice of a “realistic” subject does not free a writer of narrative of formal responsibility, because, whatever his subject matter may be, everything in his book will ultimately depend on form. Flaubert noted a disdain for the purely aesthetic element in those writers who called themselves his disciples and was horrified. It was for this reason that he refused to acknowledge the role of founder of a school that they conferred upon him, and many times expressed his violent aversion to realism (“I am thought to be enamored of the real, whereas I loathe it; for it is out of hatred for realism that I have undertaken to write this novel,” he wrote to Madame Roger des Genettes, the novel in question being *Madame Bovary*),² not because this word reminded him of subject matter that repelled him, but because it connoted a disinterest in “style” and “beauty,” which for Flaubert were literature’s *raison d’être*. He made his meaning clear to George Sand, who had remarked upon the enormous influence that he enjoyed among young writers: “Speaking of my friends, you add the words ‘my school.’ But I’m ruining my disposition trying not to have a school! I reject all schools, *a priori*. Those writers whom I often see and whom you mention are out to track down everything I despise and worry very little about matters that torment me. I regard technical detail, documented local facts, in a word, the precise historical side of things as quite secondary. I aim at *beauty* above all else, while my fellows scarcely give it a thought. Where I am beside myself with admiration or horror, I find them unmoved.”³

This absorbing aesthetic passion is as essential to *Madame Bovary* as is the appropriation of ordinary life as an acceptable subject for the novel. An entire series of writers, among them some of the greatest modern prose stylists, admire this formal aspect while rejecting or neglecting the other, and thus declare themselves

2. Undated letter, October or November 1856, *Correspondance*, Vol. IV, p. 134.

3. Undated letter, end December 1875, *Correspondance*, Vol. VII, p. 281.

Flaubertians for reasons that are the opposite of those of a Zola or a Maupassant. Foremost among them is the artist-novelist par excellence, the most intelligent and refined of writers of fiction of his era, the master juggler of point of view, the magus of ambiguity: Henry James. He came to know Flaubert personally in the last years of his life, and has left a moving image of what Sunday afternoons were like in the little apartment in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, when writer friends gathered there to chat with Flaubert. In a study published in 1902, James crowned Flaubert "the novelist's novelist," stressing almost exclusively the artistic splendor that the novelistic genre had acquired thanks to the author of *Madame Bovary*.⁴ A subtle and penetrating essay, and as partial and arbitrary a one as Zola's (though for opposite reasons), it sums up with great exactitude what form meant for Flaubert and his method of work, which, he says, consisted of finding a style that would enable him to "feel" a subject, unlike romantic novelists, who believed that it was necessary to "feel" the subject in order to be able to express it adequately. James's view that the form of *Madame Bovary* is rich and the material poor is less persuasive, though symptomatic, and his criticism that Flaubert was incapable of creating "rich and interesting" characters in the novel (in reality Flaubert was *trying* to do precisely the contrary) is frankly absurd. Despite James's reservations concerning several of Flaubert's books (in 1883, in his *French Poets and Novelists* he committed a gross error of judgment, deeming *L'Education sentimentale* a novel of no interest), he was the first to recognize, in *The Art of Fiction*, that it was thanks to Flaubert that the novel had come to be one of the great artistic forms in Europe. A direct line of those who have claimed descent from Flaubert on aesthetic grounds can be traced to our own day, when, as I have noted before, the French authors of the New Novel, formalists if ever there were such, called him their precursor for having looked upon literature, a century before them, as a problem of language. In the two collateral branches of the Flaubert lineage, one of the most important of the "artistic descendants" (to distinguish them, in a handy formula, from the "realists") was Proust, for whom this predecessor is above all the master of style, a narrator able to identify himself totally with what he describes, to disappear in the object of his description, which, Proust says, is the only way of giving life and truth to what is being described. The author of *A la Recherche* praises primarily the silences or blanks of his style, that is to say, his talent for narration by omission, his use of the hidden fact.⁵ Proust was not as great an admirer of Flaubert as

4. "Gustave Flaubert," included in *Notes on Novelists* (New York: Scribner's), 1914.

5. "A propos du style de Flaubert," in *Chroniques* (Paris: Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1927).

he was of Balzac, but it is probable that his debt to the former was in fact greater. Flaubert's descriptive method, the *style indirect libre*, as we have already seen, opened a door to the subjectivity of the novelistic character and for the first time enabled the life of the mind to be represented directly. In *Madame Bovary* this system is almost always employed to show how the human mind, on receiving any sort of stimulus from reality, brings dead experiences back to life through memory, how every profoundly lived sensation, emotion, or event is not something isolated but the beginning of a process to which, over time, memory will contribute other senses and meanings as new experiences supervene. Memory as something ineradicable, a stubborn battering ram against time, recovering with each new incident what has already been lived, is a constant in *Madame Bovary*, and from this point of view the book can be seen to be an antecedent of Proust's prodigious adventure: re-creating a reality as a function of that preponderant level of experience, memory, which organizes and reorganizes the real, which perpetually re-creates what its great enemy and purveyor, time, continually destroys.

Interior Monologue

With regard to narrative technique, critics have unanimously stressed the importance for the modern novel of the *style indirect libre*, invented by Flaubert. Thibaudet was the first to point this out: "The *style indirect libre* circulates everywhere today, something we owe beyond question to Flaubert, to the imitation of Flaubert."⁶ It is not a question of imitation, however, at least in the case of authentic creators capable of using forms developed by others in an original way (whereupon these forms cease to be the forms of "others" and become their very own). Imitation in literature is not a moral problem but an artistic one: all writers use, to varying degrees, forms that have been used before, but only those incapable of transforming these plagiarisms into something personal deserve to be called imitators. Originality consists not only of inventing techniques but also of pointing the way to a new, enriching use of techniques already invented. The significance of the *style indirect libre* lies not so much in the fact that this device for showing interiority is used by countless contemporary novelists in the same characteristic way that Flaubert used it but in the fact that it was the point of departure for a series of techniques which, by revolutionizing traditional narrative forms, have enabled the novel to describe mental reality, to provide a vivid representation of a character's inner psychological life. The *style indirect libre* is, on the one

6. *Op. cit.*, p. 246.

hand, an antecedent of Proustian discourse and its slow, oleaginous reconstruction by memory of time past, and on the other hand, the most immediate precedent for the inner monologue, as first conceived by Joyce in the final episode of *Ulysses*, and later perfected and diversified (so as to represent not only the "normal" workings of consciousness but also different types of psychic "abnormality") by Faulkner. Thus the entire vast psychologistic sector of the modern novel, in which, in one way or another, the dominant perspective in fictitious reality is the human mind, is a tributary of *Madame Bovary*, the first novel in which an attempt was made to represent the functioning of consciousness without having recourse to its external manifestations, as had been the practice up until then.

The Techniques of Objectivity: The Behaviorist Novel

Criticism, on the other hand, has been blind—perhaps because of the Manichaeism omnipresent in contemporary thought that requires that everything be univocal, that nothing partake at one and the same time of two contrary principles—to the relation between Flaubert and the branch of contemporary narrative that is (superficially speaking) the adversary of the psychological tendency. I am speaking of the so-called behaviorist novel, in which acts predominate over motivations, in which the primary focus of the narrative is not on the inner world of ideas and feelings but on the outer world of conduct, objects, places. Is it not obvious that this kind of novel—which describes without interpreting, shows without judging, places the primary emphasis on the visual, and endeavors to be "objective"—shares certain undeniable "family traits" with the tireless preacher of impersonality and impassibility and hence with the first novel in which these theories were embodied? Impersonality, which Flaubert required of the novel, also tempted a number of poets of his time. The Parnassians, with Leconte de Lisle at their head, attempted to eliminate the subjectivity of the author and called for a serene art, a poetry that would have the solid and visible beauty of natural landscape or of group sculpture. But poetry soon took another direction, subjectivity regained its rights, and in modern poetry the objective tendency is no doubt the one least highly esteemed. In the novel, on the other hand, it has lasted on into our own day, and in certain countries and certain periods—the United States, the period between the two world wars—it dominated narrative writing and produced such highly talented novelists as Dos Passos and Hemingway. General features characterizing the objectivist tendency are a preference for the narrative point of view of the omniscient narrator whom I have called the invisible narrator and the key role that description plays in it. Certain critics at-

tribute the invention of the invisible narrator to Hemingway, because of the brilliant use he made of this point of view, and others point out that its appearance in the novel was a consequence of the movies. In reality, as we have already seen, it is the ruling point of view in *Madame Bovary* and Flaubert was the first to experiment with certain forms of writing as a means to this end. As for description, I should like to quote a passage from Geneviève Bollème concerning the status this technique came to have in the novel thanks to Flaubert: "Whereas before him description entered into the novel only to support it, to make it more truthful, and its role was merely incidental, it becomes for him the one and only experience whereby it seems possible to express the movements of life. It is description that is the story because it is analysis and expression of the feelings that things symbolize or support, becoming one with these feelings as they become one with things."⁷ Geneviève Bollème thus establishes a line of descent between Flaubert and those writers who, like Robbe-Grillet, an inveterate "voyeur," have practically reduced the novel to this one procedure. What is certain is that after *Madame Bovary* description came to fulfill a major function in novels narrated by an invisible teller, for the simple reason that one of the most effective tactics for concealing the existence of the omniscient narrator is to make of him an impartial and meticulous gaze, eyes that observe the fictitious reality from a distance that never varies and a mouth that relates what those eyes see with scientific precision and total neutrality, never allowing so much as the hint of an interpretation to creep in. Flaubert used the invisible teller to give what is recounted an autonomy, to make the fictitious world appear to be sovereign. This aim explains why description in his hands became something more than a complement of the story (Geneviève Bollème calls it his "one and only" instrument; I would only go so far as to say the principal one, since dialogue and monologue also play a role in *Madame Bovary*). The same thing occurs in the modern behaviorist novel, and for the same reasons. The narrator of Sánchez Ferlosio's *El Jarama*, for instance, and of the majority of novels of the "critical realism" that was the height of fashion in Spain in the fifties and the beginning of the sixties, is a tireless describer of the objective world: the meticulously detailed, impersonal, apparently disinterested enumeration of behavior, objects, and places effaces the presence of the narrator. There are countless modern novelists who, like Flaubert in *Madame Bovary*, have used objective description to make the teller of the story invisible. In their novels the verisimilitude of what is recounted depends on this invisibility. This is precisely the reverse of what happens in a classic

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 268.

novel, in which the verisimilitude ordinarily depends on the power of persuasion—that is to say, on the direct and personal *presence*—of the omniscient narrator, an intruder often more visible and active than the characters themselves.

ERICH AUERBACH

On the Serious Imitation of the Everyday†

I

Mais c'était surtout aux heures du repas qu'elle n'en pouvait plus, dans cette petite salle au rez-de-chaussée, avec la poêle qui fumait, la porte qui criait, les murs qui suintaient, les pavés humides; toute l'amertume de l'existence lui semblait servie sur son assiette, et, à la fumée du bouilli, il montait du fond de son âme come d'autres bouffées d'affadissement. Charles était long à manger; elle grignotait quelques noisettes, ou bien, appuyée du coude, s'amusait, avec la pointe de son couteau, à faire des raies sur la toile cirée.

[But it was above all the meal-times that were unbearable to her, in this small room on the ground-floor, with its smoking stove, its creaking door, the walls that sweated, the damp pavement, all the bitterness of life seemed served up on her plate, and with the smoke of the boiled beef there rose from her secret soul waves of nauseous disgust. Charles was a slow eater; she played with a few nuts, or leaning on her elbow amused herself drawing lines along the oilcloth table-cover with the point of her knife.] (56)

This paragraph can be found in the ninth chapter of the first part of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, toward the end. It forms the high point of a depiction, whose object is Emma Bovary's dissatisfaction with her life in Tostes. For a long time, she has been hoping for some sudden occurrence that would give a new direction to her life lacking elegance, adventure and love, in the depths of the province, at the side of a mediocre and boring man. She has even gone so far as to prepare herself for such an event by cultivating herself and her house in order to deserve this turn in her destiny and to be worthy

† This article originally appeared in the publications of the Edebiyat Fakultesi (Faculté des Lettres) of Istanbul University (1937). It formulates the kernel of Auerbach's argument in his influential *Mimesis* (1953) and is published here in English translation for the first time. Translated by Kirk Wetters for this Norton Critical Edition. Reprinted by permission of the translator.

of it. When this event does not occur, she is seized by discontent and despair. Flaubert describes this very meticulously in several images that depict Emma's surroundings as they seem to her at this point: what is inconsolable in them, what is monotonous, grey, dull, suffocating and inescapable now emerges clearly before her eyes, when she no longer sees any hope of flight. Our paragraph is the pinnacle in the depiction of her despair. The novel subsequently tells how she allows everything in her house to deteriorate, how she neglects herself and begins to become sickly—so that her husband decides they should leave Tostes, because the climate there is not good for her.

This paragraph itself presents a specific image: husband and wife together at the dinner table. This image is however by no means given for its own sake, but is instead subordinated to the ruling object, Emma's despair. For this reason it is also not placed before the reader in its immediacy; it is not as if the two were just sitting there at the table with the reader looking at them. Instead, the reader sees principally Emma, of whom much has been said on the preceding pages, and the reader views the image first through her. Immediately he sees Emma's inner state and it is only secondarily, through this state and in the light of this condition of her spirit, that he sees the action at the dinner table. This observation is illuminating in itself, but it should also be demonstrated in the paragraph's construction. The depiction of its image stands entirely subordinated to the first sentence, which speaks of the state of Emma's spirits: "Mais c'était surtout aux heures des repas qu'elle n'en pouvait plus . . ." Everything else is only the development of the theme given here. Not only are the determinations that depend on *dans* and *avec* (giving the sense of place, amassing the particularities of discontent) commentary on the "elle n'en pouvait plus," but also the following sentence, about her disgust at the food, conforms to the sense and rhythmic flow of the paragraph's primary intent. When it then further says "Charles était long à manger," then this is indeed both grammatically and rhythmically something new, but it is still really just a new upbeat. This sentence achieves its correct sense from the opposition, between her distaste and her motions of nervous despair that are depicted immediately thereafter. The unsuspecting man eating becomes ridiculous and a bit ghostly. When Emma looks at him as he sits there and eats, he turns into the real and primary cause of the "elle n'en pouvait plus." Everything else that provokes despair, the unhappy room, the usual food, the lack of a tablecloth, everything that is inconsolable in the whole thing, appears to her and thereby also to the reader as something to do with him, something that emanates from him and that would be completely different if he were completely different.

Thus the situation is not simply given as an image, but instead Emma is given first and through her the situation. It also is not a matter, as in many novels written in the first person and other later works of similar character, of a simple reiteration of the contents of Emma's consciousness, of what she feels and how she feels it. The light illuminating the image does indeed emerge from her, but she is also a part of the image, she stands within it. It is not Emma who speaks, but the author. *Le poêle qui fumait, la porte qui criait, les murs qui suintaient, les pavés humides*. Everything described by this sentence is certainly felt and seen by Emma, but she would not be in a position to put it together like this. *Toute l'amertume de l'existence lui semblait servie sur son assiette*. She certainly has a thought like the one expressed here, but were she to express it, it would become blurry and sentimental; she lacks the sharpness of comprehension for such a formulation, and the cold honesty to account for herself. Of course, it is not Flaubert's existence that is contained in these words, but only Emma's. Flaubert does nothing but make the material that she offers, in its full subjectivity, ready for language. If Emma were able to do this herself, then she would no longer be what she is, she would have shed and thereby saved herself. As it is, however, she does not merely see, but is herself seen as the one who sees and is thereby judged—simply in the articulated naming of her subjective existence passing beyond its own limits. When one reads in a later passage, approximately on the second page of the twelfth chapter of the second part, "jamais Charles ne lui paraissait aussi désagréable, avoir les doigts aussi carrés, l'esprit aussi lourd, les façons si communes . . ." ("Never did Charles seem so unattractive, slow-witted, clumsy and vulgar . . .," p. 151), one might think for an instant that this peculiar combination was the affective accumulation of the occasions that each time bring Emma's aversion toward her husband to a head. One might further imagine that she herself was the one who, so to speak, internally uttered these words and that it was thus an instance of "*erlebte Rede*" [free indirect discourse].¹ But this is a mistake. They are indeed some paradigmatic occasions for Emma's aversion, but they are intentionally combined according to the author's design, not by Emma's affect. Emma feels much more, and much more confusedly. She sees other things in addition to those mentioned: Charles' body, his manners, his clothing; memories mix themselves up with it, and meanwhile maybe she hears him speak, feels his

1. Following the practice of Willard R. Trask's translation of Auerbach's *Mimesis*, the German term "*erlebte Rede*" ("free indirect discourse," but literally "experienced speech, experienced discourse") is retained here. (See, for instance, *Mimesis* [Princeton: Princeton UP, 1953], p. 213.) The quotation marks surrounding the term in the present essay are original to Auerbach's German text [*Translator's note*].

hand perhaps, his breath, sees him going about, cheerful, narrow-minded, unattractive, unaware. They are countless confused impressions. Only the result is sharply outlined, the aversion toward him, which she has to hide. Flaubert places this sharpness in impressions; he chooses three, apparently completely arbitrarily, but which are in exemplary fashion taken from the corporeal, intellectual and formal aspects of Charles' self-presentation, and which are put in such a way as if they were three shocks that struck Emma one after the other. This is not naturalistic. Natural shocks come into being quite differently each time. The ordering hand of the author lies behind it, summarily closing the confusedness of Emma's internal inventory of impressions, breaking it off in the direction toward which it itself strives, in the direction of "aversion toward Charles Bovary." This accounting whereby the author takes stock of Emma's internal state does not draw its measurements from somewhere outside of her, but rather from the contents of the state itself. It is only the application of the quality particular to order that allows these contents to convey themselves into language without admixture.

II

In the paragraph reprinted at the top, the contents of "elle n'en pouvait plus" is ascertained and brought purely, through the image of the shared dinner, to linguistic-sensory expression. The paragraph is therefore a successful example of the kind of art that seeks to reproduce pieces of human life in language—it is what we call literary realism. Plato called it imitative art, and, though he understood more in this expression (which included the imitation of super-human phenomena) than is intended here, we nevertheless give preference to his word for its greater precision and thus can call Flaubert's paragraph a piece of imitative art, one which imitates moreover by the means of language.

The imitation practiced by Flaubert should at this point be investigated, according to its object and method, so as to bring out whether and to what extent his practice differs fundamentally from imitative works of earlier ages. To this end, our paragraph will be taken (there is certainly no need for further justification on this count) as a typical example of Flaubert's art—which can itself in turn be taken (as will later become clear) as the paradigm of imitation in the nineteenth century as a whole.

The subject here, posed in front of Flaubert, is an image of husband and wife in their house at dinner. This is not an unusual theme, and it is often to be found not only in literature but also in

the visual arts. If one simply imagines it to one's self, without recalling the present example, one would without trying certainly think of a peaceful idyll, something like a bourgeois interior in the Dutch style. Or at least a connoisseur of older literature and art, for whom the nineteenth century is unfamiliar or indifferent, would think something like this. In any case he would be able to think of this or that scene from older novels, where husband and wife are squabbling, but in a burlesque manner which is amusing to the reader. One could also say that, since the image has to do with Emma and her state, the subject is a woman within her domestic sphere—a scene that exists practically as if it were naturally given and has been exemplified in all literatures which produced any imitative works at all. In this domestic frame, there might be idyllic representations of her work, her life with the children; or satirical ones, of her unfaithfulness, shrewishness or predilection for gossip; or love-stories, whose tone can be tragic, sentimental, idyllic, comical or burlesque.

The paragraph presents an image of discontentment. It is therefore not an idyll, nor any part of one. Domestic activity is of course depicted many times in *Madame Bovary*, but always only like the dinner here, in order to clarify the individual moments of discontentment, that is, never for its own sake and never as something peaceful and well-ordered. The paragraph is also not a satire, nor is it any part of one. Emma is not a mere caricature, the polemical-moralistic claims belonging to seriously intentioned satires are also absent—and it certainly is not a merely comical satire. The paragraph's image is most closely related to a love-story, and could at any rate be the introductory part of one. A time-honored schema is given: An unhappy young woman, a boring petty-bourgeois husband; the third is lacking, the lover. And because he also, as everyone knows, repeatedly finds his way onto the scene later, one could at least say that the paragraph is a piece of the exposition of a love-story. But one feels right away that this does not hit upon what is essential here. *Madame Bovary* was not written for the sake of Emma's love-affairs. They too, like the dinner-scene, serve a far more general intention, that of representing a completely futile existence in which the love-stories are only stages but not the main subject. And besides this, how shall any of the love-episodes be located in the traditional triangular scheme? Such stories were formulated in earlier times as either tragic or comic. Here however, the participants are too mediocre to fit with the inherited concept of the tragic, but are taken too seriously in their torment to let the thought of the comic even come to mind. The intermediate form of the sentimental also does not fit. Emma and some of the other figures are indeed sentimental, but the sentimental itself is continu-

ally subjected the most horrifying unmaskings in that it comes into contradiction with a reality that it cannot endure. And it is also not a satire of sentimentality, because the reality that triumphs over sentimentality is quite apparently as ridiculous and comfortless as the sentimentality itself. The paragraph is in any case also not to be ordered into the tradition as a love-story, nor as part of one. It is more, namely a piece of the representation of an existence in its totality. Was something like this never represented previously? Certainly, but not likely in the domestic setting, where husband and wife are sitting at the table. The representation of an existence in its entirety was understood differently. Other occasions were needed to make it visible: It became visible in the great decisions of life, not in such a simple everyday activity.

Here, however, nothing special happens, nor has anything special happened just before. It is an arbitrarily selected moment in that regularly recurring hour, in which husband and wife eat together. The two do not fight; there is no occasion for it. No conflict shows itself, no matter how one might want to conceive it. Not only the scene, but also the nature of Emma's despair is different than what we are used to from works of earlier periods. This despair is not occasioned by something concrete that she might have lost or which she might have desired. She does indeed have many desires, but they are completely vague: Elegance, love, life, diversion—such an indefinite despair may have always existed, but it was paid no attention, and was not taken as an object of imitation. There was despair about the collapse of great enterprises, over suffering, poverty, sickness, fatality, over the misfortune of humanity, of Christianity, of the state, of the country, of fellow believers, of family. Or despair over unfortunate or unrequited love, over the endangerment or infidelity of the beloved. In every case it was always despair over a concrete cause. Such a shapeless and purely negative despair as Emma's, which only directs itself *against*, namely against one's own condition in its entirety, without knowing what to put in its place—such a despair had existed in literature at the time when Flaubert wrote, but not for very long. He was certainly the first to represent it in people of lower intellectual development and social class.

The situation of Emma Bovary's life in the image before us is that of a ruined marriage, or at least of one that is nearing its ruin. Such marriages were also represented before. An older French work, the *Quinze Joyes de Mariage*, from the beginning of the fifteenth century, is one famous example, one that is all the more worth drawing upon here because it likewise concerns itself, not with this or that concrete cause of the marriage's failure, but rather with the depiction of failure as a condition. This is achieved however exclusively by the use of exemplary events. Again and again,

examples are narrated of this or that petty action which the woman has taken against the man, and only on the basis of many such examples does the situation emerge. Flaubert, on the contrary, presents the situational element directly. Nothing happens, but this nothing has become a heavy, dull, threatening something. We have already seen how he brings this about by ordering in language the confused impressions of discontentment that come to Emma from the sight of the room, the food, her husband—orders them to tight clarity. Flaubert also tells only rarely of events that move the plot forward. Purely out of images—shaping the nothingness of the indifferent everyday into a weighty circumstance of aversion, of barrenness, of false hopes, crippling disappointments and pitiful anxieties—a grey and randomly chosen human life glides sluggishly towards its end.

In the room where dinner is taken, there sit two people, man and wife. The marriage is near failure; but the man is completely unaware of this. In the *Quinze Joyes*, the married people also quarrel, or do mean things to each other—this is also how it was even earlier, when a similar subject was treated. Here, in *Madame Bovary*, there is no disputing, no fighting between the two—Emma is so solitary that she does not even have companionship in dispute with her husband. And Charles, who is always together with her, senses nothing about her life and her real condition. Each of the two is so wrapped up in their own world (her in despair and vague dreams of desire, him in his stupid bourgeois contentedness), that they are both completely alone, each by her- or himself, as in the paragraph treated here. They have no common world, and yet neither do either of them have a world of their own, a world for the sake of which it would be worthwhile to be solitary. In fact, each has, for her- and himself, a foolish, false world that cannot be made harmonious with the reality of their situations. Emma lives in trivial day-dreams and perishes wretchedly and vainly by them. She passes up the possibilities of her life that are offered to her because she does not see them. She does not know what to do with her husband's love for her, which is a genuine love, and the man himself is likewise useless to her. When she turns toward him amicably, she does not see him as he is, but a silly fantasy-image of him. For this reason, she requires from him accomplishments that do not match his nature. Soon enough he lives up to her demands, and she disdains him for it. And also all of the other possibilities for fulfillment that surround her, which she need only reach for—she does not see them, because a foolish ideal of life has blocked them from her. He, Charles Bovary, is not so completely foolish. He is only weak, short-sighted and mediocre, and he is all of these to such a great degree that the simple integrity of his being and the truth of his feelings

are of no use to him. He does not see the reality that concerns him, and spends his life, up to Emma's death and beyond, foolishly unaware. When he is finally forced to comprehend reality, he can find no way of bearing himself within it and dies of weakness.

This foolish failure to recognize the actual situation, which can be observed here in the two people at the table, can be found in all of the figures that Flaubert allows to take the stage in *Madame Bovary* or his other novels dealing with contemporary subjects.² He calls it stupidity [*Dummheit*], *la bêtise humaine*. This stupidity thus consequently consists in every individual's replacement of his or her given reality with a world of appearances, made up of illusions, habits, drives and slogans. This leads to apathy of the heart, to mean-spiritedness, to over-confidence and also, in external dealings, usually also to misfortune. Its first consequence, though, is that it leads to isolation; loneliness and *bêtise* are closely related. Each of these many mediocre humans has his own windowless world of mediocre foolish stupidity, and each one is therefore alone, so that no one can understand the other, no one can help the other to understanding. There is no common world of men, because this could only come into being if many men were able to find their way to their own genuine reality, each time uniquely given to each individual—only then would it also be a genuine communal reality. The characters in *Madame Bovary* do come together of course, for business and for the satisfaction of their desires, but this coming together does not sound any note of communality. Instead everything goes wrong, becomes ridiculous, is loaded down with misunderstandings, lies and stupid hatred, and the whole thing is like a concert of many instruments where each one is out of tune, and where they do not play together but rather all on top of one another. The order of the community is lacking because stupidity isolates and is incapable of achieving it. This situation becomes especially clear whenever the representatives of the social order actually make an entrance. The priest Bournisien, for example, or the state-official who opens the *comices agricoles* produce helpless, empty, repulsive and affected nonsense that could never gain entry into any heart.

Thus every person in this novel lives in the cage of his illusion; each one has a different one, each one just as foolish. And things go badly for them in it. Their illusion is constantly disappointed, so that they suffer uselessly. The disappointment though, does not occur in the collision of the stupid illusion with authentic reality, but always

2. The only exception that has occurred to me is Doctor Larivière, who appears at Emma's sickbed shortly before her death. On the conception of *bêtise humaine*, Paul Binswanger has made remarks which are similar to those here (*Die ästhetische Problematik Flauberts*, Frankfurt 1934, passim).

in its collision with the stupidity of others, whether it be with a more powerful stupidity, or whether it be with the stupidity of many others, allied out of apathy or malevolence. What the world really is, the world of the "smart," which would be a common world of men—this is something that Flaubert never tells us. Reality here consists of sheer stupidity, a stupidity which mistakes reality in such a way that the latter might not even actually be there at all. It really is there though. Of course, Flaubert does not say what such a real reality, the world of the smart, would actually look like. He does not find such a reality anywhere. He merely has a tool, language, that is capable of unmasking stupidity. The language of the writer thus holds the measure of stupidity and thereby also participates in that intelligence that is otherwise unseen. But even this single final instance functions only by unmasking—and gives no hope at all, grants no escape into the freedom of an authentic reality.

And with this a final peculiarity of the paragraph under discussion, something that was unknown in earlier periods, has become visible: the strange relationship of the writer and thereby also of the reader to the characters who appear in the text. The question has already been touched upon a few times. The two people are sitting at the table at dinnertime. One of them is Emma, the heroine named in the title. The story is about her, and her state of mind guides the formation of the book. Through her we see the world she lives in. We are on her side, here, and often throughout the book; we feel with her. We are moved by her youth, her courage, her love of the unconditional and the passionate, no matter how foolish and misguided; we are moved by her many sufferings and vain hopes, and by the horrible torment of her demise. What is described here is tragic pity [*Mitleid*]*—but is Emma Bovary a tragic heroine? Did Flaubert see her this way, and does he want us to do so? No, by no means. True tragedy is excluded by the disdainfully objective way in which Flaubert lays bare what is silly, immature and disorderly in her life. The comfortless mediocre everydayness in which she lives and which she nonetheless does not overcome—this is not a setting for tragic events and individuals. According to an earlier traditional sense that had determined the concept of the tragic, dominating almost completely in France until about 1800, everyday surroundings are entirely irreconcilable with the tragic. The tragic hero should appear beyond everything quotidian, purely occupied with the completion of his great destiny. Even if one conceives the tragic more extensively, in that sense which might be circumscribed as romantic, the sense in which Don Quixote is tragic, we cannot apply this term to Emma Bovary. Her destiny and inner being are lacking in all greatness. Certainly, Aristotle did say that the tragic hero must be mixed from good and evil, but may she also*

be completely immature, flighty, caught up in childish dreams? This is the case for Emma Bovary—evident even in the short paragraph here. That which arouses her despair is nothing but tribulations, unworthy of a tragic hero. (Consider again Don Quixote, how his genius radiates through the most miserable condition and always preserves his freedom.) Emma's despair has much that is ridiculous, and the sentence *toute l'amertume de l'existence lui semblait servie sur son assiette* could even provoke a naïve and somewhat crude person to laughter. Such a reader would thereby refrain from taking Emma Bovary seriously.

But she definitely is not funny, and anyone who reads how she suffers and dies can no longer laugh. To imagine an individual that one wants to conceive of comically as emerging so fully from the depths of her humanity as in the present instance, so that the reader often can no longer defend himself against tragic pity—this is impossible. And the fateful entanglement in which Emma finds herself from the beginning is also strongly reminiscent of the tragic mode of representation.

How then shall one designate the form and fate of Emma Bovary? It is important to have a designation for it, as it is not a unique case. A great number of writers of the nineteenth century depicted mediocre or even hideously misbegotten people (who in earlier times would only have been represented comically), depicting them with so much art, in the depths of their creaturely entanglement that their unheroic nature was not even noticed anymore and they were just called tragic. One has even become accustomed to designating as tragic each everyday instance in which some poor person cannot get over his fate. In the case of Flaubert, in the mixture of tragic pity and disdainfully objective critique, the love of man may indeed come up a little short, but the tidiness of the relationship between the categories is preserved: He allows it to be clearly recognized that he does not see Emma Bovary as tragic. Such a recognition is made possible because the concept of the tragic ultimately and unconditionally requires not only an inner freedom from the merely miserable, but also the dignity of his struggle. Only such a hero may be called tragic.

If Emma Bovary cannot be called tragic, then what designation should be given to figures like her? Tragicomic is only an exigent solution, because it expresses nothing. Another problem is that this term is already in use to mean something else in the literary usage of the eighteenth century. A few commonplace philosophical terms, namely dialectic or existential, would be suitable however. "Dialectical" would well express the interplay of tragic and comic within reality, "existential" the treatment of a human life in its total contents and the depths of its being. Existential realism or imitation of

existence would correspond quite well to that which is intended here. Another word seems, however, even more suited, if only on account of its simplicity. It is a word which allows the realistic aspects and those that are essentially historical to resonate—and therefore we shall here call Emma Bovary's character and fate "everyday." In the sections to follow, this word will be used to designate the whole category of similar figures that arise in the literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Flaubert here enters into such a strange relation of tragic pity and critical disdain with an everyday character. What he thereby accomplishes is the serious imitation of the everyday.

III

After what has already been said, there is little to add about the novelty of the method that Flaubert uses. Essential to it is a psychology of understanding, which of course also existed before, but yet had never been applied to purely everyday persons. No one in the sixteenth, seventeenth or eighteenth centuries would have let it occur to them to dedicate so much seriousness and careful attention to the humanity and destiny of the wife of a provincial doctor. Perhaps similar individuals of these classes did not even exist yet; perhaps they first became possible in the bourgeois era. Be that as it may, we can learn all kinds of things about the earlier existence of the everyday, from farces, satires, grotesques, genre-paintings and similar works. There was always a representable layer of everydayness, but it did not seem worthy of the inner understanding that makes up the precondition for serious imitation. In Flaubert, however, not only the main character, but also virtually all of the other persons of her surrounding, are treated with the same careful psychology of understanding [*Psychologie des Verstehens*], so that the novel is completely full of purely everyday personalities, each possessing their own inner development, entanglement and quasi-tragic existence.

One must not however be misled by the expression "psychology of understanding," into thinking that it has to do with dissection of the soul and theoretical exposition of the motives of action. This was eagerly done by many other writers who described the everyday of the nineteenth century, but hardly ever by Flaubert. *Madame Bovary* is rather a mosaic of many, very carefully observed, mostly completely insignificant circumstances and events. These are often accompanied by the thoughts of the characters involved, often even developed out of these thoughts, but the thoughts themselves are always just the completely trivial and self-evident ones that are known to the person him- or herself. Our example shows it with complete clarity: What is presented is an everyday image, accompa-

nied by Emma's everyday feelings. No observation or analysis of her psychic life is undertaken that would go beyond this presentation. And yet perfect insight into her existence is achieved, in this paragraph alone, and even more clearly in connection with the earlier parts of the novel that tell of her education and previous life with Charles. In them too, there is no depth-psychology at all, just the precise reiteration of everyday contents. Flaubert has no need of depth-psychology. He only needs the linguistic expression for everyday appearances and the trivial thoughts that come to people in the course of their actions—as soon as he succeeds in reproducing this exactly, he is certain of grasping at once the depths of motivation and the roots of human development. Each process and every action, purely transferred into language, interprets itself and the humans that participate in it down to their base: Flaubert's artistic practice rests upon this conviction, that is, upon a deep trust in the truth of language. Vauvenargues has said: *Il n'y aurait d'erreurs qui ne périssent d'elles-mêmes, exprimées clairement*. [There are no errors that would not disappear by themselves, if they were clearly expressed.] Flaubert's faith goes yet further, he believes that even the reality of occurrence unveils itself in linguistic expression.

Insight into the being, the motives and the development of the characters thus arises out of the sheer representation of the contents of everyday actions and emotions. And despite this limitation to pure report, figures are not presented as mere roles, but as human beings. The superiority of the author gives itself away not in that Flaubert says something about the characters that they themselves do not know or could not know, but rather in that he says what they themselves feel.

Everyday subject-matter brings with it the necessity for Flaubert to relate a great number of minor and even extremely minor occurrences in order to achieve his purpose. Everyday existence reveals itself not in a great conflict of fate, but in its duration. This duration, however, withdraws and escapes every representation, and all that remains is the attempt at an approximation, in order to make it tangible. This effort requires that many moments of meaningless triviality let the weight of dull time be felt, moments which at the same time comment on one another by showing the stations of a leaden progression that comprise the development of everyday figures. Such a moment of sluggish duration, filled with painful tension, is found in the paragraph under discussion here. Flaubert, of all his contemporaries, recognized and realized with the most purity the task of imitating the everyday, and indeed precisely in *Madame Bovary*. In the *Education sentimentale* or in *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, the same formation also dominates, but it does so so excessively that at times one feels the extension to be unbearable, and does not

always understand why such a frequent repetition of similar situations is desirable. In *Madame Bovary*, the flow of the plot is certainly also sluggish, but it still flows in a single unabated direction that can be felt incessantly. In our scene as well, it can be felt, if only slightly, but all the more clearly, the more carefully one reads: Leaden and incessant, fate courses through it, a fate that is already contained here in its germ.

IV

The serious imitation of the everyday and the techniques that naturally result from it are, all in all, what is new in Flaubert's artistic practice, as consideration of the paragraph from *Madame Bovary* has shown. This innovation now shall be investigated according to its origin and the mode of its coming into being. At this point it should also be underlined that a change in the imitative practice of art and its objects is connected with a change in human self-perception and, beyond this, with a correlative change in the human itself and in its societal order. It is not a question of merely placing the origin of the new artistic mode in the particular personality of Flaubert (or the peculiarity of some other related authors). For, as peculiar as Flaubert's personality was, if the objects treated by him were not to be encountered in the world of his time, then the reader would not have recognized them, and *Madame Bovary* would never have been able to achieve the status of a representative work of realism. He was only able to uncover what was already given, what he encountered. He was able to give shape to and make conscious something that had never been noticed before; and indeed, it is something that had not even been there previously, or that had at least remained so germinal and hidden in its source that no one had been there to see it previously or give it shape by imitating it.

Changes, however, in humans and their society are not the immediate object of literary history. In order to investigate these, some borrowings from other historical sciences would be desirable. But such is not the intention here. Only completely well-known historical events are presumed. The present investigation otherwise limits itself to the content of literary works. This is because, in each of them we receive an imprint of the historical condition, which is thereby transmitted to us in a definite form, often very personal and strange, but always synthetic and necessary. The historical situation in its entirety is contained in literary works, and, indeed (something which makes the value of these accounts even greater), contained in a way that is variously unintentional and unconscious. We are therefore justified in deciphering the interior workings of history from them. Naturally, an extensive background and critical ability

are desirable in order to separate the contingent and personal from the general and historical.

Our next question then, is: When in modern times did traces of the realism encountered in Flaubert first appear? We must seek to ascertain this point in time with the greatest possible accuracy. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Europe, and particularly France, was dominated by the classical principle of stylistic separation. This dictated that the tragic might only be represented as beyond the everyday, and that the everyday required a comical representation. We know what a radical implementation this doctrine received in the seventeenth century. In tragedy no object of everyday use could be called by its common name. Even to ask the time, or to mention the usual processes of creaturely life, age, sickness, or even economic conditions was considered inept. It seemed just as inept, and embarrassing, when something resembling a tragic conflict showed up within the comic frame. Moreover, even in comedy the everyday was only selectively tolerated: There was a more distinguished social comedy which took its subjects from the higher strata of society and only permitted a certain portion of the everyday. It used a kind of expression which was indeed light but also extremely selective. In addition to this high comedy there was a lower comedy, in which the everyday had its proper place. Here things were not just comical, but burlesque. From this situation, it can be concluded that the everyday had only a very modest place in the imitative practice of that time and could only appear in a very distorted manner. These differences between sublime-tragic, noble-comic and everyday-burlesque also very nearly coincided with those of the social hierarchy itself. It was desired, originally out of a sense for the dignity of the tragic destiny, that the tragic hero be free of all lower entanglements and kept beyond daily life, and this is how the tragic plot selected its figures—just as, admittedly under a different set of societal presumptions, also happened in antiquity. These figures were always of a social status which raised them out of the everyday. They were, for example, mythic heroes, princes, generals and similar figures of the highest rank. In comedies of high society, however, it was desirable that one see a representation of one's self, and thus the public of the time itself took the stage. This public was made up of nobles and upper bourgeoisie. These figures also were only permitted so long as everything abyssal was kept decently veiled,³ including the day-to-day life that was a mere

3. No one can be prevented from taking the misanthrope seriously—we are not at all bound to the seventeenth-century understanding. It is only that one has to be clear about the fact that he could not have been understood that way back then—and that it was Rousseau, characteristically enough, who first made an existential problem out of him.

necessity for most of the people of this world. When the crude everyday appeared, it was heaped, in the manner of the burlesque, upon individual figures suffering from ridiculous disfigurements. In the burlesque proper, that is the French farce or the burlesque novel, one sought to entertain one's self with the colorful past-times of the social depths. Here "the people" take the stage, who appear always to have been afflicted with the everyday. For this reason, the peasant is almost without exception a simpleton, while the city-dwellers are rabble. Characters from the margins of social life—actors, quacks, wenches, lackeys, crooks, comical doctors and lawyers—also take up a disproportionate number of the roles. There are still of course some people of higher rank in the burlesque. They lack, however, the cultivation and dignity appropriate to their class, and present themselves as crude or shabby or stupid. "The people," in the sense that the word is understood today, appear nowhere.

Already in the eighteenth century, the strict separation between the serious and the everyday was broken by intermediary forms. The *Comédie larmoyante* presents moving situations in a middle-class domestic setting, with a happy ending. The novel of manners [*die Sittenroman*] depicts the goings-on in the streets and market-places, in country-houses and inns, family-life and salon-life; its central plot often has an unhappy ending. But all of this is still of a playful and sensuous sentimentality that avoids, out of an unconscious idea of decency, the unveiling of the existential and everyday depths. The organization of the social order, left untouched in practice in spite of all theoretical considerations, and the ever-yet existent classical sense of style that still exists, hinder the real breakthrough of the everyday. Only toward the end of the century are there a few manifestations which a reader familiar with later developments can recognize as forerunners. In the last novel of manners, the *Liaisons dangereuses* of 1782, whose setting is admittedly very conventional, the psychological elaboration of events is pursued right up to the limit of the vertiginous. In certain novels of Diderot—especially in the *Neveu de Rameau*—people from everyday life are introduced with a certain seriousness. These characters are however quite peculiar and eccentric, and the seriousness is more reminiscent of many English novels of manners, at once entertaining and satirical, than of the realism of the nineteenth century. Above all, however, a germ of the later development makes itself felt in the figure and work of Rousseau. The *Nouvelle Héloïse* only contains the realistic in a safe dose, and its linguistic form, so revolutionary in the eruption of unmediated feeling, veils everything practical behind a completely classical sense of decency. The *Confessions*, however, bring an existence—Rousseau's own—in its

real situation, into contemporary life. This work could be viewed as the earliest example of the earnest imitation of the everyday—if Rousseau's approach to reality were that of an imitative artist. Instead he has such a pronouncedly apologetic and moral-critical relation to his material, his own life, that the reality of the social sphere never becomes his proper subject. The work remains lacking, in terms of a unified and self-sufficient construction. Despite this qualification, the roots of the subsequent serious realism are to be found in Rousseau, in the example of the *Confessions*, as well as in his politicization of the idyllic conception of nature. This conception contained a general idealization of the everyday as something available to everyone (at least on its surface); this ideal came into contradiction with the reality of the everyday and made the latter into a problem in a way which had been hitherto unknown.

To be sure, Rousseau's effect on imitative arts did not show itself immediately in the first decades following his death. The Revolution, Empire and Restoration are poor in realistic works. Even the light and colorful realistic art of the *ancien régime* falls silent. Where the practical realities of life do make an appearance in the works of that era, they are only alluded to in the most general way, and the heroes of the period's novels betray a practically pathological reluctance to engage with them. This is all the more peculiar, because at the same time in other countries, especially in Germany, the principle of separation of styles was being completely overruled by a younger generation that set itself up against the French-classical taste. Here—already in the *Sturm und Drang* ["Storm and Stress"] movement and then above all in the first part of *Faust* and in *Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung* ["Wilhelm Meister's Theatrical Calling"]—the everyday is treated seriously in a way that is completely self-evident, even if it also does not, in correspondence with the era and the German situation, yet appear as particularly modern reality. In the France of 1800 there is nothing similar. Shortly after 1820, Victor Hugo and his friends announce themselves as the first finally to break with the principle of stylistic separation by allying the sublime with the grotesque. Yet in reality they did not fuse the two stylistic poles of the tragic and the comic, but instead developed the opposition to its most extreme point, to the point of excess, letting the two collide, creating a theater of great pathos and affect that remained, however, just as unreal and improbable as the one that preceded it.

Around 1830, fifty years after Rousseau's death, the first books appear in which the full breadth of contemporary reality achieves its serious representation. They are the novels of Stendhal and Balzac, and specifically Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Stendhal's first work which appeared in 1831—almost simultaneous with the

first novels of the *Comédie humaine*, which deal with the society of the time. These works begin the artistic practice of the serious imitation of the everyday, whose purest example in the nineteenth century appears to us as *Madame Bovary*. This answers the question of its origin. In the second half of the eighteenth century, especially in Rousseau, one finds the first clear and persistent sign of a dissatisfaction with the merely comic representation of the everyday. A half century after his death, following a long pause during which there was practically no significant realistic literature whatsoever in France, the new art-form usually termed modern realism stepped forward. The change through which the earnestness of the everyday became ripe for representation must have taken place during these fifty years. What was the nature of this change?

V

In order to answer this question, we will first seek to describe the relation of the intellectual classes in the second half of the eighteenth century to the reality of their time. They found themselves, as is known, in a relation of fiercest criticism to the conditions in which they lived. The social situation, and the principles according to which it had been set up, seemed unreasonable and out-of-date. It seemed desirable to everyone that they be changed, indeed changed fundamentally, according to the rules of natural human reason. In this process, the conception of the nature of man won greater—ever increasing—significance; it became accepted, in contradiction with the Christian doctrine, that humans were in themselves good and reasonable and that only a false education, propagated by some few groups and persons who had an interest in it, had corrupted them in the course of time. Human nature and human reason thereby came into conflict not only with Christianity and the absolutist social order, but in the end with history itself. Already Voltaire considered all institutions, constitutions and states of mind that could not be explained by the reason or natural conditions of the population in question as sheer nonsense. Rousseau pushed it yet further by denying the utility of even the useful inventions of progress that had been pleasing to Voltaire. For Rousseau culture is the absolute enemy of nature, and virtue of peace. From this intellectual position, we can see that in the consideration of reality, one took only the reasonable and the natural seriously—and the natural itself was comprised of the common nature of the human (to this extent it appeared as nearly identical with the reasonable) as well as of the particular natural conditions of his life, that is bodily constitution, land and climate. All properly historical conditions, on the other hand, the work of the human life

in time, were not recognized as things which had grown up out of necessity. History as well became nonsense. The work of men, as it existed in constitutions, institutions and inherited intellectual forms, was the object of disdain. It was believed that this work was only contingent and therefore also unreasonable; and it was believed as well that only the enlightenment of all and good will were needed to clear it all away and make room for a better human world. Such a conception of existing historical reality, which is naturally applied even to the smallest occurrences within it, is irreconcilable with the serious imitation of this reality. This reality could never be an object of such a representation because it was not filled with destiny and was unproblematic. Really, it only becomes so when one is conscious of what is internal to the workings of history and of the necessary entanglement of everyday life. The insight into the historicity of the human and society is the principal presupposition for the serious imitation of the everyday. (The present inquiry was written primarily for the sake of the preceding sentence.) This insight does not however by any means need to be systematically founded, as it was, for instance, for Vico or Hegel, but it must take root in the experience of the artist, so that the everyday can win its own truth. Where this is missing, where one thinks that human life is reshapeable by merely taking some measurements and fashioning some doctrines (insofar as the naturally given conditions allow for it), and that there is no historically binding necessity—here reality withdraws from its every imitation; it withdraws from the place where its becoming and its being as a whole shine forth. When reality has withdrawn, the imitation remains either as a portrayal of manners or as a plot-exercise or as a didactic fable—but the characteristic depth and seriousness of our life does not appear.

We can explain the limitations of realism in the eighteenth century out of this ahistorical frame of mind, that had not only gripped the minds of a few philosophers, but of all society. But already with Rousseau it inverts itself. Many others however, despite all their criticism, had felt quite at home in their epoch, which was still kept warm by the comforts of tradition. In Rousseau, the contradiction between the natural (that he desires) and the historical (that he finds everywhere) turns into a practical conflict of tragic intensity. Rousseau was no longer alive when the Revolution created a completely new situation, not a natural-Rousseauian one, but precisely again a historically binding one. His students and acolytes were still there though, for he had, as is well-known, a very profound impact. It was only natural that they did not find themselves accommodated by the new world that had completely destroyed their hopes. In the place of the spirited skepticism used by many significant figures of the eighteenth century to approach the realization of the

natural social order that they desired, there now emerged, precisely in the most serious-minded of men, a complete despair accompanied by a turning away from political reality. They lost the great influence that the intellectual class had exercised in the eighteenth century. Scattered and solitary, the most significant writers of the post-revolutionary epoch are only at home in their own feelings, in their own estrangement from the world, and with the study of foreign cultures. The turbulent reality of contemporary France is either foreign or antagonistic to them. Senancour is the purest, but by no means the only example of this situation.

Senancour thinks still very similarly to Rousseau, as regards nature and history. His *Obermann* believes in the primacy of natural causes in the genesis of societal phenomena.⁴ He believes in the nature of man, and he finds it, almost more overtly than Rousseau, in the living feeling of one's own heart. *Je me repose dans ma bonté naturelle* [I rest on my natural goodness], he says at one point in the fourth letter, and, shortly following, *Je sens irrésistiblement que mes penchants sont naturels* [I feel irresistibly that my inclinations are natural]. Like Rousseau, he finds the inner norm for human life purely in accordance with what is felt, especially in the high mountain landscapes where no trace of human activity can be noticed.⁵ Like Rousseau, he thinks that humans only need to confine themselves to their most immediate and simple needs in order to be calm, virtuous, peaceful and happy. But this view shared by Senancour and Rousseau, while it still retains all of its combative and reformative force in 1804 (when *Obermann* first appeared), had also become—all at once—completely solitary and hopeless. *Obermann* has given up trying to change people and to convert them to his view. He resigns himself to solitude and uselessness, *étranger dans la nature réelle, ridicule au milieu des hommes* [a foreigner in real nature, ridiculous in the midst of men].⁶ That it was like this for him is not surprising, because the hand on which he had placed his bet was long ago played out, and in vain. Human nature, which had previously seemed hidden beneath the class-based absolutist sys-

4. Lettre XXII: . . . *Les divers caractères de tous les peuples . . . sont modifiés par les différences des expositions, des climats, des vapeurs, autant et plus encore que par celles des lois et des habitudes. En effet, ces dernières oppositions ont en elles-mêmes, dans le principe, de semblables causes physiques.* See also the expression *les accidents éphémères de l'oeuvre sociale* (Lettre IV).

5. *Sur les terres basses, c'est une nécessité que l'homme naturel soit sans cesse altéré, en respirant cette atmosphère sociale si épaisse, si orageuse, si pleine de fermentation, toujours ébranlée par le bruit des arts, le fracas des plaisirs ostensible, les cris de la haine et les perpétuels gémissements de l'anxiété et des douleurs. Mais là, sur ces monts déserts où le ciel est immense, où l'air est plus fixe, et les temps moins rapides, et la vie plus permanente; là, la nature entière exprime éloquemment un ordre plus grand, une harmonie plus visible, un ensemble éternel. Là, l'homme retrouve sa forme altérable, mais indestructible; il respire l'air sauvage loin des émanations sociales; son être est à lui comme à l'univers: il vit d'une vie réelle dans l'unité sublime* (Lettre VII).

6. Lettre IV.

tem, the dogmas of the church and a number of inherited institutions, had shed this veil in the revolution; and it had shown itself not a "natural" nature, but a *nature réelle*. This discovery must have been incomprehensible and unbearable to the generation living in Rousseau's world, raised according to his form of self-perception. The reality of contemporary life brought them only torment and shame, and they turned away from it. It could not become a subject of their art, because they detested, feared and disdained it. This relationship is nevertheless, despite its purely negative character, a far more seriously problematic one than that of the Enlightenment-inspired society that preceded it. The movement started by Rousseau and the great disappointment that it suffered was a precondition for the genesis of the modern imitation of reality. By passionately opposing natural man to everyday life as it existed, Rousseau made the latter to a practical problem. Only at this point did its unproblematic re-creations in the style of the eighteenth century become devalued.

In order, though, to free the problematic relation to reality from its pure negation, a more graspable and practical, life-oriented experience was needed. Stendhal was more than a decade younger than Constant, Chateaubriand and Senancour, born just early enough to be conscious of the Revolutionary period and, as an adult, to be dragged into the Napoleonic whirlpool. He gladly allowed himself to be dragged in, because he was too thirsty for adventure, too hungry for life, to fall victim to the post-Rousseauian affliction. But his entire life—set upon success, fortune and pleasure—went wrong and as is well-known, did so completely. He himself had explained the reason: his nature, which did not fit in with that of his contemporaries. But this peculiar nature, as it comes across in his late accounts of it, is certainly not precisely its original reality. In 1835 he sees his earlier self (of 1800) differently from how that self actually must have been. There is no seventeen-year-old like that, at least not one who later, at the age of fifty, poor and alone, still had the courage to make fun of romantic despair and to write books, putting his hope in the readers from 1880, that were barely given notice. His nature in 1835 is unmistakably one that had become that way, formed and bent, in the course of life; his nature is much more likely the result rather than the cause of his worldly misfortune. This cause does not lie, moreover, in the particularity of the individual. It lies in the situation of a strong individual from an earlier world, utterly incapable of accommodating himself to social re-stratification, who is caught up in a new form of society that can not use him. He is a well-to-do child from the period of the aristocracy and he remains this way all of his life, although he had always thought in a way that was libertarian and rev-

olutionary. He cannot assimilate himself to the new order of the classes as it is taking shape; he hates his own social status because it has now become a class. He can have an occupation, but never a career; he can be practical, and he is so, but he can never completely give himself up to things; he can be bold, and he is, but only as a young man of rank who joins in an adventure, not as a member of an organized society. His wit, his style of intercourse with people, his gallantry with women, belong to aristocratic society of the eighteenth century, and are no longer appropriate in the new environment; they have meanwhile turned bitter and vertiginous. Many others were, admittedly, in the same situation, but either they were able to transform themselves or else they perished, unless they were able, by good fortune or prudent management of their lives, to protect themselves from associating too closely with the conditions of their time. It was exactly this kind of self-protection that Stendhal did not want; he wanted to test himself, enjoy the real world and to master it. He did not manage this, though he was basically up to the task. What he did manage, however, was to grasp the problem of his own life as an object and thus to give shape to his own contemporary reality.

All his novels, from *Armance* to *Lucien Leuwen*, deal with a young person whose social situation has become problematic in a society in transformation. All of these figures stand in the middle of a great re-stratification and thus experience reality just as Stendhal himself experienced it. All of them have far more sympathy for the people, and for the still halfway-intact remains of the old world of the aristocracy, than they do for the petty-egotistical, bureaucratic mentality and silly ideals of the new bourgeoisie. And the form of life that they, mostly in vain, seek to realize—the freedom of the large spirit, the freedom to passion—becomes, in its unromantic expansiveness and dispassion, an ideal that is made possible (for very few) by the status-system itself.

Through his problematic situation during the societal re-stratification of the post-revolutionary epoch, Stendhal experienced the historicity of the everyday,⁷ and out of this there grew in him the inclination and the capacity for a new kind of realistic art. Already in the novel *Armance* from 1829 there are efforts in this direction, and in *Le Rouge et le Noir* it is fully formed. In this work, the separation of styles is radically suspended; the fates and events of the novel bring themselves about within the contemporary

7. This is also expressed in his letters and autobiographical texts, although he was ill-suited to the systematic elaboration of his insights and experiences. A sentence like the following one, from *Henri Brulard*, might hardly be found by any earlier writer: *Comme une belle pêche passe en quelques jours, l'esprit passe en deux cents ans, et bien plus vite, s'il y a révolution dans les rapports que les classes d'une société ont entre elles* (Chapitre XXX).

French reality, a reality whose entire breadth is reflected in these events. The social situation of the characters is not merely given by their condition at that time, as for example in Lesage, but instead this condition appears always as the result of larger, smaller and the most minute processes of contemporary history, so that this history is kept in a constantly mobile relation to the plot of the novel. And the whole thing, the history of the era as well as the fate of the characters, is seen as a turbulent historical development. Even the psychic make-up of the characters, which Stendhal was so talented at shaping, does not appear as something that is simply given, once and for all, but rather as something that is co-determined by the societal situation and which develops along with it. And what necessarily goes along with this is that all of the figures and relations, regardless of their level of everydayness and social rank, are presented in all the gravity of their existences. It is not only the hero, Julien Sorel, who is conceived from the outset, despite the humiliating and ridiculous situation in which he finds himself, in the full depth of his existence (and, unlike any figure before him, within the breadth of the everyday). Even the lesser characters, regardless of whether they are sympathetic or despicable, are never recreated as purely static in the sense of those imitated in genre-paintings or satire, but instead are produced out of their own development and in the fullness of their existence.⁸

But we can see in Stendhal however, by comparison with the work of later writers, still certain limitations of his realism. His sense of the historical is not entirely secure and remains shot through with figures of thought from the eighteenth century. He is very inclined to connect the events of the story in an overly rational manner, and to give too much space to the plot, to the calculus of the will, to moralistically pointed anecdotes—so that instead of a properly historical dynamic, the novel offers a manifold system of plots resolvable into nothing but threads of causality. The moralistic tradition of the classical age in particular is much stronger in his work than in that of later authors: Almost everything that his char-

8. He writes in *Henri Brulard* (chap. VII): *Tous les faits qui forment la vie de Chrysale sont remplacés chez moi par du romanesque; je crois que cette tâche dans mon télescope a été utile pour mes personnages de romans; il y a une bassesse bourgeoise qu'ils ne peuvent avoir, et pour l'auteur ce serait parler le chinois qu'il ne sait pas.* This is misunderstanding; characters like Valenod are no less lower bourgeoisie than Chrysale. But Stendhal is unable to take them completely comically; and it is the same case when, on a different occasion (chap. XXXII), he says that the origin of his *dégoût pour les faits comiques* (in which a *personnage bas* must necessarily appear) is his hatred toward the calculating precaution of the bourgeoisie. He does not view the base as comic, and thus ultimately as without danger as in the cases of Chrysale or Harpagon, but instead sees it in its despicable, dangerous and effective existence. Of course this is not the way, as he dreamed in *his own* youth, to become the successor of Molière. What he calls *romanesque* ("romantic," "novelistic") is his own inclination toward heroic freedom in the sense of the old class-system: *cet espagnolisme m'empêche d'avoir le génie comique* (chap. XVIII).

acters do is done consciously and willfully, either out of reason or clearly circumscribed passion, and they are also in the position to judge whether and to what extent it is good or evil. Connected with this is the fact that Julien Sorel has far more traits of a genuine tragic hero than is possible in the later French realistic novels. Julien is still moral in a way that is beyond the everyday; he is not completely entangled by the duress of circumstances; he acts freely out of the calculus of the will, just as the heroes of Corneille, and just as Richard III, he has the will to become a villain. And so Julien, hardly twenty years old, likewise resolves to become a schemer and a hypocrite.

The instinctive insight into the intrinsically historical quality of the everyday, which still met with resistances in Stendhal, was at the command of a Balzac sixteen years his junior as if it were self-evident. First in Balzac's work the ahistorical conception of the everyday is completely destroyed and overcome. Contemporary events appear before him spontaneously in all of their branchings as an autonomous, monstrous stream of sheerly human drives and purely historical formations. His subject, like Stendhal's, is the great re-stratification of Western European society, and he thus also came to grasp human life as a historical formation ever since it had started to churn in its depths and had emerged into consciousness as never before. He is so much a child of his time that he is no longer able to analyze economy, society, politics and intra-historical human history in a way that is purely reasonable and moralistic, but which instead senses secret and magical forces there. Just as magic demonizes nature, thus he demonizes modern life in the society of men. Of course, he never achieved any theoretical clarity about the conception of history that inspires his work. Only the comprehensiveness of his imitation of life is conscious to him from the beginning—*toutes les figures et toutes les positions sociales* [all figures and all social positions] are to be contained in his work. All conditions, situations and states, all physiognomies, all character-types, all ways of life and vocations, all regions, zones and locations, all ages and generations, are to be included. . . . *L'histoire du cœur humain tracé fil à fil, l'histoire sociale faite dans toutes ses parties, voilà la base; . . . ce sera ce qui se passe partout* [The base will be the history of the human heart delineated thread by thread, the history of society in all its parts; . . . it will be what takes place everywhere].⁹ This corresponds completely to the concept of the everyday that is meant here, and all the more so because the word *histoire* does not designate "past history" here, but instead refers to

9. Letters from 1834, especially the letter to Madame Hanska of the 26th of October (Honoré de Balzac, *Lettres à l'Etrangère*, 1833–1842 [Paris: Calmann-Lévy Editeurs, 1899], p. 205).

that which happens out of history as something present. His uncertainty begins, however, as soon as he tries to define the structure of what happens—and thereby the structure of his own work. At one point he speaks of laws that he would like to find out, another time he calls chance the greatest novelist in the world, and poses as only its secretary. His *Etudes sociales* (thus he writes on one occasion) would be something like the book of a thousand and one nights for the Occident. As a title for the whole thing, he had chosen, for a time, *Contes et Romans philosophiques*. And, in addition to all of this he also loved to call his work “zoology” or “physiology.” All of these ideas—taken from natural science, poetry, philosophy of history, sociology—found room alongside one another in his head.

In the end he decided upon the title *Comédie humaine*. This recollection of Dante was, however, certainly not aimed at the mixture of styles that both divine and human comedy would have in common. Balzac was not aware of all that. In his title, he was thinking of the common universality of a material that would span all heights and depths, and he wanted also to find expression for a kind of demonic irony, corresponding to a Romantic understanding of Dante. In truth, he sees society as he sees nature, with an innumerable quantity of types and individuals, who all possess a drive to live and thrive. All of these drives resonate sympathetically in Balzac himself. In him they are all connected; he senses them in their apparent and also in their secret convergences, and he shares their every stirring. He actually feels such stirrings all the stronger, the more unconscious and instinctive they are. The truly intellectual is something that he can grasp only much more incompletely. To this extent, his favorite word, “physiology,” is completely accurate: His human society gives the impression of a natural formation. The historical has become so dynamic and irrational for him that he can hardly separate it any longer from what is actually natural.

The modern everyday is also, for this reason, much nearer to the character of his works than it was to Stendhal's. In Balzac one can hardly find any remnants of the moral freedom that sometimes allowed Julien Sorel to emerge as genuinely tragic. True, Balzac is, far more than Stendhal, under the spell of the romantic vision of love, and there is no lack of so-called tragic love-stories in his work. And yet, when measured against the inherited concept of the tragic, most of the actions of his novels' characters can only be described as extremely compulsive, risky and novelistic [*romanesk*].¹ Aside from this one exception, all of the remaining figures of this gigantic work fall completely, even morally, within the conception

1. See Auerbach's mention (n. 8 above) of the significance of the term *romanesque* for Stendhal.

of the everyday as it is used here. Perhaps one wonders a little that figures like, for example, Grandet or Goriot are called everyday. In the case of Grandet, one must remember that the everyday is not used to describe what occurs frequently as opposed to what is seldom and unusual, but rather to describe that which is caught up in the daily course of things as opposed to what is sublimely removed from them (that over which the day-to-day can exercise no power). This sublimity, at least as a form of moral freedom, is unconditionally required in tragedy. Old Grandet is for this reason indeed a very unusual but thoroughly everyday character. He is also taken very seriously; exactly how seriously can be seen by juxtaposition with Molière's Harpagon: Harpagon's foolishness is dashed to pieces, helplessly and ridiculously, upon the concerted opposition of a world of healthy common sense [*gesunder Menschenverstand*], whereas in Balzac's novel, Grandet rules, and the world of healthy reason is itself under the spell of economic entanglements—and therefore also in its service. He himself is however also (and the most intensely) under the spell of compulsive economic entanglement. His powerful will does not fight against it, but is completely subjugated by it. He is a slave to his own entanglement and at the same time a rare natural phenomenon of the human everyday, no longer tragic at all. It may also seem unjust that the tragic is also denied to Father Goriot, since he did indeed place a single feeling above everything, a feeling which, according to its nature, is authentically human: the love for his daughter. Like a hero, he sacrifices everything for this feeling. But he is no hero, just a wretch who is blind and trapped. His love is a compulsive blasphemy and it also does not protect him from his own complaining, which actually gives away his whole situation, as well as its complete baseness: "If only I were still rich, if I just hadn't given them my money, and then she would be with me, would take care of me, show me every tenderness. Money can provide everything, even daughterly love"—and so forth. No tragic passion can feel—much less speak—this way about its object. To do so is wretched, but not tragic.

Balzac was undoubtedly never really clear on this. He accompanies his "Totality of Human Life in the Nineteenth Century" with commentaries that are emotional, ironic or moral, in which his confusion about the categories of human destiny emerge quite clearly. As soon as some unfortunate person suffers in his day-to-day life, Balzac is ready to compare him to a hero, a saint, an angel—or, if it is a woman, to the Madonna. Every energetic villain is comparably demonized. The real insight into the moral nature of the everyday object is first achieved by Flaubert, who, a full two decades younger, began to write in the fifties shortly following the last civil revolution, and whose ill-tempered honesty is impeccable.

To him the gravity of being caught up in history's workings is self-evident, but equally apparent is the lack of tragic dignity in the situation. Every demonization of the social is absent here; life no longer crashes and foams, but flows, sluggish and leaden. The actuality of the everyday presented itself to him not in highly agitated actions and passions, but in the extenuation of a condition whose motion is almost imperceptible, yet still everywhere and unrelenting—so that the political, economic and social background of the whole thing is relatively stable and at the same time appears charged with unbearable tension. All the events do not change anything essential about the situation, but instead the solidification of duration appears, a time which is filled, charged with its own mute inescapability. It appears, certainly for the first time, in individual occurrence, just as in the world as whole. The commentaries which Balzac placed around his object, are also absent here. As was discussed above, Flaubert only makes his subject ready for language, condensing and ordering the raw material of the everyday so that it transposes itself into language.

VI

The nature of the change described here in case of France enabled the serious imitation of the everyday to become possible, to come into being and to mature. The social re-stratification between 1789 and 1848 had as consequence that the older type of realism, the eighteenth century's portrayals of manners, lost its value. The separation of styles was also overcome, and an instinctive insight developed, the insight into the intrinsically historical and problematic nature of the everyday. Upon this basis, the everyday became for artists the object of serious imitation, and eventually also of a critical knowledge which brought the imitation to its culmination. Flaubert is without a doubt a high point. The French authors who followed him no longer grasped the task of an imitation of social reality with the same purity, precision and depth; and even a bit later, realism acquired a new face, namely when the most significant realists no longer were able to see the reality that was to be shaped as something external to us.

It is a meaningful turning-point in the history of human self-perception whenever the limitations of a stylistic separation collapse and the everyday is taken seriously as an historical formation—so that any one of us may seem worthy of serious imitation, because he is a human and has a human destiny. The fullness and breadth of our life opens itself to form-giving; it becomes significant in its broad branchings, not as a side-by-side or one-after-the-other of plots, but as duration, simultaneity and manifold

unity. In order for it to become real, this unity no longer needs any limit of time or place, and the prestige of artistic language no longer needs to prove itself by its decency and word-choice. Instead, the common seriousness of our human condition lends dignity to each word that proves itself to be imitative, re-creative. The consideration of the developments in France up to Flaubert also show, however, that through historical and social entanglement freedom is endangered, and that the more earnest and objective an imitative form became, the less any liberation and catharsis of the human seemed possible.

The serious imitation of the everyday also began in other European countries at the same time. In them the separation of styles was never so firmly rooted as in France, and social re-stratification did not come about so violently. For this reason the image of imitative literature, for example in Germany, is also (at least on its surface) a completely different one. There the everyday is suffused with the forces of spirit and of humor, a philosophical irony, a pious abiding in the inherited tradition, a deep love of the given reality, its singularity and ephemerality. The more social-economic conditions in Europe became similar—as the form of modern life everywhere became clearer and more generally equivalent—the weaker and more inauthentic became this pious relation to the everyday.

An investigation of realism, such as the one undertaken here, also reveals that the sudden force of re-stratification not only shook the inner orderings of Europe around 1800, but in fact also summoned people to a deeper consciousness of their life—without however immediately putting them in a position to give a valid order to that life within the consciousness that had been summoned up.

ROLAND BARTHES

The Reality Effect†

When Flaubert, describing the room occupied by Mme Aubain, Félicité's employer, tells us that "an old piano supported, under a barometer, a pyramidal heap of boxes and cartons" ("A Simple Heart," from *Three Tales*); when Michelet, recounting the death of Charlotte Corday and reporting that, before the executioner's arrival, she was visited in prison by an artist who painted her portrait,

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includes the detail that "after an hour and a half, there was a gentle knock at a little door behind her" (*Histoire de France: La Révolution*)—these authors (among many others) are producing notations which structural analysis, concerned with identifying and systematizing the major articulations of narrative, usually and heretofore has left out, either because its inventory omits all details that are "superfluous" (in relation to structure) or because these same details are treated as "filling" (catalyses), assigned an indirect functional value insofar as, cumulatively, they constitute some index of character or atmosphere and so can ultimately be recuperated by structure.

It would seem, however, that if analysis seeks to be exhaustive (and what would any method be worth which did not account for the totality of its object, i.e., in this case, of the entire surface of the narrative fabric?), if it seeks to encompass the absolute detail, the indivisible unit, the fugitive transition, in order to assign them a place in the structure, it inevitably encounters notations which no function (not even the most indirect) can justify: such notations are scandalous (from the point of view of structure), or, what is even more disturbing, they seem to correspond to a kind of narrative *luxury*, lavish to the point of offering many "futile" details and thereby increasing the cost of narrative information. For if, in Flaubert's description, it is just possible to see in the notation of the piano an indication of its owner's bourgeois standing and in that of the cartons a sign of disorder and a kind of lapse in status likely to connote the atmosphere of the Aubain household, no purpose seems to justify reference to the barometer, an object neither incongruous nor significant, and therefore not participating, at first glance, in the order of the *notable*; and in Michelet's sentence, we have the same difficulty in accounting structurally for all the details: that the executioner came after the painter is all that is necessary to the account; how long the sitting lasted, the dimension and location of the door are useless (but the theme of the door, the softness of death's knock have an indisputable symbolic value). Even if they are not numerous, the "useless details" therefore seem inevitable: every narrative, at least every Western narrative of the ordinary sort nowadays, possesses a certain number.

Insignificant notation¹ (taking this word in its strong sense: apparently detached from the narrative's semiotic structure) is related to description, even if the object seems to be denoted only by a single word (in reality, the "pure" word does not exist: Flaubert's barometer is not cited in isolation; it is located, placed in a syntagm

1. In this brief account, we shall not give examples of "insignificant" notations, for the insignificant can be revealed only on the level of an immense structure: once cited, a notion is neither significant nor insignificant; it requires an already analyzed context.

at once referential and syntactic); thus is underlined the enigmatic character of all description, about which a word is necessary: the general structure of narrative, at least as it has been occasionally analyzed till now, appears as essentially *predictive*; schematizing to the extreme, and without taking into account numerous detours, delays, reversals, and disappointments which narrative institutionally imposes upon this schema, we can say that, at each articulation of the narrative syntagm, someone says to the hero (or to the reader, it does not matter which): if you act in this way, if you choose this alternative, this is what will happen (the *reported* character of these predictions does not call into question their practical nature). Description is entirely different: it has no predictive mark; "analogical," its structure is purely summatory and does not contain that trajectory of choices and alternatives which gives narration the appearance of a huge traffic-control center, furnished with a referential (and not merely discursive) temporality. This is an opposition which, anthropologically, has its importance: when, under the influence of von Frisch's experiments, it was assumed that bees had a language, it had to be realized that, while these insects possessed a predictive system of dances (in order to collect their food), nothing in it approached a *description*. Thus, description appears as a kind of characteristic of the so-called higher languages, to the apparently paradoxical degree that it is justified by no finality of action or of communication. The singularity of description (or of the "useless detail") in narrative fabric, its isolated situation, designates a question which has the greatest importance for the structural analysis of narrative. This question is the following: Is everything in narrative significant, and if not, if insignificant stretches subsist in the narrative syntagm, what is ultimately, so to speak, the significance of this insignificance?

First of all, we must recall that Western culture, in one of its major currents, has certainly not left description outside meaning, and has furnished it with a finality quite "recognized" by the literary institution. This current is Rhetoric, and this finality is that of the "beautiful": description has long had an aesthetic function. Very early in antiquity, to the two expressly functional genres of discourse, legal and political, was added a third, the epideictic, a ceremonial discourse intended to excite the admiration of the audience (and no longer to persuade it); this discourse contained in germ—whatever the ritual rules of its use: eulogy or obituary—the very idea of an aesthetic finality of language; in the Alexandrian neo-rhetoric of the second century A.D., there was a craze for ecphrasis, the detachable set piece (thus having its end in itself, independent of any general function), whose object was to describe places, times, people, or works of art, a tradition which was maintained throughout

the Middle Ages. As Curtius has emphasized, description in this period is constrained by no realism; its truth is unimportant (or even its verisimilitude); there is no hesitation to put lions or olive trees in a northern country; only the constraint of the descriptive genre counts; plausibility is not referential here but openly discursive: it is the generic rules of discourse which lay down the law.

Moving ahead to Flaubert, we see that the aesthetic purpose of description is still very strong. In *Madame Bovary*, the description of Rouen (a real referent if ever there was one) is subject to the tyrannical constraints of what we must call aesthetic verisimilitude, as is attested by the corrections made in this passage in the course of six successive rewritings. Here we see, first of all, that the corrections do not in any way issue from a closer consideration of the model: Rouen, perceived by Flaubert, remains just the same, or more precisely, if it changes somewhat from one version to the next, it is solely because he finds it necessary to focus an image or avoid a phonic redundance condemned by the rules of *le beau style*, or again to "arrange" a quite contingent felicity of expression;² next we see that the descriptive fabric, which at first glance seems to grant a major importance (by its dimension, by the concern for its detail) to the object *Rouen*, is in fact only a sort of setting meant to receive the jewels of a number of rare metaphors, the neutral, prosaic excipient which swathes the precious symbolic substance, as if, in Rouen, all that mattered were the figures of rhetoric to which the sight of the city lends itself—as if Rouen were notable only by its substitutions (*the masts like a forest of needles, the islands like huge motionless black fish, the clouds like aerial waves silently breaking against a cliff*); last, we see that the whole description is *constructed* so as to connect Rouen to a painting: it is a painted scene which the language takes up ("Thus, seen from above, the whole landscape had the motionless look of a painting"); the writer here fulfills Plato's definition of the artist as a maker in the third degree, since he imitates what is already the simulation of an essence. Thus, although the description of Rouen is quite irrelevant to the narrative structure of *Madame Bovary* (we can attach it to no functional sequence nor to any characterial, atmospheric, or sapiential signified), it is not in the least scandalous, it is justified, if not by the work's logic, at least by the laws of literature: its "meaning" exists, it depends on conformity not to the model but to the cultural rules of representation.

2. A mechanism distinguished by Valéry, in *Littérature*, commenting on Baudelaire's line "*La servante au grand coeur . . .*": "This line came to Baudelaire . . . And Baudelaire continued. He buried the cook out on the lawn, which goes against the custom, but goes with the rhyme," etc.

All the same, the aesthetic goal of Flaubertian description is thoroughly mixed with "realistic" imperatives, as if the referent's exactitude, superior or indifferent to any other function, governed and alone justified its description, or—in the case of descriptions reduced to a single word—its denotation: here aesthetic constraints are steeped—at least as an alibi—in referential constraints: it is likely that, if one came to Rouen in a diligence, the view one would have coming down the slope leading to the town would not be "objectively" different from the panorama Flaubert describes. This mixture—this interweaving—of constraints has a double advantage: on the one hand, aesthetic function, giving a meaning to "the fragment," halts what we might call the vertigo of notation; for once, discourse is no longer guided and limited by structural imperatives of the anecdote (functions and indices), nothing could indicate why we should halt the details of the description here and not there; if it were not subject to an aesthetic or rhetorical choice, any "view" would be inexhaustible by discourse: there would always be a corner, a detail, an inflection of space or color to report; on the other hand, by positing the referential as real, by pretending to follow it in a submissive fashion, realistic description avoids being reduced to fantasmatic activity (a precaution which was supposed necessary to the "objectivity" of the account); classical rhetoric had in a sense institutionalized the fantasmatic as a specific figure, *hypotyposis*, whose function was to "put things before the hearer's eyes," not in a neutral, constative manner, but by imparting to representation all the luster of desire (this was the vividly illuminated sector of discourse, with prismatic outlines: *illustris oratio*); declaratively renouncing the constraints of the rhetorical code, realism must seek a new reason to describe:

The irreducible residues of functional analysis have this in common: they denote what is ordinarily called "concrete reality" (insignificant gestures, transitory attitudes, insignificant objects, redundant words). The pure and simple "representation" of the "real," the naked relation of "what is" (or has been) thus appears as a resistance to meaning; this resistance confirms the great mythic opposition of the *true-to-life* (the lifelike) and the *intelligible*; it suffices to recall that, in the ideology of our time, obsessive reference to the "concrete" (in what is rhetorically demanded of the human sciences, of literature, of behavior) is always brandished like a weapon against meaning, as if, by some statutory exclusion, what is alive cannot not signify—and vice versa. Resistance of the "real" (in its written form, of course) to structure is very limited in the fictive account, constructed by definition on a model which, for its main outlines, has no other constraints than those of intelligibility; but

this same "reality" becomes the essential reference in historical narrative, which is supposed to report "what really happened": what does the nonfunctionality of a detail matter then, once it denotes "what took place"; "concrete reality" becomes the sufficient justification for speaking. History (historical discourse: *historia rerum gestarum*) is in fact the model of those narratives which consent to fill in the interstices of their functions by structurally superfluous notations, and it is logical that literary realism should have been—give or take a few decades—contemporary with the regnum of "objective" history, to which must be added the contemporary development of techniques, of works, and institutions based on the incessant need to authenticate the "real": the photograph (immediate witness of "what was here"), reportage, exhibitions of ancient objects (the success of the Tutankhamen show makes this quite clear), the tourism of monuments and historical sites. All this shows that the "real" is supposed to be self-sufficient, that it is strong enough to belie any notion of "function," that its "speech-act" has no need to be integrated into a structure and that the *having-been-there* of things is a sufficient principle of speech.

Since antiquity, the "real" has been on History's side; but this was to help it oppose the "lifelike," the "plausible," to oppose the very order of narrative (of imitation or "poetry"). All classical culture lived for centuries on the notion that reality could in no way contaminate verisimilitude; first of all, because verisimilitude is never anything but *opinable*: it is entirely subject to (public) opinion; as Nicole said: "One must not consider things as they are in themselves, nor as they are known to be by one who speaks or writes, but only in relation to what is known of them by those who read or hear"; then, because History was thought to be general, not particular (whence the propensity, in classical texts, to functionalize all details, to produce strong structures and to justify no notation by the mere guarantee of "reality"); finally, because, in verisimilitude, the contrary is never impossible, since notation rests on a majority, but not an absolute, opinion. The motto implicit on the threshold of all classical discourse (subject to the ancient idea of verisimilitude) is: *Esto* (*Let there be, suppose . . .*) "Real," fragmented, interstitial notation, the kind we are dealing with here, renounces this implicit introduction, and it is free of any such postulation that occurs in the structural fabric. Hence, there is a break between the ancient mode of verisimilitude and modern realism; but hence, too, a new verisimilitude is born, which is precisely *realism* (by which we mean any discourse which accepts "speech-acts" justified by their referent alone).

Semiotically, the "concrete detail" is constituted by the *direct*clusion of a referent and a signifier; the signified is expelled from the

sign, and with it, of course, the possibility of developing a *form of the signified*, i.e., narrative structure itself. (Realistic literature is narrative, of course, but that is because its realism is only fragmentary, erratic, confined to "details," and because the most realistic narrative imaginable develops along unrealistic lines.) This is what we might call the *referential illusion*.³ The truth of this illusion is this: eliminated from the realist speech-act as a signified of denotation, the "real" returns to it as a signified of connotation; for just when these details are reputed to *denote* the real directly, all that they do—without saying so—is *signify* it; Flaubert's barometer, Michelet's little door finally say nothing but this: *we are the real*; it is the category of "the real" (and not its contingent contents) which is then signified; in other words, the very absence of the signified, to the advantage of the referent alone, becomes the very signifier of realism: the *reality effect* is produced, the basis of that unavowed verisimilitude which forms the aesthetic of all the standard works of modernity.

This new verisimilitude is very different from the old one, for it is neither a respect for the "laws of the genre" nor even their mask, but proceeds from the intention to degrade the sign's tripartite nature in order to make notation the pure encounter of an object and its expression. The disintegration of the sign—which seems indeed to be modernity's grand affair—is of course present in the realistic enterprise, but in a somewhat regressive manner, since it occurs in the name of a referential plenitude, whereas the goal today is to empty the sign and infinitely to postpone its object so as to challenge, in a radical fashion, the age-old aesthetic of "representation."

FRANCO MORETTI

"The Best Time We Ever Had"†

* * *

In his discussion on the 'romanticism of disillusionment' in the *Theory of the Novel*, Lukàcs explains Frédéric Moreau's 'tendency towards passivity', his 'tendency to avoid outside conflicts and struggles', as the result of 'the soul's being wider and larger than

3. An illusion clearly illustrated by the program Thiers assigned to the historian: "To be simply true, to be what things are and nothing more than that, and nothing except that."

† From *The Way of the World* (London: Verso, 1987). Reprinted by permission of the publisher. In this selection, Moretti uses the failed education of Frédéric Moreau, the hero of Flaubert's *Sentimental Education*, to discuss how Flaubert dismantles the narrative paradigm of the Bildungsroman, which shows the young person learning to strike a compromise between desires and social conventions when he or she makes his entrance into society. His comments illuminate Flaubert's treatment of this paradigm in *Madame Bovary*.

the destinies that life has to offer it'. 'Defeat'—being 'crushed by the brute force of reality'—thereby becomes 'the precondition of subjectivity'; of a subjectivity, needless to say, that no longer intends to objectify itself in the external world, since 'when the interiority is like a cosmos, it is self-sufficient, at rest within itself.'¹

The initial chapters of *Sentimental Education* seem to endorse Lukács's view. If not exactly 'crushed', Frédéric is nonetheless repulsed by a 'world of convention', fraught with delays, misunderstandings, promises not kept. What embitters him most is that nothing decisive ever takes place: in narratological terms, as soon as an event is on the verge of becoming a kernel (univocal, propulsive, irreversible) it lapses once again, for any number of reasons, into a mere satellite in a plot that never takes off. No progress ever seems to be made, especially with Madame Arnoux: and this defeat *sui generis* encourages Frédéric to dream—to transform his interiority into a 'self-sufficient cosmos', one that compensates for the shortcomings of the real cosmos.

But already at the end of the first part of the novel all this suddenly changes: 'He was to inherit!' Frédéric Moreau inherits indeed, and since money, Gobseck had said, 'potentially contains all, and in reality gives all', nothing should hold him back any longer from fulfilling his desires, thereby freeing himself from the substitutive cosmos of his imagination. Yet this, as we know, does not happen. First of all with Madame Arnoux: unlike the long youthful text of 1845 (the so-called *First Sentimental Education*), here the adultery is never 'consummated'. A worn metaphor, but indicative here of a not-so-trivial truth: the real satisfaction of desire is inevitably narrower than its imaginary satisfaction. Any determination is denial, and reality is always determined: amongst its advantages there will never be that *unlimited pliability* of the object of fantasy. If this is what one yearns for, it is better to entrust desire to what Latin grammars describe as the 'hypothetic sentence of impossibility':

'Why was it not the will of Heaven? If we had only met—!'

'Ah! if I had been younger!' she sighed.

'No, but if I had been a little older.'

And they pictured to themselves a life entirely given up to love . . . in which the hours would glide away in a continual outpouring of their own emotions. . . . (*Sentimental Education*, II, 6.)

This longing for a purely hypothetical counter-world directs every move Frédéric makes. We have said that at the beginning of the

1. From György Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. A. Bostock (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp. 112–17.

novel he is frustrated—as were Julien, Lucien, and Rastignac—by the lack of kernels, of turning points in his life in Paris. Now that he has the money to impose them, however, he takes upon himself the opposite task, and does everything he can to hinder, or at least weaken them. Unlike his predecessors, Frédéric *holds back* plot rather than accelerating it. He is the champion of mediation, of compromise: between the Arnoux, between Arnoux and Dambreuse, between Dambreuse and the revolution of 1848. Each time the simplified but relentless sociology of *Sentimental Education* tends to polarize positions, Frédéric is there to reconcile them; each time a character's life seems over, a loan from Frédéric keeps him going. In both the space and time of the novel, in economic as in sentimental or ideological relations, whenever one must choose and therefore separate and exclude, Frédéric steps in to postpone this moment.

Does he do it because he is 'good', as he is told at various points by each of the Arnoux? I do not think so: Frédéric is not a 'beautiful soul', and there is nothing expressly generous about him. What moves him is an uncontrollable aversion towards all things *definite*.² If he therefore 'avoids outside conflicts rather than engaging in them', it is not, as Lukács believes, *because* his soul is 'wider' than the outside world, but rather, and there is quite a difference, *in order to* make it wider. It is a new desire—a desire for 'romanticism' as defined by Carl Schmitt in *Political Romanticism*: 'subjective occasionalism', an ironico-aesthetic appropriation of the existing world, the triumph of 'possibility' over 'reality'.³ All notions very close to those which Pierre Bourdieu—in a sociological analysis of *Sentimental Education* to which the present study owes much—groups under the heading of 'the imaginary', as the 'compossibility of all possibles': precisely what holds together Frédéric's spiritual attitude and practical behavior throughout the novel.⁴

Schmitt and Bourdieu sketch such a rich phenomenology, that many other instances could be mentioned here, from Frédéric's dilettantism to the romantic 'unpoliticality' icily emphasized by the chapters on 1848. But rather than offer an inevitably incomplete summary, let us investigate some of the corollaries of Frédéric's 'romanticism'. To begin with, what is it that has made this spiritual inclination *appealing*? What, on the other hand, has made it *possible*? Finally, how has it affected the structure of the *Bildungsroman*?

2. With great perspicacity Flaubert sets the magic moment of his hero in the first months of 1848, when the power void, and the stunned equilibrium between the different classes and opinions, requires 'representatives' just like Frédéric: who would certainly be elected to Parliament as a candidate of compromise between the divergent factions if, as usual, he did not hesitate so much.

3. Carl Schmitt, *Politische Romantik*, München 1925.

4. Pierre Bourdieu, 'L'invention de la vie d'artiste,' *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 2, 1975.

As for the first question, the answer lies in that growing gap between social development and subjective formation we examined with the help of Simmel. The limitless offer of 'cultural contents' typical of the capitalist metropolis presents the individual with a paradox: to realize a determined identity, thereby fatally renouncing, however, the ever new and varied products of modernity—or to plunge into the great adventure of 'self-estrangement', but at the risk of psychic and spiritual disintegration. One either has to renounce being 'modern', it seems, or renounce being an 'individual'. But thanks to the ironico-aesthetic attitude, the contradiction disappears: on the one hand, the romanticism of fantasy keeps alive all the possibilities of the surrounding world, and even strengthens them beyond measure; on the other hand, since this is an imaginary space and time, which can be reorganized at will, the individual is not forced into that merry-go-round of real identifications which, as was the case with Rameau, would leave him exhausted and in a thousand pieces.⁵

Second question: apart from being desirable or necessary, what has made all this possible? First and foremost, as we have already seen, is the adhesion of modern imagination to the domain of 'having', where money—the *universal* mediator—potentially makes anything available to its possessor. And it is precisely this universality of money that suggests a rejection of Gobseck's formula: money is not important because it 'in reality gives all'—the word 'all' does not have much meaning in reality—but because it 'potentially contains all'. More than to fulfill desires, money enables people to *conceive* them, thereby becoming the paradoxical mainstay of the new idol of interior possibility.

But in order for the latter to assert itself once and for all, in addition to money, something else was needed—youth. The youth of the past hundred years, first portrayed in Frédéric Moreau: *protracted* youth. A fate perhaps inevitable, given the way in which the modern world has shaped this phase of life: for if the individual is granted the shelter of a 'psycho-social moratorium' in which to explore countless possible social roles, and to imagine all the possible future lives open to him—then it is not surprising that, at a certain

5. I should emphasize that this, shall we say, spiritual device, has nothing bizarre or eccentric about it: just as Frédéric, in essence, is a quite average character, so his inner adventure is in no way exceptional. Even more than appealing, as I have defined it above, daydreaming is 'necessary' for modern man—it is the only way he can avoid the 'dilemma of the consumer'—and thus quickly becomes a part of his everyday life. The situation receives its ultimate expression fifty years after Flaubert, with *Ulysses*: there the complex fantasizing of stream of consciousness (with its hidden links to advertising techniques) has become universal, spontaneous, unnoticed, even banal—a perfect counterbalance to a life in which the category of *real* possibility no longer has any place. (I have discussed these developments in more detail in 'The Long Goodbye: *Ulysses* and the End of Liberal Capitalism', in *Signs Taken for Wonders, cit.*, and 'The Spell of Indecision'.)

point, the fascination of experimentation and dreams wins out over that of discovery and choice.

Youth considered as a boundless field of possibility—and this alone is the typical bourgeois idea of youth—paradoxically results in the overturning of its function: rather than a *preparation for something else*, it becomes a *value in itself*, and the individual's greatest desire is to *prolong* it. Rastignac's motto was 'Parvenir!'; Frédéric Moreau's, undoubtedly, is 'Procrastinate!'. If he holds back plot and tries to defuse its kernels, it is precisely to preserve as long as possible that state of *psycho-social indetermination* which, from a training ground for maturity, has become the autonomous and jealously defended *goal* of modern youth.⁶

But if youth only desires to 'be itself', and therefore to preserve itself *as youth*, then there is no longer any real need for the *Bildungsroman*. With its lean and cold lucidity, *Sentimental Education* brings to an end a century of narrative attempts, and its characters who seem so inauthentic, as if they were reciting a role that no longer concerns them; its imitative plot, almost a stitching-together of scraps of previous novels; its dialogues where what was once problematic and alive has become bogged down in the trite certainty of clichés—these are all signs of a literary genre that is dying, of a structure that no longer holds together.

The *Bildungsroman* is over—and it ends, we may add, by returning to its initial problem: to Wilhelm Meister, of whom Frédéric Moreau is none other than a faded avatar. Wilhelm himself, if we think about it, also preferred fantasy to reality, would get caught up in circumstances, held back plot and tried to have everyone take part in it. More than anything, Wilhelm too was a *dilettante*, and in no way wished to *conclude* his 'apprenticeship'. If this is not what happens, it is because the world of *Meister* is not yet truly 'open', and the coercive goodwill of the Society of the Tower forces Wilhelm's 'happiness' on him: a social role, a home, a wife, even a child

6. The closing-in of youth upon itself is pitilessly hammered home in the last page of *Sentimental Education*. Frédéric and Deslauriers, now old, remember an episode from their early adolescence, the visit to the bordello of the Turk: 'what with the great heat, the fear of the unknown, and even the very pleasure of seeing at one glance so many women placed at his disposal, [Frédéric] ran away; and, as Frédéric had the money, Deslauriers was obliged to follow him' (*Sentimental Education*, vol. III, p. 6).

Already here, we may add, money is no longer the 'common whore of mankind' of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, and of Marxian comment: rather than compelling us to fulfill desire, it pushes in the opposite direction (how to choose between 'so many women placed at his disposal?'; moreover, *why* choose?). But most important of all is Frédéric's remark concerning the episode: 'That was the best time we ever had.' These words, with which the novel ends, indicate, in their nostalgia for an experience that did *not take place*, the advent of a notion of youth—'cowardly', Flaubert wrote to George Sand—in which the challenge of novelty has become 'fear of the unknown'. Thus there is no longer any room for growth as an irreversible break from the sheltered world of the first years of life: Frédéric, among other things, is the only protagonist of a *Bildungsroman* who returns to settle down in the home of his childhood.

(which Frédéric too will have with Rosannette, herself a reincarnation of Goethe's Mariane, but who will quickly die, to the ill-disguised relief of his father).

In *Wilhelm Meister*, in other words, there still exists an authority capable of decreeing the end of a youth that would prefer to go on forever. In *Sentimental Education* it seems to have completely vanished, and Frédéric can protract his youth: as always, thanks to money—thanks to the countless drafts that circulate in the novel, demonstrating that by now even *time* can be bought. 'And in return, what do you hope to take?'; 'There's so much time—so why insist?'. So much time, not forever though. The final thirty pages of *Sentimental Education* are all meant to illustrate this simple truth. For at a certain point the bills become due, and the possessions of the Arnoux must be auctioned; in politics the power gap does not last forever, and Sénécal kills Dussardier; Madame Arnoux grows old and her hair, unlike that kept in lockets, turns white, arousing in Frédéric 'disappointment', 'repulsion', and ultimately 'disgust':

In spite of its ironies and paradoxes, romanticism is in a constant position of dependence . . . it unwittingly submits to the nearest and strongest external power. Its supposed superiority over a present that is faced only occasionally is thus subject to a supremely ironic reversal: every form of romanticism is effectively at the mercy of other unromantic tendencies and its supposed sublimity with regard to definitions and decisions is overturned in a servile accompaniment of forces and decisions extraneous to it.⁷

Applied to Frédéric Moreau, the last lines of *Political Romanticism* perhaps ring too harshly, but they nonetheless indicate that inferiority can never truly become 'a cosmos that is self-sufficient and at rest within itself'. In the long run its freedom must be paid for with a subjugation more drastic still, since it is unforeseen, to the laws of reality. So it is with Frédéric's long youth: despite all efforts it ends just the same—and it ends in the *worst* possible way, since he arrives defenseless when his time runs out. A rude awakening for which there is no new day, this youth falls headlong into an *old age* fed only by what were once 'hopes', and are now faded 'memories'. The twenty years in between are dismissed in a few famous, and icy lines ('Il voyagea. Il connut la mélancolie des paquebots . . .'). And yes, the *Bildungsroman* was always hesitant when faced with defining 'maturity': in a certain sense it came into being as a literary genre precisely because the new fascination of youth had blurred that idea, making it hard to put it back into perspective. But it is the first time that maturity appears to be—nothing. A

7. Schmitt, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

void, an empty hole between a somewhat vile youth and an imbecilic old age.

'Et ce fut tout' (*Sentimental Education*, III, 6.)

STEPHEN HEATH

[Provincial Manners in *Madame Bovary*]†

* * *

'Nothing, in fact, has changed at Yonville since the events about to be recorded', announces a narrating voice, presenting Yonville-l'Abbaye just before the arrival of Charles and Emma (II,1). The writing of time in the novel reflects this: history is written into stagnation, there is a feeling of immobility that Leroyer de Chantepie catches too in the fall of 'where I was born, where I have spent my life'. One of the differences between *Madame Bovary* and a novel by Balzac is the absence of dates and other evident historical indications; indeed, from the plans and drafts to the finished novel, Flaubert tended to delete direct chronological markers, leaving a temporality of moments and seasons—'one Sunday morning', 'during the whole winter'—and a sense of repetition and sameness rather than development and transformation. Certainly it is possible nevertheless to establish an approximate chronology: we go from Charles's studies and first marriage in the 1830s, to his marriage to Emma in 1839 (there is some argument for 1838), to her affair with Rodolphe in 1842–3 (the elopement is fixed for 'the fourth of September, a Monday', II,12, a vital detail for dating the novel's action), to her affair with Léon in 1844–6, to her death in March of that last year and the death of Charles soon after, to the final present of the narration in 1856, with Berthe Bovary in the cotton-mill and Homais receiving the *légion d'honneur*. What is then striking about this, however, apart from the gap between the detective work needed for such a reconstruction and the reader's actual awareness of time in the novel, is the avoidance in the main action of 1830 and 1848: the story of Charles and Emma is set between the July revolution and the coming to power of Louis-Philippe and the February revolution and the coming to power of Louis-Napoleon. It is as though the provincial life is held aside from the national history, which then in turn loses its significance, represents no real change; with the present narration in the 1850s—as Flaubert writes his novel—confirming this: nothing has

† From *Gustave Flaubert: Madame Bovary* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1992). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

changed. The tightly enclosed space of the novel also adds to this effect: the action is confined to a couple of villages and a town, with Paris a far-off reference, vague and imaginary, and transport restricted to coaches, horses, foot, no railway, no boats even—save the one in which Emma and Léon are rowed on their ‘honeymoon’ in—where else?—Rouen. Rouen itself, moreover, is given no historical recognition. The fifth French town when Flaubert was writing, it was a flourishing commercial port and the centre of the cotton industry in France, with an industrial working class and slum areas—none of which has more than the barest existence in the novel (only the visit to the half-finished mill, II,5; what Charles sees from the window of his student room, I,1; ‘the noises of the town’, III,3). What anyway could it signify for Flaubert but the fixed present of the bourgeois civilisation? There is no longer any *history*, and the provincial world, its cities included, figures a reality of stasis, a truth that the superficial agitation of Paris and politics merely hides as it blindly pushes forward into more of the same.

‘Nothing, in fact, has changed.’ But then, equally, there *has* been change: the tense of the novel is that of the stifling permanence of the bourgeois, the eternalisation of its mediocrity; its action is that of the establishment of that permanence, bourgeois progress. The monotony of provincial life has its history in these terms, shown through the shifting finances of Flaubert’s characters. Though the world of the novel has its instances of stable wealth and class (the old order of the aristocracy, the Marquis d’Andervilliers; the *rentier* gentleman-farmer, Rodolphe, said to have a private income of ‘*at least fifteen thousand francs*’, II,7), the main impression is one of mobility, money on the move, an economic and social transformation in which a truly middle class is finding itself, adjusting positions, gaining a power through commerce and small finance, with individual winners and losers in the process—Homais and Lheureux succeed, Charles fails. The central social perception of *Madame Bovary* is of exactly this *accomplishment* of the middle class and its consequent existence as all-englobing order and representation of the society it creates; the dominance of industrial and financial capital and its values is accompanied by the development of an extended middle class—the middle classes—and the general elaboration of a social–moral reason, a whole (*petit-*) bourgeois culture. Against which are the marginalised and asocial, those in misery, subject to exploitation, excluded: labourers and servants, women, the deformed—Catherine Leroux, Mère Rollet, Hippolyte, the blind man. Not surprisingly, Homais, paragon of the bourgeois and voice of (its) progress, is at once unable to cure the latter and determined to eradicate him, to put him precisely out of sight. Homais is the social mean, with the blind man its rejected excess,

grotesquely close to Emma, herself a threatening disturbance to the good commerce of society, to its values and order.

It is in its depiction of the movement of social forces and the relation of that movement to money that *Madame Bovary* comes closest in its study of provincial life to the Balzacian model. It is not just that the buying and selling of things and the borrowing and lending of money are a constant activity in the novel, it is that the novel's very action is financial, strongly determined by this activity. No less than five financial failures are presented or reported: (1) the decline of Charles-Denis-Bartholomé Bovary, father of Charles: forced to leave the army in which he was an assistant surgeon-major, he marries a hosier's daughter with a large dowry on which he proceeds to live for two or three years before going unsuccessfully into manufacturing and then farming, ending in much reduced circumstances; (2) the financial disappointment of Charles's first wife, the widow Dubuc, selected for him by his mother because of her reputed fortune, some of which is stolen by her lawyer while the rest was simply a lie ('Monsieur Bovary senior smashed a chair on the floor and accused his wife of ruining their son', I,2); (3) the worsening fortunes of old Rouault, Emma's father, who loses money every year on his farm and finishes up paralysed, unable to do anything for his granddaughter; (4) the collapse of M. Tellier, proprietor of the *Café Français*, which is engineered by Lheureux (and beyond which lies the foreseeable collapse of the widow LeFrançois of the *Lion d'or*, faced with competition from Lheureux's newly established *Favorites du Commerce*, III,11); (5) the ruin of the Bovary household: Charles has some success as an *officier de santé* but the move from Tostes to Yonville is disastrous: Homais undercuts him, and Emma's expenditure traps them both in Lheureux's system of credit, bringing their downfall; when Charles dies, nothing is left, 'a balance of twelve francs seventy-five centimes which paid for Mademoiselle Bovary's journey to her grandmother's' (*ibid*)—Charles's father had speculated in the manufacture of cotton goods, his daughter ends as a worker in a cotton-mill.

In counterpart to these losses in fortune are the two great gains, those of Lheureux and Homais. The first, the happily named merchant-draper, uses capital both as straight investment and as a means of gaining control of local commerce, building up complex networks of debt around competitors who are then forced to sell out. 'Everything was going well for him' (II,14), we are told as Emma lies ill after her abandonment by Roldolphe and Charles signs bills and seeks loans, and by the end of the novel everything is going even better: in addition to the profits from his shop, he wins a good cider contract, has the promise of shares in some peat-works

and, with his new coach service, is nearing the achievement of his ambition to bring 'the whole of the Yonville trade into his hands' (*ibid*). The second, the chemist, has much of the same rapacious obsequiousness and commercial cunning, putting interest over principles ('he sacrificed his dignity to the more serious interests of his business', II,11), flouting regulations (those forbidding him to practise medicine), and showing a keen sense of the new importance of publicity, of the creation of an 'image' (as witness his shop with its coloured jars and gold-lettered statements of the Homais name, its walls covered 'with inscriptions in Italian, round, and copperplate script', II,1; not to mention his self-displaying pieces in the *Fanal de Rouen* and his monographs for the local academy). Just as Lheureux seeks to modernise, so too does Homais, always in the forefront with the latest commercial 'discovery': 'He was the first to bring "cho-ca" and "revalentia" into the Seine-Inférieure; he waxed enthusiastic about Pulvermacher's hydro-electric chains and wore one himself' (III,11). Just as Lheureux prospers while the Bovarys decline, so too does Homais, physically flourishing, healthily reproducing: 'Across the way, the chemist, whom everything conspired to bless, exhibited his hale and hearty brood' (*ibid*).

In this ordinary middle-class, mediocresly *petit-bourgeois* world, it is the *economy* of money that is all-important. There is none of the epic fascination with money as demonic power to be found in Balzac, nothing of the mystery of gold (unless it be, derisively, in Madame Homais's glorious vision of her spouse's chain: 'Madame Homais was entranced by the golden spiral that enveloped him; it redoubled the fervour of her feelings for this man, more swathed than a Scythian, as resplendent as one of the Magi', *ibid*), nothing of Parisian high finance (Lheureux after all is just a minor capitalist swindler, clever enough for Yonville-l'Abbaye). Money here does not *appear*, nothing much changes inasmuch as everything looks the same: 'the draper's shop still waves its two calico streamers in the wind, the chemist's foetuses, like bundles of white tinder, go more and more rotten in their muddy alcohol' (II,1). Triumphant, Homais and Lheureux never spend, only materialise in their goods, their commerce, its language and ideology; Lheureux's retort to the desperate Emma, 'While I slave away like a nigger here, you are off having a good time' (III,6) is not merely a contemptuous (and racist) taunt; it is the reality and value of this world, precisely its *platitude*, everything she despises and ignores. In revolt against the general mediocrity, her middling class, Emma inevitably opposes its economy, is reckless, spendthrift, prodigal, anti-Madame Bovary. Significantly enough, the two other Madame Bovarys, Charles's mother and his first wife, join together against Emma from the start, seeking to bring Charles back into their regime: 'they would

both be at him . . . He oughtn't to eat so much! Why offer drinks to anyone and everyone! Sheer pigheadedness, refusing to wear flannel!' (I,2). Mother Bovary is continually echoing Lheureux and his 'while I slave away' discourse: 'Do you know what your wife needs? . . . manual work!' (II,7); which in turn is the discourse of the trial, the prosecution reproaching Emma with her 'life of luxury'.

Charles and his father both make marriages for money that fail. Charles's second marriage, to Emma, is for love, though he does suppose her father to be comfortably off (the latter gauges that Charles 'wouldn't haggle too much over the dowry', I,3). On her side, Emma marries in the belief of all those words 'which had seemed so beautiful in books' (I,5), of that 'wonderful passion which had hitherto hovered above her like a great bird of rosy plumage in the splendour of a poetic heaven' (I,6). The Bovary household lives from Charles's earnings as a health officer but also, increasingly, from Emma's dowry, the small inheritance when his father dies, and loans. Which is to say that the household lives uneconomically; Charles's adherence to the reasonable mean—'He said *it was quite good enough for the country*' (I,7)—gives way, and from the start, to Emma's extravagance, to the expenditure that infringes those proper standards which his mother unfailingly re-asserts: 'She found her to have a *style above their means*; wood, sugar, candles *went as freely as in some great house*' (*ibid.*). The style is the point, for Emma exists in and through objects; all the things she buys for herself or has bought for her or buys to give away: a map of Paris; a frilled *chemisette* with three gold buttons; little garnet-coloured slippers with ribbons; a blotting pad, writing case and penholder; a pair of big blue glass vases for the mantelpiece; an ivory workbox with a silver thimble; a rug in wool and velvet for Léon; a Gothic prayer stool; a blue cashmere dress; Italian dictionaries and a grammar; a riding habit; a horse; a handsome leg for Hippolyte and then another more everyday one; a riding whip with a silver knob, a cigar case, a scarf and a signet ring, all for Rodolphe; and so on and on, in Emma's constant passion for things—'she groaned over the velvets she did not have' (II,5). Not to have the things is not to have the feelings they represent—unable to have a cradle with pink silk curtains, Emma loses interest in preparations for her baby; unable to 'play at a concert in a short-sleeved velvet gown, lightly caressing the keys of an Erard' (I,9), she loses interest in music—but to have the things is not to be satisfied with the expected feelings either, since any thing only and partially represents desire and cannot in itself, through possession, fulfill it—hence the restlessness and the ceaseless need to have more, spend more. 'In her desire, she confused the sensual pleasures of luxury with the joys of the heart' (*ibid.*), comments the narrating

voice, close enough here to Charles's mother. But another way of putting it, the voice of the narration again, is that 'the mediocrity of her domestic life pushed her to fantasies of luxury' (II,5).

The image of this luxury, the freedom of expense as style, is aristocratic, the ball at La Vaubyessard with all its gratifications and excitements, culminating in the moment when a servant breaks some window-panes to let in air:

L'air du bal était lourd; les lampes pâlissaient. On refluit dans la salle de billard. Un domestique monta sur une chaise et cassa deux vitres; au bruit des éclats de verre, madame Bovary tourna la tête et aperçut dans le jardin, contre les carreaux, des faces de paysans qui regardaient. Alors le souvenir des Bertaux lui arriva. Elle revit la ferme, la mare bourbeuse, son père en blouse sous les pommiers, et elle se revit elle-même, comme autrefois, écrémant avec son doigt les terrines de lait dans la laiterie. Mais, aux fulgurations de l'heure présente, sa vie passée, si nette jusqu'alors, s'évanouissait tout entière, et elle doutait presque de l'avoir vécue. Elle était là; puis autour du bal, il n'y avait plus que de l'ombre, étalée sur tout le reste. Elle mangeait alors une glace au marasquin, qu'elle tenait de la main gauche dans une coquille de vermeil, et fermait à demi les yeux, la cuiller entre les dents. (I,8).

(It was stuffy in the ballroom; the lamps were growing dim. There was a general movement into the billiard-room. A servant climbed up on a chair and broke two window-panes; at the sound of the glass shattering, Madame Bovary turned and caught sight of some peasants in the garden, their faces pressed to the window, watching. She remembered Les Bertaux: she saw the farmhouse, the muddy pond, her father in his smock beneath the apple-trees, and she saw herself as she had once been, her fingers skimming cream from the great bowls of milk in the dairy. But amid the splendours of the present, her own past life, till then so clear, was vanishing entirely, and she almost doubted she had lived it. Here she was; outside of the ball, there was nothing but shadow, spread over everything else. She was eating a maraschino ice, holding it in her left hand in a silver-gilt shell, half-closing her eyes, the spoon between her teeth.)

It is an astonishing passage: Emma loses her past in the electric tension—the *fulgurations*, the sudden lightning flashes—of a present which is real, here indeed she is, and at the same time unreal, this is her fantasy of where she ought to be. Real and unreal, such a present can only be the sensation of a moment and an abrupt cessation of identity: her identity is *not* this, she is just Madame Bo-

vary, farmer's daughter and wife to Charles, but then again *that* is not *her* identity either, her imagination has taken her beyond it. What the ball provokes is a concentrated immediacy of something else: eyes-closed, silver-gilt shell, ice, spoon, a freed luxuriance of being. Emma here, literally, has her head turned, shifts from where she was to where she should be, comes inside to be the object of the gaze of those who look from outside, other to the other she was (and will be)—in her view—as Madame Bovary. Pressing their faces to the window, the peasants recall Emma's own habitual pose, 'standing with her forehead against the window', as Charles finds her at Les Bertaux (I,2). The window is the frame of Emma's dissatisfaction—what, in fact, can she ever see from hers?—and then of her fantasy—she inside looking out beyond, seeking another life. Here, for a moment, she is inside being looked at, finally in her true place, the fantasy realised (hence the feeling of unreality, of loss of identity; nothing real is left, except the moment). Of course, it cannot last (the moment has no past, no future, *fulgurations* anyway are themselves part of Emma's fantasies: 'She thought that love must come all of a sudden with great thunder and flashes of lightning [*avec de grands éclats et des fulgurations*]', II,4), and in a complex and brilliant reversal, Flaubert has her, a page or so later, still inside but now looking out from her bedroom in one wing at the other windows of the château from whose life she is once again separated:

Emma mit un châle sur ses épaules, ouvrit la fenêtre et s'accouda . . .

Le petit jour parut. Elle regarda les fenêtres du château, longuement, tâchant de deviner quelles étaient les chambres de tous ceux qu'elle avait remarqués la veille. Elle aurait voulu savoir leurs existences, y pénétrer, s'y confondre.

Mais elle grelottait de froid. Elle se déshabilla et se blottit entre les draps, contre Charles qui dormait. (I,8)

(Emma put a shawl over her shoulders, opened the window and leaned out . . .)

Day began to break. She looked long at the windows of the château, trying to guess which were the rooms of all the people she had seen in the course of the evening. She would have liked to know about their lives, to enter into them, to merge with them.

But she was shivering with cold. She undressed and snuggled between the sheets against the sleeping Charles.)

No longer in the magic circle of the ball, the chance—dream—time of her invitation running out, Emma is already what she always

was: just Madame Bovary again, her world that of the sleeping Charles, of lawyers' clerks, tax-collectors, merchant-draper, at best the local gentleman. 'Here she was', 'Elle était là', but then, her moment over, 'Here she was at Tostes', 'Elle était à Tostes'—'tedious countryside, imbecile petty bourgeois, mediocrity of life' (I,9).

In revolt against this mediocrity, Emma, in fact, knows only the fantasies of her class, what she derives from its novels and pictures, its imagination of luxury and 'Society', romance and adventure. Her reproach to the men around her is that they do not fit—how could they?—the imagined world of her desire as mediated by the books she reads: '[Charles] couldn't swim, or fence, or fire a pistol, and was unable to explain a riding term she came across in a novel one day' (I,7); Rodolphe, with his man-of-the-world airs, soft leather riding boots, and so on, is a cut above Charles but fails to bring pistols to their assignations, revealing 'a kind of coarseness' (II,10); as for Léon, he is 'incapable of heroism, weak, commonplace, more spineless than a woman, as well as parsimonious and chicken-hearted' (III,6). In revolt, Emma counters parsimoniousness, the economy of her class, with an expenditure that itself merely repeats terms from that same class: class as possession, consumption as value—Lheureux, after all, needs the Emma Bovarys, the customers for what can be marketed as 'style' and 'fashion'. Shown into Maître Guillaumin's dining-room with its porcelain stove, dubious pictures, crystal door-knobs, cactus, and so on, Emma's reaction is immediate: 'this is the sort of dining-room . . . I ought to have' (III,7). Such a version of luxury, with its fetishism of objects, characterises Emma in a specific class assumption of value (the merchant-draper consumes nothing, makes no display; the provincial notary makes precisely the display she also wants), involving, as the novel puts it, the false equation of objects, with feelings, with 'the joys of the heart'.

That last phrase has a context which puts Emma's position in another perspective:

Plus les choses, d'ailleurs, étaient voisines, plus sa pensée s'en détournait. Tout ce qui l'entourait immédiatement, campagne ennuyeuse, petits bourgeois imbéciles, médiocrité de l'existence, lui semblait une exception dans le monde, un hasard particulier où elle se trouvait prise, tandis qu'au delà s'étendait à perte de vue l'immense pays des félicités et des passions. Elle confondait, dans son désir, les sensualités du luxe avec les joies du cœur. (I,9)

(Moreover, the nearer things were to home, the more she turned her thoughts away from them. Everything that made up her immediate surroundings, tedious countryside, imbecile petty bourgeois, mediocrity of life, seemed an exception in the

world, a particular piece of bad luck that had seized on her; while beyond, as far as the eye could see, ranged the vast lands of happinesses and passions. In her desire, she confused the sensual pleasures of luxury with the joys of the heart.)

The passage goes on to indicate the confusion, how for Emma 'the fevers of love and the languid tenderness of love' cannot be separated from the settings and objects that for her they necessarily entail, 'the sparkle of precious stones and shoulder-knots on servants' livery'. At the same time, however, it is not simply a comment on Emma: she may be wrong but she is also right, her perception of her immediate surroundings is that of the book as well; her aspirations mirror her class, are *petit-bourgeois*, but they also disrupt it, are in excess. Emma's romance dreams of lands of happiness and passion may be mediocre, but her desire is real, says something true against the world around her, makes her the exception.

It is significant that in the social context the book details, Emma's ruin by Lheureux does not altogether make sense. Lheureux profits from the Bovarys—Emma buys a great deal and occasionally pays, he gets a house from her cheaply, envisages a nice return from the credit he allows her and the loan he makes to Charles ('his little capital . . . would one day come back to him considerably plumper', II,14; this is Lheureux's sensuality, *his* luxury: the *plumpness* of money)—but there is something not entirely explicable about his pursuit of them to total extinction. Even if we assume that the sale after Charles's death allows him to recover all the money owed, it is still not clear that the hounding of the Bovarys to death was good business, merely a matter of more profit. Lheureux can calculate better than anyone, knows exactly what the Bovarys' resources are and how far he can profitably exploit them; his calculations here, however, are also *against* Emma, in opposition to *her*, as though she were to be destroyed no matter what, pursued as Homais pursues the blind man, also to be destroyed. Emma's fault is to give Madame Bovary a story (compare Madame Homais or Madame Tuvache, contained in their wifely role, no stories), and the story, scandalously, reflects and condemns that existing reality of imbecile petty bourgeois, monotonous and mediocre.

The novel's title is again important: *Madame Bovary Mœurs de province*. Nothing there is Emma's. *Mœurs de province* announces a social vision of the novel and a social reality, the provincial life, of which she is a part; while *Madame Bovary* states her social place, leaves her personally nameless, as Rodolphe reminds her (though as part of his own strategy of possession): 'Madame Bovary! Everybody calls you that! And it isn't your name anyway; it's someone else's' (II,9). 'Madame Bovary', or 'My wife! my wife!' (II,13): Emma is not

only someone else's, she is the mere repetition of a function—the third Madame Bovary in the novel and the second wife. What existence does Emma have? Wife of Charles, lover of Rodolphe, lover of Léon, always *of*. The alternative is fantasy, being the heroine of this or that romantic novel, no alternative at all. But then Emma is the heroine of *this* novel, which is not called *Emma*, some romance ending in marriage, but *Madame Bovary*, beginning with the marriage (note the speed, three short chapters, with which Flaubert gets to the wedding) and telling *that* story. As Proust noted, this novel too might well have been called *L'Education sentimentale* since what it describes is indeed Emma's sentimental education. But Flaubert calls it *Madame Bovary Mœurs de province*: the description of provincial life is the story of a woman who becomes the novel's perspective on that life, forcing it to reveal its mediocrity through the scandal of her story, at the same time that the novel has her in perspective too, as heroine of this novel but also of all those other novels, she steeped in the commonplace imagination of that very same life, herself another example of the general mediocrity.

* * *

DOMINICK LACAPRA

From Trial to Text†

To

Marie-Antoine-Jules Sénard

Member of the Paris Bar

Ex-President of the National Assembly, and

Former Minister of the Interior

Dear and Illustrious Friend,—

Permit me to inscribe your name at the head of this book, and above its dedication: for it is to you, before all, that I owe its publication. By becoming part of your magnificent defence, my work has acquired for myself, as it were, an unexpected authority. Accept, then, here, the homage of my gratitude, which, however great, will never attain to the level of your eloquence and your devotion.

Gustave Flaubert

Was Flaubert altogether serious in his dedication of *Madame Bovary* to Sénard? In the light of his genuine anxiety about the trial, his general views about the Sénards of the world, and the utterly conventional and moralizing nature of Sénard's reading of the novel, Flaubert's gesture would seem to be both serious and—

† From *Madame Bovary on Trial* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982). Copyright © 1982 by Cornell University Press. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

whether intentionally or not—ironic. Paul de Man, in his “substantially new translation” of the novel, has introduced into the dedication six commas more than Flaubert himself used, thereby accentuating one’s doubts about its intention. What is less open to doubt is the fact that Flaubert’s dedication sets up an intertextual relation between the novel and the trial. Standard French editions of *Madame Bovary* include the trial as an appendix to the novel and thereby invite the reader to explore further the problem of their intertextuality. Indeed the supplementary position of the trial on the most literal level of the text induces the reader to extend to it the procedures and critical strategies engaged by the novel. The trial even seems like an anticlimactic scene in the novel itself. A knowledge of Flaubert’s corpus might prompt the assertion that the trial, read in its implausibility as a literary text, goes beyond the measured experimentalism of *Madame Bovary* and approaches the more extreme overtures of *Bouvard and Pécuchet*. Yet it is, paradoxically, the very measured nature of *Madame Bovary*’s experimentalism that makes the conventionalizing and didactic reading at the trial tempting and, indeed, even plausible on at least one level of reader response.

Yet the readers at the trial attempted adamantly to keep their interpretation confined to one level and resisted the ways their own lines of argument, turns of phrase, or suspicions seemed to open other possibilities in reading. I have already suggested that the trial, in its reading or reception of the novel, treated with reference to ordinary crime what was, in significant respects, ideological or political crime. It took as standard deviation from (or, in the case of the defense, as simple conformity to) the norm what tended to place in question the norm’s viability in its larger sociohistorical and literary context. It thus reduced the radical negativity of the novel to manageable proportions either to condemn or to praise its author. On the basis of the trial alone, one may infer the existence of two related conventional expectations concerning what the novel should do: first, it should conform to certain rules or norms common to it and to the larger social world it inhabited—or, if it deviated from them, its deviation should be restricted to standard or recognizable forms; second, it should be narrated from a reliable and coherent perspective itself defined by established rules or norms. My contention that the novel was by contrast motivated by a subversive, scandalous, or “ideologically criminal” impetus that placed in jeopardy the very grounds of the trial must now be supported by an investigation of the novel itself.

In the world of *Madame Bovary* and, by disconcerting implication, in the social world it resembled enough to cause concern, the very opposition between marriage and adultery or between the sa-

cred and the profane threatens to collapse. The terms of the opposition are rendered mutually convertible, and the contextualized norms that they subtend become insubstantial. This is evident with respect to plot and characterization alone, as Sénard himself seemed at times dangerously close to disclosing. Emma attempts to escape the banality of marriage through romance but finds in adultery only the replication of the platitudes of marriage—just as she married to escape the banality of her father's house but found only its deadly repetition. Her lovers in their mediocrity and inability to live up to her dreams have little to distinguish them from her husband. And, as Pinard noted, the priest to whom she goes for spiritual counsel turns out to be as much of a materialist as the pharmacist: he recommends something for her digestion. The final scene between the priest, Bournisien, and the pharmacist, Homais, shows them in a self-parodic act of reconciliation and mutual recognition: the ultimate loving couple, they eat and sleep together over Emma's coffin. In a manner more extreme than the mingling of erotic and religious desire in Emma herself, the final embrace of these two pseudo-antagonists reveals the opposition between the sacred and the profane—like that between marriage and adultery—to be a distinction without a difference.

The manner in which the novel subverted the specific oppositions basic to established familial and religious codes should—once it is pointed out—be fairly obvious. Equally obvious is the general relation of this process to the problem of the narrative subject. For the breakdown of the primary codes regulating religious and familial life increases the lability or uncertainty in the position of the subject. By contrast, the existence of strong and widely accepted codes in these areas of life helps to orient the subject, at times to the point of dogmatic fixation. Less obvious, however, is the precise manner in which the novel's testing or contestation of established categories and conventions is bound up with the problem of the status of the narrative subject.

What may also not be readily apparent is the way in which the problem of the narrative subject is itself related to broader political and ideological issues. This question has, of course, been taken up extensively in the works of recent French theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Julia Kristeva, and Jacques Lacan. A discussion of their thought which, to be useful, would have to attempt a delineation of the complex network of similarities and differences that link their initiatives, would be out of place here. Suffice it to say that the "*procès*" of the subject, involving its "decentering" and the entire matter of its constitution, engages a vast range of modern sociopolitical and cultural concerns. Most evident is the issue

of the "bourgeois" individual who is presumed to have full moral and legal responsibility in his contractual relations with others. But, even more broadly, there is the problem of the autonomy of the individual subject, his relation to language and to social norms, and the extent to which his "liability" is limited by forces not entirely within his control. That this problem affects even "revolutionary" thought is abundantly documented in the works of Sartre, and it is one reason why he places such great emphasis upon the putative "passivity" or "pithiatism" of Flaubert in *L'Idiot de la famille*. The radical questioning or practical dislocation of the solid subject of judgment and action will, at the very least, force the rethinking of an interrelated set of assumptions basic to modern thought and behavior on levels that may even be, in certain respects, militantly opposed to one another. In these senses, the problem of the narrative subject in *Madame Bovary* has ideological dimensions that only narrow formalistic preconceptions can lead one to ignore.

At the trial itself, the prosecutor was manifestly disturbed by the absence of a clear and consistent moral principle, embodied in the author-narrator or in a character, by virtue of which Emma might be condemned. The novel seemed to depart from a convention shared by traditional narration in fiction and self-understanding in social life: the existence of a reliable center of value and judgment which integrated various aspects of experience in an intelligible and secure manner. Yet the way the novel departed from this conventional expectation is, as I have intimated, a moot issue even at the present time. Because this issue is crucial to one's comprehension of both the novel and the trial—especially with respect to the fashion in which the use of language in the novel constituted a specific mode of "ideological" crime—I shall now turn to an extended treatment of it and the ways in which it has been handled in recent criticism of Flaubert.

Let us start with the views of Hans Robert Jauss. In his elaboration of an aesthetics of reception, Jauss has pointed to the importance of Flaubert's trial and raised the question of its relation to the nature of the novel. Jauss locates the novel's disruptive "stylistic" change in its combination of impersonal, impassive narration with *erlebte Rede* (or *style indirect libre*), and he indicates certain of its effects on the reader. Both because they pinpoint significant issues and because they leave others indeterminate, Jauss's observations deserve to be quoted at length. The positive suggestions and the open questions of Jauss's account will preoccupy us in our own investigation of the ways in which the novel triggered processes whose effects made themselves felt at the trial but whose nature the readers at the trial did not, and perhaps could not, explicate.

The new literary form which forced Flaubert's readers to an unfamiliar perception of the "worn-out fable" [the tale of adultery in the provinces] was the principle of impersonal (or uninvolved) narration in conjunction with the so-called "*erlebte Rede*," a stylistic device which Flaubert handled like a virtuoso and with a consistent perspective. What is meant by this can be seen in a description which the prosecuting attorney Pinard claimed in his indictment was immoral in the highest degree. In the novel it follows Emma's first "misstep" and tells how she looked at herself in a mirror:

En s'apercevant dans la glace, elle s'étonna de son visage. Jamais elle n'avait eu les yeux si grands, si noirs, ni d'une telle profondeur. Quelque chose de subtil épandu sur sa personne la transfigurait.

Elle se répétait: J'ai un amant! un amant! se délectant a cette idée comme à celle d'une autre puberté qui lui serait survenue. *Elle allait donc enfin posséder ces plaisirs de l'amour, cette fièvre de bonheur dont elle avait désespéré. Elle entrait dans quelque chose de merveilleux, où tout serait passion, extase, délire. . . .*

[But when she saw herself in the mirror she wondered at her face. Never had her eyes been so large, so black, nor so deep. Something subtle about her being transfigured her.

She repeated: "I have a lover! a lover!" delighting at the idea as if a second puberty had come to her. So at last she was to know those joys of love, that fever of happiness of which she had despaired! She was entering upon a marvelous world where all would be passion, ecstasy, delirium. De Man, 117]

The prosecuting attorney regarded the last sentences as an objective description which included the judgment of the narrator and was upset over this "glorification of adultery" which he considered to be even more dangerous and immoral than the misstep itself. In this Flaubert's accuser fell victim to an error as the defense immediately pointed out. The incriminating sentences are not an objective determination of the narrator, which the reader can believe, but a subjective opinion of a person characterized by her feelings that are formed from novels. The scientific device consists in revealing the inner thoughts of this person without the signals of direct statement (*Je vais donc enfin posséder . . .*).¹

1. Hans Robert Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," *New Literary History* II, no. 1 (1970), 34-35.

Let us interrupt Jauss briefly here to note that he locates the essence of the free indirect style in the narratorial revelation of the “subjective opinion” or “inner thoughts” of a character without the use of the “signals of direct statement.” I shall raise certain questions about this prevalent view at a later point. Jauss himself is especially concerned with the effect of stylistic innovation on the reader.

The effect is that the reader must decide for himself whether he should accept this sentence as a true statement or as an opinion characteristic of this person. . . . The consternating effect of the formal innovation in Flaubert’s narrative style was obvious at the trial: the impersonal narrative form forces his readers not only to perceive things differently—“photographically exact” according to the judgment of the time—but it also forced them into an alienating insecurity about their judgment. Since the new stylistic device broke with an old novelistic convention—unequivocal description and well-founded moral judgment about the characters—*Madame Bovary* could radicalize or raise questions of life, which during the trial caused the original motive for the accusation, alleged lasciviousness, to recede into the background.²

Jauss’s useful commentary situates issues that seemed to register, if at all, in a largely displaced way at the trial, within the larger context of a critical reading of the novel. How does the so-called “free indirect style” function, and how is it related to the impersonal or uninvolved narration with which Jauss, somewhat curiously, seems to amalgamate it? What is the larger narrative and historical setting for the extreme problematization of existing norms and oppositions in *Madame Bovary*? How precisely, and with what implications, does *Madame Bovary* “radicalize or raise questions of life” or, as Jauss also puts it, “jolt the reader out of the belief that his moral judgment is self-evident and reopen the long-closed question of public morals”³? What in general are the relations among symptomatic, critical, and transformative effects in the way the novel comes to terms with its social and literary contexts? This complex of questions has of course been broached in a forceful manner by the interpretation offered by Jean-Paul Sartre in *L’Idiot de la famille*.

My own emphases will differ significantly from those of Jauss or Sartre, and it may be useful to anticipate them here. The disorienting nature of the novel, having both critical and more uncanny effects, derives from what I shall call its double writing or dual style:

2. *Ibid.*, 35.

3. *Ibid.*, 36.

its ability to employ or refer to more traditional elements on one level and to sound them out or play havoc with them on other levels. Flaubert's "free indirect style" itself cannot be seen exclusively as a "free" technique to report indirectly a character's "subjective opinion" or "inner thought." It is itself a dual mode involving both proximity and distance—empathy and irony—in the relation of the narrator to the character or narrated object. This variable mingling of character and narrator, often in terms of a character's thoughts or feelings expressed in part through the narrator's language—with the inflexions in empathy and irony this makes possible—must be seen in the context of shifts or modulations in narrative perspective or voice. These shifts seem natural and are glossed over by technical devices of transition which easily make them escape notice. But they can be drastic, and they are disconcerting even if they pass unnoticed on a conscious level. They create an indeterminacy of narrative voice that unsettles the moral security of the reader and renders decisive judgment about characters or story difficult to attain. They also raise the question of the relation between unifying and "decentering" forces in the position(s) of the narrating subject—among which impersonal or uninvolved narration is one relatively extreme position which cannot be identified with "free indirect style."

These variations in narrative perspective or position are related to other modes of "doubleness" (indeed multiplicity) in the novel whereby more conventional expectations are held out only to be critically tested and at times strangely dislocated. Here one has the way *Madame Bovary* is—or at least simulates—a "traditional" novel on one level and frustrates more conventional expectations on other levels. It invites conventional readings or (when autonomized) misreadings, such as those at the trial, only to reveal the limitations of those readings through processes engaged by the text. It is a novel on the very threshold between the conventional and the experimental—tradition and critique—and thus elicits responses (including the desire to read it simply as a story) which Flaubert's later novels, as well as novels inspired by his work, render less plausible if not gratuitous. *Madame Bovary* invites the kind of reading that *Bouvard and Pécuchet* manifestly repels or rewards with near total boredom. For while *Madame Bovary* is liminal, *Bouvard and Pécuchet* tends to be insistently beyond the fringe. It would probably never be brought to trial because its critical and disquieting effects would fail to register even on a subliminal level for the average reader, in part because the storyline that initially engages attention and emotional investment is so very thin, at least in conventional terms. It is an acquired taste, while *Madame Bovary* continues to be assigned in high schools and sold in railway stations or airports.

But a problem of the greatest difficulty which *Madame Bovary* poses to the reader is that of the relationship among the symptomatic (or reinforcing), the critical, and textual processes or movements not fully contained by these categories—processes Flaubert referred to as *l'indisable* (the unsayable). I have insisted that the trial resisted, repressed, or displaced the ways in which the novel constituted political or ideological crime. But it would be equally misleading to ignore the complex and at times intractable relations among the symptomatic elements of the text upon which Sartre insists, the critical effects that I have stressed, and the more uncanny or undecidable features which are significant without being of exclusive importance.

Another problem the novel raises is that of the relations between its textual processes and the more manifest intentions or projects of its author-writer. Before proceeding further in this respect, it may prove useful to distinguish among the roles of author, writer, and narrator, for the name "Flaubert" can be used to refer to all three roles. These distinctions tend inevitably to be blurred, especially when the narrator is neither a character nor defined as a distinctive or easily identifiable personality in the text. Yet a minimal note of caution is struck by the recognition that these roles are different aspects of the same "social individual" but that they are themselves not simply identical to one another. Indeed their relationship poses a problem. At the trial, both the prosecution and the defense tended simply to identify them with an ease and lack of self-consciousness that indicated the conventional nature of the identification. The prosecutor attributed not only the role of narrator but everything conveyed in the narration, including the contents of passages in "free indirect style," to authorial intention in the delimited sense of Flaubert's own authorial view or "voice." The defense attorney also identified the author with the narrator but insisted upon a differentiation between characters and author-narrator, and he, in at least a restricted fashion, noted the role of irony in the text. But he proceeded to construct a consistent moral position and identity for the narrator by piecing together various elements taken from Flaubert's life, the putative testimony of character witnesses, and fragments from the novel. It may further be observed that Sartre, with a more explicit awareness of what he is doing, insists on reading the text as an expression of its author's voice or at least of his profoundly "lived" if at times unarticulated intentions or projects.

The understanding of the relation among author, writer, and narrator as forming an overt or covert "expressive totality" is misleading, notably in the case of someone like Flaubert. It simply ignores crucial dimensions of his narrative practice, especially the nature of the "free indirect style" and its relations to other aspects of narra-

tion such as impersonality. This question of course did not arise at the trial. It is significant that it also does not arise in Sartre's *Idiot*. Sartre's insistence upon the relation of author and text is, I think, valid insofar as one attempts to relate life and writing and to attribute importance to personal responsibility in the act of writing. It was, one may observe, Flaubert as author of the text who was placed on trial. Yet the concept of author, as Foucault has convincingly argued, cannot be taken as an unproblematic center of interpretation.⁴ It is in certain ways a historically specific concept with links to juridical, political, and cultural dimensions of the larger society. To the extent that the concept of author implies full authority or mastery over the workings of the text, it and the ambitions it signifies are resisted by the role of "writer." For the writer is always situated within a language and a history whose resources he does not entirely control. Even if one stops short of the more extreme critiques of "humanism" and anthropocentric interpretation, one may argue that the situation of the writer limits—but does not eliminate—the liability of the author and renders problematic—but not simply irrelevant—the relation between projects or intentions and what the text may be argued to do or to disclose. The liability of the writer-author is not total but it is considerable, and his intentions are essential in the estimation of his responsibility for what he does, even if those intentions do not entirely master writing and its effects.

The concept of narrator is situated more clearly as a component of the text. The narrator is in a sense a function of the writer's narrative practice which the text puts into play to bring about certain effects. The extent to which the narrator is a unified or personal presence, integrating various narrative perspectives or voices, varies with texts. One of the conventions of historical writing and at times of more traditional novels is that the narrator speak only in the author's voice or render the status of hypothetical statements altogether explicit. But one of the obvious freedoms of fiction is that the narrator need not be the mouthpiece of the author, and, as we shall see, one may raise certain questions about an absolute dichotomy between author-narrator and narrated object in historiography itself. A dictum of Flaubert's own "impersonal" style was that a work not be a *déversoir* (drainpipe) for its author, and while this dictum was qualified by the empathetic-ironic modulations of the "free indirect style" and by direct intrusions whose force is a function of their rarity, it was never simply dispensed with.

In summary form, one might suggest that, in a fictional text, the author is the role-specific person to whom responsibility is im-

4. Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in Donald F. Bouchard, ed., *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 113–38.

puted; the narrator is the envoy to the imaginary or the delegate of the "social individual" in the text; and the writer is more of a threshold phenomenon, mediating and supplementing author and narrator with reference to the complex social individual and his or her relation to the writing process. Writing in the literal sense is one activity or practice of the social individual. Authorship is a role in which one attempts to control, and benefit from or be responsible for, the writing process. (It is one modality of what Freud termed the "ego" as executive agency of the person. Like the ego, it may be the object of illusory projections, notably the belief in total mastery of, and absolute responsibility for, the writing process or the workings of language.) And the narrator is situated in the text as a function of the narrative practice in part controlled by the author but also subject to processes he or she may not be entirely conscious of or fully master. On the narratorial level, "Flaubert" becomes a specular name or "*imago du nom propre*"—and it is this more imaginary persona to whom we often refer in discussing the novels or stories. Finally, the "social individual" is not simply the person designated by the mark of identity that is the proper name. He or she is the site where a scene is staged involving a more or less forceful desire for identity and heterogeneous tendencies, among which are various "roles."

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JONATHAN D. CULLER

From Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty†

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The most basic feature of irony is perhaps its dual structure: it presupposes two orders which are in contrast with one another and in whose contrast lies whatever value the form can generate. Since our most pervasive dualism, or at least that which is thought most worthy of attention and productive of meaning, is one of appearance and reality, we tend to cast suspected ironies into that mould. An ironic statement has a literal meaning, but that meaning is only semblance and the true proposition is hidden and must be reconstructed. Indeed, it is the incongruity of the literal meaning, the perception of it as semblance, which leads us to identify a possible

† From *Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1974, rev. 1985). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

irony and seek the hidden reality. Situational irony, as opposed to verbal irony, relies even more obviously on this particular structure: pride goeth before a fall; the order postulated by the proud protagonist is revealed as mere semblance when he falls into the contrary order of poetic justice. The proleptic assertion of one order is undermined by consequences which we feel are 'appropriate' in that they derive from another, though not necessarily preferable, order.

Situational or dramatic irony is thus a device of cohesion, which knits together incidents and gives them a meaning by relating them to a law of the world. The irony of Charles encouraging Emma's relationships with Rodolphe and Léon gives more shape to the plot of *Madame Bovary* than it might otherwise have had, and the irony of the Blind Man's appearance at three crucial moments in Emma's life and the implicit commentary provided by his songs and actions gives a metaphorical neatness to her fate. But generally such gross dramatic ironies play only a minor role in Flaubert's novels, and in *L'Education sentimentale* and *Bouvard et Pécuchet* the order which situational irony proposes—the irony of dreams or projects failing in appropriate ways—seems little more than that of a general negative fate: human projects are doomed to systematic failure.

It is not difficult to understand why this should be so. Situational irony cuts rather too neat a figure and implies, even if its message be discouraging, a fundamentally predictable and orderly world. It is a mode of existential recuperation frequently used in daily life to temper disappointment: 'that's just what would happen', we say when it begins to rain just as we start a picnic lunch, suggesting that nature is not wholly indifferent to us but acts in accordance with an order which might be grasped. And thus when Balzac has Grandet expire from the effort of attempting to seize the priest's gold cross, or Valérie Marneffe die 'bien punie par où elle a péché', the world is rendered more orderly and intelligible by these dramatic ironies than if they had been struck down in some irrelevant and haphazard way. Such coherence is not one of Flaubert's goals, and he shows a consequent preference for verbal rather than situational irony.

What makes verbal irony an especially fascinating problem for anyone concerned with the strategies of reading is that no sentence is ironic *per se*. Sarcasm may contain internal inconsistencies which make its purport quite obvious, but for a sentence to be properly ironic it must be possible to imagine some group of readers taking it quite literally, otherwise there is no contrast between apparent and assumed meaning and no space of ironic play. The perception of irony thus depends upon a set of expectations which enable the reader to sense the incongruity or *invraisemblance* of literal or ap-

parent meanings and to construct an alternative ironic meaning which accords with the *vraisemblance* which he has established for the text. In ordinary conversation these expectations are drawn from shared knowledge of external circumstances: knowing both George and Harry one can decide that what George has just said about Harry does not accord with the text of justifiable attitudes towards Harry and that therefore it must be taken ironically; but in the case of literature one's expectations depend on an even more complex sum of cultural and literary experience.

When Flaubert writes that during her illness Emma had a vision of heavenly bliss and purity to which she resolved to aspire, his language does not itself offer decisive indications of irony:

Elle voulut devenir une sainte. Elle acheta des chapelets, elle porta des amulettes; elle souhaitait avoir dans sa chambre, au chevet de sa couche, un reliquaire enchâssé d'émeraudes, pour le baiser tous les soirs (I, 647).¹

Our perception of irony depends on a series of cultural norms which we assume we share with the narrator. One does not simply decide to become a saint, as one might decide to become a nurse or to take up the piano; and if saintliness were the proper object of a decision, the way to become a saint would not be to purchase the equipment. Moreover, our model of sainthood presumably clashes with the concrete form that Emma's desire takes: emeralds on a relic box do not ensure the progress of the soul, nor does the self-indulgence of the desire to have it at the head of one's bed in order to kiss it from time to time.

Thus irony seems to depend, in the first instance, on the referentiality of the text: we must assume that it refers to a world with which we are familiar; if it were fantasy or fairytale, or if it concerned a primitive tribe in Borneo, we would have no standards by which to judge actions as foolish and self-indulgent unless the text itself proposed these judgments. It is no doubt for this reason that the novel has been thought the form most propitious to irony. Referring us constantly to a known world, it makes relevant our models of behaviour and enables us to detect the foolishness of apparent meanings.

But even at this initial stage there is a dialectic between text and world, for our sense of irony in this passage is strengthened, perhaps even provoked, by the fact that we expect Emma to be a fool-

1. 'She wanted to become a saint. She bought rosaries, she wore amulets; she wanted to have in her room, at the head of her bed, a reliquary set in emeralds to kiss every evening.' This passage appears on page 171 of this Norton Critical Edition. In these citations from the French original, as in all following citations in French, Culler is using the edition of Flaubert's novel that appeared in volume 1 of Gustave Flaubert, *Oeuvres* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1964).

ish and self-indulgent woman. Were this not the case we should probably pass easily over the passage in question; but in fact we can link it up with other reports on her thought and conduct. When she finds that despite her prayers 'aucune délectation ne descendait des cieux' she draws from that failure and her continued sacrifice an image of herself:

Emma se comparait à ces grandes dames d'autrefois, dont elle avait rêvé la gloire sur un portrait de La Vallière, et qui, traînant avec tant de majesté la queue chamarrée de leurs longues robes, se retiraient en des solitudes pour y répandre aux pieds du Christ toutes les larmes d'un coeur que l'existence blessait (I, 647).²

Her vision dwells not on the piety and self-sacrifice of a convent life but on the embroidered train of the long gown in which she might majestically move along corridors. Such analogues help to confirm our perception of irony.

Yet clearly our knowledge of the world and our knowledge of the world of the novel do not in themselves suffice to account for the discovery of irony. Those factors might remain constant, but if the text itself undertook to formulate disparagement of Emma's desires, then there would be no discrepancy between apparent and assumed meaning. We might still detect a situational irony in the neatness with which sexual ambitions become religious, but there would be no verbal irony. While we need not actually find in the verbal surface an assertion which runs counter to what our empirical knowledge would lead us to assert, we must at least detect, in the apparent disinterestedness of the text, a failure to assert what we take to be the appropriate judgment.

Moreover, and this is the final factor in the perception of irony, we must in our reading have formed impressions of a kind of narrative *vraisemblance*, of the way in which the text habitually operates, so that we can determine whether the text is actually being ironic or whether, on the contrary, it is describing without irony projects on which we, in our superior wisdom, can pass ironic judgment. In the latter case, we would say that it is ironic that Emma should be described in this way but not that the text itself was ironic.

It would seem, then, that the perception of irony depends on four different factors which are rather too easily grouped together under the ambiguous heading of 'context': our models of human behaviour which provoke judgments of what the text presents, our

2. 'Emma compared herself to those great ladies of yesteryear, whose glory she had dreamed about over a portrait by La Vallière, and who, trailing so majestically the elaborate trains of their long dresses, retired from society to spill at Christ's feet all the tears of a spirit that life had wounded.' [See p. 172.]

expectations about the world of the novel which suggest how details concerning actions or characters are to be interpreted and thus help give us something to judge, the apparent assertions which the sentences in question make and which provide material that we find incongruous and recuperate as irony, and finally our sense of the habitual procedures of the text which provides a justification for ironic reading and reassures us that we are only participating in that play to which the text invites us. The nature of these various determinants of irony indicates only too clearly the freedom and anxiety we make ours when we call a text ironic, for at the very moment when we propose that a text means something other than what it appears to say we introduce, as hermeneutic devices that will lead us to the truth of the text, models which are primarily to be defined as our expectations about the text and the world. Irony, the cynic might say, is the ultimate form of recuperation, whereby we ensure that the text says only what we desire to hear; but one might also turn that definition around and, focusing on its less cynical face, say that in calling a text ironic we indicate our desire to avoid premature foreclosure, to allow the text to work on us as fully as it can, to grant it the status of sacred words which are presumed to contain at some level, however deep, the answers which we might seek. In other words, it is precisely because the procedures for identifying and reading irony require the active participation of the reader that the ironic text displays that negative capability which is reputedly the feature of the greatest works.

One can see, then, that while irony as an attitude of mind involves a relatively simple dialectic of freedom and anxiety—the subject trying to secure his freedom by becoming a new subject that judges himself as object—the irony of a text offers a more complex dialectic: the mind does not simply judge itself and judge itself judging itself; it must judge the text against expectations which result from judging the text and must judge itself judging the text against those expectations. The intervention of the work itself as both subject and object is what adds new complications to the ironic process; for what W. H. Auden says of all ‘real books’ applies especially to the ironic text: it reads us, forcing us as we explore those hidden depths which we have decided exist to wonder whether our searchlights are in fact projectors and what it is in us that might enable us to make such a distinction. Irony, we might say, frees the writer, but, insofar as it gives his work the character of a sacred and written text, it frees the reader only by chaining him to the problems of his own subjectivity.

A single trivial but typical example will illustrate the involuted and anxious nature of ironic reading. Having failed his first medical exam, Charles set to work, learned all the questions by heart, and

passed on the second attempt with a reasonable mark. 'Quel beau jour pour sa mère! On donna un grand dîner' (I, 578). That full stop ends the paragraph; the next passes on to Charles' future.

The irony of the first sentence is easily identified: our cultural models enable us to understand a mother's pride but still make it ironic for the mother rather than the son to be pleased; and we are prepared for such a reading by the stress the text has laid on her role in organizing his life. Moreover, the exclamation mark calls the sentence to our attention as potentially ironic. It is rather the second sentence which enables one to experience the antinomies of irony.

Suppose that one does wish to take it as an ironic comment on the festivities, suggesting, by its brevity and flatness, that they were indeed mediocre or at least provoked by a mediocre occasion. How does one attain and justify such a reading? Our models of human behaviour are not of much use, as they tell us that dinners are appropriate responses to such events, though they may also tell us something of the awkwardness that so often attends celebrations. We must rely, rather, on our expectations about the world of the novel and try to imagine 'un grand dîner' involving these characters. The family, after all, is not a happy one, and festivities involving the braggart father, the shrewish and over-protective mother, and the lumpish son might have left much to be desired. But, alternatively, we might stress the presumed elaborateness of the festivities in contrast with Charles' mediocre success and try to find irony there. And the existence of those alternatives indicates what shaky ground we stand on: is the dinner itself mediocre or is it an excessive response to a mediocre occasion? Some such hypothesis, some imaginative filling-in of the scene, is required for the perception of irony, but it seems strangely unimportant which scene one constructs. If this be true, and I think that it is, then our response appears to be governed not by the empirical content of our expectations—not, that is to say by a firm and detailed sense of how these characters would behave—but by a formal expectation, derived, shall we say, from our sense of the function of earlier descriptions of Charles; that mediocrity and foolishness are to be the ultimate *signifiés* of any sequence concerning Charles and his family. Such a view, if openly stated, appears highly problematic, but it would seem to underlie and make possible the perception of irony.

Having gone that far, there seem two obvious questions that one must ask. First of all, from what perspective, on what grounds, can one pass ironic judgment on a dinner held to celebrate success in an examination? What values is one proposing in so doing, and are these values not so eccentric that one ought to hesitate before at-

tributing them to the text? This question finds no easy or adequate reply, and the very difficulty of stating in clear and acceptable terms the grounds of one's judgment must intensify a self-conscious uneasiness. Secondly, is this imaginative filling-in an appropriate response to a text which deliberately remains silent, telling us no more about the dinner than that it was 'grand'? Our sense that 'How many children had Lady Macbeth?' is an illegitimate question should make us doubtful of the propriety of guessing what the dinner was like. Awareness of the danger of substituting a world for the text makes the process of ironic reading even more self-conscious and problematic.

And yet, and yet, the brevity and silence of the sentence looms before us, demanding, especially now that we have dwelt on it, some kind of response, some naming of its effect. Moving from world to text we might try to justify a perception of irony with the thought that the phonetic ugliness of the line must bear some meaning. The assonance of vowels which are similar enough to echo one another but different enough to avoid harmony—'on donna' and 'donna un grand'—and the awkward juncture between 'donna' and 'un' can be read as a grunting commentary.³ Such a sentence must have a deflating effect. But if we look on that argument with a critical eye we can immediately see that it depends either on an assumption about the function of sound patterns in novels which we would be hard put to defend in general terms, or, if we wish to make no claims about novels in general, on notions of Flaubert's craftsmanship and its relation to his intentions: Flaubert would not have made this line phonetically ugly unless he wished it to be ironic. Whatever encouragement we might draw from such an hypothesis, it does not provide very firm ground on which to base a reading.

Indeed, the determining consideration might seem to be that once we have raised the question of irony we cannot easily abandon it without making the sentence utterly devoid of interest and denying the existence of that detachment which we have been so anxiously and, in this case, so verbosely exercising. Or, to approach the problem from a different angle, one might say that the only convincing arguments against the irony of a particular sentence are those which show that such irony would not be consonant with the world of the novel and the habitual procedures of the text; and hence, when we rely on our expectations about the text and its world in order to produce a presumed irony, we have nothing

3. A broad phonetic transcription makes clear the relationships between vowels: /ɔ̃ dɔ̃na œ gra dine/. Note the presence of three nasal vowels in close proximity.

against which to judge that presumption except our own annoyance at the indeterminacy and shakiness of our own interpretive procedures. And since these procedures, the moves by which we distance ourselves from the language of the text and try to see it in a new light across that distance, are what constitute irony, we have in effect made the sentence ironic and experienced the freedom and alienation which irony produces. To dismiss the sentence and our own critical labours as futile and uninteresting does not deny irony because a sentence which so exercises us without yielding positive results is still, and precisely for that reason, highly ironic.

Beyond a certain stage one has no defence against the thought of irony; it invades one, as the expectation that the text will be ironic becomes the dominant consideration and produces that mode of detached questioning which is both exhilarating and demoralizing. But this is the end rather than the beginning of experience; one is led to it by more substantial and tangible ironies which are made obvious by a modicum of cultural knowledge. One should look briefly at some of these ironies which can be named and defended before considering once again the vertiginous uncertainties into which one is lured by expectations of irony.

The clearest ironies in Flaubert are perhaps those which deflate the pretensions of characters, either by signal departures from our models of human conduct or else by the description of illusions which contrast with realities announced by the text. Coming back in an exalted mood from his first dinner with the Arnoux, Frédéric, in a moment of epiphany on the Pont-Neuf, feels awakening powers and asks himself whether he should become a great painter or a great poet: 'il se décida pour la peinture, car les exigences de ce métier le rapprocheraient de Mme Arnoux. Il avait donc trouvé sa vocation! Le but de son existence était clair maintenant, et l'avenir infaillible' (II, 26). Even without knowledge of Frédéric one can identify that irony which undermines a thought-process notable for its lack of rigour by presenting it in logical terms. Slightly different cultural models make Léon's opinion about the best name for Emma's child an object of irony: 'M. Léon . . . is surprised that you don't choose Madeleine, which is exceedingly fashionable just now' (I, 604). And our notions of human behaviour enable us to identify irony when Frédéric 'wished for a serious illness, hoping in that way to interest her' (II, 33). Somewhat more interesting are ironies which rely on our sense of the incongruity of certain juxtapositions. 'On discutait sur l'immortalité de l'âme, on faisait des parallèles entre les professeurs' (II, 28), or 'Ce qui l'inquiétait principalement, c'était la frontière du Rhin. Il prétendait se connaître en artillerie, et se faisait habiller par le tailleur de l'Ecole polytechnique' (II, 29). Such exam-

ples could be multiplied almost indefinitely: Emma 'avait envie de faire des voyages ou de retourner vivre à son couvent. Elle souhaitait à la fois mourir et habiter Paris' (I, 594).⁴ Sentences which juxtapose and pretend to knit together items which our notions of appropriate human responses and behaviour render incongruous are perhaps the most frequent devices of Flaubert's irony.

Often, however, the contrast on which the irony is based comes less from our own knowledge of the world than from inconsistencies in the text itself which presents both a reality and an illusion. When Frédéric accompanies Mme Arnoux on an errand,

'le temps était froid, et un lourd brouillard, estompant la façade des maisons, puait dans l'air. Frédéric le humait avec délices . . . A cause du pavé glissant ils oscillaient un peu; il lui semblait qu'ils étaient tous les deux comme bercés par le vent, au milieu d'un nuage' (II, 32-3).⁵

In other cases the contrasting items may be separated by larger stretches of text, but the scrupulous and attentive reader will have little difficulty in noting, shall we say, Frédéric's changing perceptions of Rosanette and Emma's of Charles.⁶ However, the ironies he discovers, at least in the more interesting cases, may depend less on explicit contrasts which enable him to distinguish unequivocally between an appearance and a reality than on a general contrast between modes of discourse. Our experience of the novels gives us a sense of the various codes in which thoughts and events may be rendered, and we quickly come to identify the appearance of one of these codes with irony. As soon as we feel confident of our ability to recognize and categorize a particular type of discourse, that discourse comes to be read as if it were being quoted or displayed by the text with a modicum of distance; and as we accept that distance in sighing 'oh, more of that sort of thing', we undertake an ironic reading.

Madame Bovary is exceptional in that an early chapter devoted to Emma's convent education and its extracurricular accompaniments

4. 'He opted for painting, since the demands of that profession would bring him closer to Mme Arnoux. He had, therefore, discovered his calling. The goal of his existence was now clear and the future assured.'

'There was discussion of the immortality of the soul; comparisons were made between professors.'

'He was primarily concerned about the Rhineland frontier. He claimed a knowledge of artillery and went to the tailor of the Ecole Polytechnique.'

'longed to travel or to go back to live in her convent. She desired both to die and to live in Paris.'

5. 'It was cold and the air reeked of a heavy fog which obscured the house-fronts. Frédéric inhaled it with delight . . . Since the pavement was slippery they swayed a bit, and it seemed to him as if the wind were rocking them both in the midst of a cloud.'

6. Cf. Sherrington, *Three Novels by Flaubert* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), pp. 92-96, 100-109, 117-19, 239-46, and 249-315 *passim*.

sketches for us the main features of the principal code. Attracted to the concrete expressions of a vague sentimentality, Emma accepts religion insofar as its metaphors are sexual or pathetic and peoples her mind with particularized novelistic images of amorous adventure:

Ce n'étaient qu'amours, amants, amantes, dames persécutées s'évanouissant dans des pavillons solitaires, postillons qu'on tue à tous les relais, chevaux qu'on crève à toutes les pages, forêts sombres, troubles du coeur, serments, sanglots, larmes et baisers, nacelles au clair de lune, rossignols dans les bosquets, *messieurs* braves comme des lions, doux comme des agneaux, vertueux comme on ne l'est pas, toujours bien mis, et qui pleurent comme des urnes (I, 586).⁷

Naturally enough, these images mingle with historical melodrama, the cult of Mary Queen of Scots and other noble and unfortunate ladies. The experience of which this code speaks is either socially exotic—noble ladies reclining on sofas or in carriages, contemplating the moon, a flower, or a plumed rider—or culturally exotic—mountains, waterfalls, ruins, palm trees. And the most striking feature of this romantic code is not that it speaks of an ideal which puts to shame the reality of the world but that it does so in terms which by their very concreteness become unrealizable. To aspire to be a chatelaine who, beneath gothic arches passes her days, chin in her hand, 'watching a plumed horseman on a black horse galloping towards her through the countryside' (I, 586) is to condemn oneself to disappointment. Flaubert satirizes the misplaced concreteness of this code in a splendidly anti-climatic passage about engravings representing:

paysages blafards des contrées dithyrambiques, qui souvent nous montrent à la fois des palmiers, des sapins, des tigres à droite, un lion à gauche, des minarets tartares à l'horizon, au premier plan des ruines romaines, puis des chameaux accroupis;—le tout encadré d'une forêt vierge bien nettoyée, et avec un grand rayon de soleil perpendiculaire tremblotant dans l'eau, où se détachent en écorchures blanches, sur un fond d'acier gris, de loin en loin, des cygnes qui nagent (I, 587).⁸

7. 'It was all loves and lovers, damsels in distress swooning in lonely lodges, postillions slain all along the road, horses ridden to death on every page, dark forests, heart-aches, solemn oaths, sobs, tears, and kisses, moonlight boat-rides, nightingales in the groves, gentlemen as brave as lions, as gentle as lambs, too virtuous to be true, always impeccably dressed, and who wept like fountains.' [See p. 32, above.]
8. 'pallid landscapes of dithyrambic regions, which often show in the same picture palm trees and pine trees, tigers to the right, a lion to your left, tartar minarets on the horizon, Roman ruins in the foreground beside kneeling camels;—the whole scene framed by a well-kept virgin forest, with a huge perpendicular sunbeam trembling on the water, on which can be seen, white scratches on a steel-grey background, here and there, swans swimming.' [See pp. 33–34, above.]

The nicely deferred ending compensates for the obviousness of the preceding ironies and indicates that it is not simply because of its impossible juxtapositions that one should distance oneself from this code.

When we recognize later passages as instances of this code, we thereby enter the domain of irony. Emma's own exotic reveries of countries with sonorous names, where one travels in a post-chaise over mountain roads to the sounds of cow-bells, waterfalls, and songs, stopping at night beside a gulf beneath lemon trees, not only are distant from possible experience but dwell on concrete and surface details which would not satisfy if they were experienced:

Que ne pouvait-elle s'accouder sur le balcon des chalets suisses ou enfermer sa tristesse dans un cottage écossais, avec un mari vêtu d'un habit de velours noir à longues basques, et qui porte des bottes molles, un chapeau pointu et des manchettes! (I, 588).⁹

Gérard Genette notes quite correctly that whereas visions, such as Emma's mystical experience during her illness, are accompanied by distancing verbs (*elle croyait voir, croyait entendre*) and vague details, reveries in Flaubert surprise us by the clarity and precision of details and thereby resist our attempt to take them as inner musings which are less real than narrated events.¹ But of course we do take them in this way, and their resistance, their substantiality, has the effect of strengthening the irony by making them stand forth clearly in the text and call attention to themselves.

It is largely our acquaintance with this code which confirms our ironic view of Emma's own behaviour, for her affairs with Rodolphe and Léon are presented as attempts to produce in her own life events which might serve as referents for the language of this code. 'J'ai un amant! un amant!' she repeats to herself, delighted that this language should finally have become applicable and that she should have entered 'la légion lyrique des femmes adultères' (I, 629). And for Léon she does indeed participate in the language of romance:

Elle était l'amoureuse de tous les romans, l'héroïne de tous les drames, la vague *elle* de tous les volumes de vers. Il retrouvait sur ses épaules la couleur ambrée de *l'odalisque au bain*; elle avait le corsage long des châtelaines féodales; elle ressemblait

9. 'Why couldn't she lean on the balcony of Swiss chalets or shut up her melancholy in a Scottish cottage, with a husband dressed in a black velvet coat with long tails and who wore soft boots, a pointed hat, and white cuffs' [See p. 35, above.] Cf. Emma's vision of life in Paris, I, 594.

1. 'Silences de Flaubert', in *Figures* (Seuil, Paris, 1966), pp. 223-9. Genette's best example is Emma's reverie, I, 640-41.

aussi à la femme pâle de Barcelone, mais elle était par-dessus tout Ange! (I, 664).²

Moreover, it is precisely a language of sentimental clichés that Emma and Léon exchange in their early conversations, which Rodolphe proffers at the Comices agricoles and in the letter to which he breaks off the affair, which Emma uses in her letters to Léon even after she has begun to grow tired of him (I, 669), and which guides Emma in her responses to particular situations. Hearing a step in the passage during one of her trysts with Rodolphe, she asks:

As-tu tes pistolets?

Pourquoi?

Mais . . . pour te défendre, reprit Emma.

She would have preferred him to be more properly dramatic (I, 631). Or again, she would dress Léon in black and have him grow a pointed beard 'in order to resemble portraits of Louis XIII' (I, 668). And though she does at one point, when watching *Lucia di Lammermoor*, distance herself from this code—'now she knew the triviality of passions which art exaggerated' (I, 650)—she immediately constructs a novel around the singer Lagardy. She cannot escape from the code or its irony.

There are, of course, other codes in *Madame Bovary*, other types of discourse which the text cites: the pompous official oratory of the Comices agricoles, pseudo-science and -culture of Homais, the bourgeois discourse of the citizens of Yonville. Presented either in direct quotation or in a *style indirect libre* which reduces and deadens by omitting the effective and spontaneous engagement of characters in speech, these linguistic specimens are read with a certain detachment and judged as ironic comments on their various sources. Much the same is true of *L'Education sentimentale*, where there is an interplay of a greater variety of codes: the romantic discourse which Frédéric adopts early in the book and which serves to structure his thoughts of Madame Arnoux; the code of the rational *arriviste*, which Deslauriers identifies in referring to Rastignac as a model and which treats society as an intelligible organism or machine that must be mastered; the artistic discourse of Pellerin, which imposes a particular view of the world; the code of revolutionary oratory; the social and political commonplaces encountered in the Dambreuse salon and elsewhere. It is not so much that our models of human behaviour and of cultural appropriateness reveal

2. 'She was the beloved of all the novels, the heroine of all the plays, the undefined *she* of all the volumes of poetry. On her shoulders he found the amber skin of the *Odalisque bathing*; she had the long-waisted dresses of feudal chatelaines; she also resembled the *Pale Woman of Barcelona*, but above all else she was an angel!' [See p. 209, above.]

any one of these codes as foolishly distorting; rather the co-existence of so many different codes produces an indeterminacy in which we can never be sure when the author is responsible for his language, when he may be citing sources which we happen not to identify but which represent a limited position like any other; and consequently the general sense of potential irony, a sense of the possibility of distancing ourselves from any of the sentences which the text sets before us, comes to hover over the book as a whole.

Irony of this sort is, of course, a polemical device. Directed for the most part against particular characters and their view of the world, it suggests that the implied author of the text holds other views, even if we cannot precisely define them; and it was no doubt this absence of positive values due to the choice of an ironic mode of expression that James had in mind when he wished that Flaubert might have fought out his case a little more on the spot. But it could certainly be argued that the function of these ironies is not primarily to convey to the reader a particular view of the world or to make out a definable case but rather to set in motion the negative operations of irony so that they may be constantly present as possible modes of processing other sentences in the text. If we are once accustomed to undertaking ironic readings of sentences which refer explicitly to the thoughts and behaviour of characters, on the assumption that alternative positions may always be constructed, then we will at least be attuned to treating in like manner sentences where polemical intent would be difficult to locate but where detachment still seems the safest posture.

In favour of such a view one could argue, first of all, that there is no surer way for a writer to make readers attend to his style than to force them to pore over his sentences, searching for subtle marks of irony. But secondly, at a slightly different level, one might maintain that the ambition to write 'un livre sur rien' can be realized only if readers can be cajoled into sucking the apparent content out of the sentences and leaving only that empty form which asks to be filled but makes one chary of actually filling it. Kierkegaard speaks of the ironic method, as practised by Socrates, as asking a question 'not in the interest of obtaining an answer, but to suck out the apparent content with a question and leave only an emptiness'.³ But that account is not entirely just, certainly not if applied to Flaubert, for such unmitigated sucking would become entirely tedious. It is, indeed, only half of the process, which might be best described in terms of Schiller's *Spieltrieb*, the drive towards play which is the basis of the aesthetic attitude. Pure appearance, which is the object

3. Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, trans. Lee Capel (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1965).

of this drive, is highly ambiguous, foiling in turn the *Stofftrieb* and the *Formtrieb* by becoming form when one seeks matter and matter when one seeks form.⁴

* * *

RICHARD TERDIMAN

From Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France†

* * *

Contested Terrain: On the Situation of Discourse in Nineteenth-Century France

In a world saturated by discourse, language itself becomes contested terrain. I will argue that such saturation is the cultural *differentia specifica* distinguishing the modern period from earlier formations. And surely the theoretical effort since the nineteenth century to understand the phenomenon of language and the complexities of the discursive responds to that saturation. It is as if toward the end of the century the dry science of linguistics suddenly found itself at the center of efforts to manage an unprecedented cultural crisis. We have been battling with it ever since. Julia Kristeva evokes this continuity in *La Révolution du langage poétique*: "Our century is still living on the nineteenth century's momentum."

Of course the privilege of a period is always relative. But Kristeva's remark suggests that the discursive combats of the nineteenth century can fruitfully be studied not only from the perspective of their explicit thematic conflicts, which are well known, but in the often subterranean struggles of their forms. The effort to achieve predominance in the social formation which emerged from the twin revolution of the nineteenth century did not play itself out at the level of politics and programs alone. The paradigms of the entire complex of social discourses by which the emerging formation organized and understood its existence were at stake. It seems clear today that in the nineteenth century the tech-

4. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, ed. and trans. Wilkinson and Willoughby (Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 105, 192–207.

† *From Discourse/Counter-Discourse: The Theory and Practice of Symbolic Resistance in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985). Copyright © 1985 by Cornell University. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. In this excerpt, Terdiman contextualizes the importance of discourse, and language in particular, in *Madame Bovary's* attack on the middle-class values dominating the society of Flaubert's time.

niques for assuring discursive penetration solidified themselves astonishingly. Such innovation sustained liberal capitalism and all its associated institutions—indeed, it might be taken as their condition of possibility. From our vantage today these techniques often appear to have achieved an uncontested sovereignty in the period. But my claim will be that as the techniques for assuring discursive control underwent a radical development, so too did those of symbolic subversion.

This assertion might not seem immediately apparent. For many of the figures of high cultural importance to us today, the nineteenth century was a period of seemingly impotent lamentation. Flaubert's plaint, in a letter written to his uncle Parrain after his departure from Egypt, is characteristic:

Dear old friend, have you ever reflected upon the utter serenity of imbeciles? Stupidity [*la bêtise*] is something unshakeable; nothing comes up against it without being destroyed. It's like granite, hard and resistant. In Alexandria, a certain Thompson, from Sunderland, has inscribed his name on Pompey's column in letters six feet high. You can read it from a quarter-league away. You can't even see the column without seeing Thompson's name, therefore without thinking of Thompson. This cretin has incorporated himself into the monument and perpetuated himself with it. It's even worse than that: he has outdone the column by the splendor of his gigantic inscription. All imbeciles are more or less like Thompson of Sunderland. And they always defeat us [*ils nous enfoncent toujours*]; they are so numerous, there's no way to stamp them out [*ils reviennent si souvent*], they are simply too healthy. You meet a lot of them while traveling. In everyday life they end up driving you crazy!¹

Flaubert's protest is characteristic. It opposes the lone voice of a cultural Jeremiah against the voice of an age. And it practices a typical counter-discursive tactic (no doubt one of the simplest): a resigned sarcasm. J.-K. Huysmans was even more desperately direct in damning the period in which he felt condemned to live: "Good God, what a mess! And to think that this century is enthusiastic and full of praise about itself! It has only one thing on its mind—progress. Whose progress? the progress of what? for this miserable century has not invented much."² But from my perspective, Huysmans was wrong. In the realm that interests me here, the inventions of his period are intensely important.

1. 6 Oct. 1850; *Correspondance*, ed. Jean Bruneau, vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard-Pléiade, 1973), p. 689.

2. Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Là-bas* (Paris: Plon, 1912), p. 172.

Our own critical discourse can metonymically evoke the whole but can never display it. What Flaubert called the “immense Nouveau qui déborde de partout” (“the immense innovation which submerges us from all sides”)³ proves ungraspable in its very pervasiveness. Nonetheless it may be useful to mention a few of the loci within the social field which were touched and transformed by the nineteenth century’s unprecedented resituation of discourse. Politics is probably the most obvious of these. In this realm the multiple revolutions of the nineteenth century had profound discursive consequences.

Consider the dismaying figure of Louis-Napoléon. Eric Hobsbawm evokes him as follows: “[He] was . . . the first of the modern chiefs of state who ruled not by simple armed force, but by the sort of demagoguery and public relations which are so much more easily operated from the top of the state than from anywhere else.”⁴ Twenty years earlier, Louis-Philippe had already adumbrated certain parallel techniques. Thus Theodore Zeldin characterizes the Orléanist king as a *fake* bourgeois seeking through consciously planned self-misrepresentation to create an *image* of rule, of a conjuncturally appropriate form of legitimacy responding to the realities of a transformed politics: “He cultivated his image as a bourgeois king in order to win popularity. . . . His umbrella, his famous wig, were publicity stunts.”⁵ Of course it would be naive to imagine that monarchs had been unconcerned with the opinion of their subjects prior to the nineteenth century. Yet the altered intensity—and the cynical, instrumental ingeniousness—of preoccupation with such considerations in the period of concern to me here begins to frame the *problem of the discursive* around which my discussion will turn.

In this regard Umberto Eco’s definition of the realm of the sign is crucial: “Semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used *in order to lie*.”⁶ Some measure of the saturation of the social field by what I am calling the discursive begins to be visible against the background of an increasing pervasion of semiotic material, and the increasingly broadcast intention to use it to mystify and to manipulate.

3. Letter to Bouilhet, 19 Dec. 1850; Gustave Flaubert, *Oeuvres complètes illustrées de correspondance (1829–1852)* (Paris: Librairie de France, 1922), Vol. 1, p. 380.
4. In *The Age of Capital, 1848–1875* (New York: New American Library-Mentor, 1979), Hobsbawm further observes (p. 109) that Louis-Napoléon was the “first ruler of a large state outside the United States to come to power by means of universal (masculine) suffrage, and never forgot it.” The interaction of the two political practices—discursive manipulation; required electoral feedback—is clear. It maps much of the social landscape of the period.
5. Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848–1945*. 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973–77), Vol. 1, p. 415.
6. Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976) p. 7; my italics.

Fredric Jameson has put this idea clearly: "Unfortunately, no society has ever been quite so mystified in quite so many ways as our own, saturated as it is with messages and information, the very vehicle of mystification (language, as Talleyrand put it, having been given us in order to conceal our thoughts)."⁷ Under the transformed conditions of social existence in the nineteenth century, signs and discourses increasingly become exchange values. They are offered, desired, and acquired; they circulate and are consumed. Yet they remain mystifyingly impalpable. In their protean fluidity and commutability they thus mirror that sense of being adrift which is a characteristic, if despairing, complaint in the period of concern to us.

In this perspective, the fears of intellectuals that they might be slipping into the undifferentiated mass of common people, ideas, and values may acquire some theoretical depth. For it was the increasingly rootless exchangeability of signs which provided the material basis for such fears. Flaubert's reaction is characteristic:

A truth seems to me to emerge from all this. It is that we have no real need of the common people [*le vulgaire*], of the populous elements, of majorities, of approval, of ratification [*la consécration*]. 1789 demolished the monarchy and the aristocracy, 1848 the bourgeoisie, and 1851 the *people*. There's *nothing* left except an imbecilic and vulgar mass [*une tourbe canaille et imbécile*].—We are all driven down [*enfoncés*] to the same level in a common mediocrity. Social equality has spread to the Mind. We produce books for everyone, art for everyone, science for everyone, like we build railroads and public waiting rooms. Humanity is rabid with moral degradation [*abaissement moral*].—And I'm furious with humanity, because I belong to it.⁸

The developments in the realm of social meaning at the heart of Flaubert's lament in fact define an entire problematic, for the decline of certain signifiers which bore *distinction* as an essential signified left those needing to distinguish themselves baffled. Thus, for example, Zeldin observes that in the early part of the nineteenth century, a cashmere shawl cost about 450 francs, the equivalent of the annual wages of a laborer. By midcentury, however, Scottish tartan shawls made in Reims sold for a *fiftieth* of this price, and what Zeldin calls "cheap parodies of luxury" became the pride of every working woman.⁹ On another front, and in what is only an apparent paradox, the distinction of family name itself was radically

7. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 60–61.

8. Letter to Louise Colet, 22 Sept. 1853, *Correspondance*, vol. 2, p. 437.

9. *France*, vol. 2, p. 615.

diluted after 1789, not only because of the temporary abolition of the aristocracy, but because, beginning with the Restoration, the number of people falsely claiming titles increased dramatically.¹

At the same time, the nation, indeed the world, was rapidly becoming a continuous market for discourses. * * * The rates of its expansion and penetration of the social field can have had few parallels in social history: newspaper circulation in France increased by 4,000 percent in the half century after 1830. In turn the pervasive circulation of the news evokes other sorts of circulation whose rates and facility were strikingly modified. Thus Hobsbawm comments on the fact that the celebrated eighty-day journey of Phileas Fogg around the world in 1872 would have taken fully four times as long only twenty-five years earlier.² And he observes that the advent of the telegraph transformed the circulation of all information in the 1860s and after (in 1860 the automatic telegraph was patented by Wheatstone; in 1865 the first transatlantic cable was completed), with a corresponding leap in the defensive sense of those concerned about the perfusion of the entire world by such discourses.³ The sorts of developments which these rapid soundings suggest penetrated even to the level of practices as intimate as the use of familiar nicknames. Hobsbawm comments on the decline of microcultures evidenced in their diminishing frequency in Normandy villages. At the same time the literacy rate in the countryside—and thus the availability of subjects for the more standardized and centralized discourses of the print medium—increased dramatically (for men it attained 80 percent in 1876; see *Age of Capital*, pp. 210–11).

Under these circumstances, the bourgeoisie, or at least those fragments whose self-perception and social status were put at risk by the increasing penetration of the mechanisms of production and exchange which gave the class as a whole its power, entered something like a crisis of self-conception. Sartre in his study of Mallarmé seizes this danger: after 1848 “la bourgeoisie se dissout elle-même. Elle deviendra peuple ou aristocratie; elle se perdra dans l’universelle équivalence, à moins qu’elle ne rétablisse à son profit l’esprit de synthèse” (“the bourgeoisie is itself in the process of dissolution. It risked absorption into the common people or into the aristocracy, dissolution through universal equivalence, unless it

1. See *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 16.

2. *Age of Capital*, p. 53.

3. Compare Flaubert’s letter to Bouilhet (19 Dec. 1850; *Correspondance*, vol. 1, p. 730), a portion of which (on the “immense Nouveau”) I quoted above. The letter’s occasion—the specific innovation which stimulated Flaubert’s cry of despair—was precisely the Law of 1850 which made communication by telegraph (previously reserved for official state purposes) available to individuals.

could succeed in reestablishing to its own advantage the ability to conceive the whole [of society] and dominate it.”)⁴

A crucial condition of the problem was that the ideology of liberalism could not make any distinctions between citizens. Coordinately, increasing social and geographic mobility made group boundary lines much more uncertain. Under such circumstances, the use of cultural signs to indicate status becomes a much more subtle, less enforceable, yet at the same time more necessary calculus than previously.

Consequently the centrality of those citizens specially qualified to manipulate the signs and discourses through which social exchanges of all sorts were transacted greatly increased. The intelligentsia was acquiring its social function and its self-conception. And in a paradox that underlies its drama to the present day, it was discovering that its own interests increasingly parted company from those of the class of which it was an uncomfortable and unwilling fragment. Pierre Bourdieu has seized the pertinence of the struggle thus founded:

But the locus par excellence of symbolic struggles is the dominant class itself: struggles for the definition of legitimized culture which confront intellectuals and artists are only an aspect of the continuing struggles in which the different fractions of the dominant class confront each other, battling for the imposition of their own definition of the stakes and the legitimate means in social struggle or, if one prefers, for the principle of legitimate domination.⁵

Quite early the bourgeoisie began to develop tactics to keep its dissident members in line. The defensive rhetoric which articulated the interests of the dominant fractions of the middle-class was constant. This rhetoric argued for the subordination of the intellectuals to the larger interests of their own class, of which they were inevitably to some degree clients. The dominant position asserted that, at a time when such conduct appeared quite consequential, when the interclass struggle was still quite open, those tending toward any other social identification were simply class traitors. Thus, characteristically, this self-serving extract from an article by L. de Carné in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 August 1853: “We take it as evident that government in France must have the intellectuals [*les intelligences*] as instrument, and financial power [*les intérêts*] as ballast, and that access to domination of the men who

4. Jean-Paul Sartre, “L’engagement de Mallarmé,” *Obliques*, no. 18–19 (1979), pp. 169–94.

5. Pierre Bourdieu, *La Distinction: critique sociale de jugement* (Paris: Minuit, 1979), p. 284.

represent the double power of thought and of capital is a normal and legitimate fact."⁶ Such a nakedly manipulative assertion in one of the most influential of the establishment media we may take as evidence of a struggle which had already been going on for some time. It was to reach unprecedented intensity in the remaining part of the century.

The result of this complex of conditions and the coordinate discursive constraints is well known. It has become a commonplace that intellectuals in the period which concerns me tended to experience the world as unendurable. Many of their most significant productions resulted from the impulse to contest it. The fact of such opposition to the power of their own class has become so internalized for us as to be virtually transparent. But the *modes* of such opposition might usefully be reconsidered in light of the transformed notion of the semiotic realm, and the intimate mechanisms of conflict that play themselves out within it, which I sketched above. I will argue that the varieties of discursive contestation in this formative period of liberal society are more internally diverse, and considerably more complex and ingenious, than we have sometimes tended to think.

Again it was Gramsci who, in connection with his effort to understand the mechanisms by which social organizations reproduce themselves under the more fluid conditions of the modern polity and socioeconomy, brought to critical consciousness the conflicted concept of the "intellectual." Particularly, Gramsci helps us to see the intellectuals' transformed role as originators and propagators of the discourse and practices which both assure hegemony and, conversely, contest it.⁷

In Gramsci's speculations, intellectuals were divided into two categories: the "organic intellectuals," whose function was to articulate the interests and perspectives of a rising or dominant class; and the "traditional intellectuals," which such a class found already installed in positions of social and structural influence (for example, clergy, teachers, men of letters of various kinds). Between the two categories, the conflict of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic impulses was systemically inevitable.⁸

* * *

6. Quoted in Claude Duchet, ed., *Manuel d'histoire littéraire de la France: 1848-1917* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1977), p. 253.

7. We should note that the formation of the notion of "intellectual" itself dates from our period. Under the term, Saint-Simon combined the skills of the man of letters and imagination of the artist with the knowledge and prestige of the scientist to produce what is essentially the modern conception; see Zeldin, *France*, vol. 1, p. 430.

8. See Antonio Gramsci, "The Intellectuals," *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), pp. 5-23 and passim; and Chantal Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci," in Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 187.

NAOMI SCHOR

Restricted Thematics: *Madame Bovary*†

* * *

Emma's search for love's passion is doubly motivated by literature. First there is "external mediation,"¹ the desire to transform the (dead) letters that she has read into lived experience, to coincide with literary models:

And Emma tried to find out what one meant exactly in life by the words *bliss*, *passion*, *ecstasy*, that had seemed to her so beautiful in books.

Et Emma cherchait à savoir ce que l'on entendait au juste dans la vie par les mots de *félicité*, de *passion* et d'*ivresse*, qui lui avaient paru si beaux dans les livres. (p. 24/69)

When she becomes Rodolphe's mistress, this much longed-for identification seems to be realized; Emma progresses from the passive status of a reader to the active status of a heroine:

Then she recalled the heroines of the books that she had read. . . . She became herself, as it were, an actual part of these lyrical imaginings; at long last, as she saw herself among those lovers she had so envied, she fulfilled the love-dream of her youth.

Alors elle se rappela les héroïnes des livres qu'elle avait lus . . . Elle devenait elle-même comme une partie véritable de ces imaginations et réalisait la longue rêverie de sa jeunesse, en se considérant dans ce type d'amoureuse qu'elle avait tant envié. (p. 117/191)

Finally, with Léon she attains her goal: from a heroine-for-herself she is transformed into a heroine-for-others: "She was the mistress of all the novels, the heroine of all the dramas, the vague 'she' of all the volumes of verse" ("Elle était l'amoureuse de tous les romans, l'héroïne de tous les drames, le vague *elle* de tous les volumes de vers" [p. 192/289]).

But this first love-letters link conceals another of prime importance to our study: Emma seeks a lover not only to become a nov-

† From *Breaking the Chain: Women, Theory, and French Realist Fiction* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985). Copyright © 1985 Columbia University Press. Translated by Harriet Stone. Reprinted by permission of the publisher. The selections from *Madame Bovary* in English are from the Norton Critical Edition translation. The selections in French are from the Garnier-Flammarion edition, 1966.

1. René Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1965), p. 9 and passim.

elistic character, but especially to become an author. When, in the early stage of her marriage, Emma settles in to wait for "something to happen," she outfits herself in advance with a writer's tools:

She had bought herself a blotter, writing-case, pen-holder, and envelopes although *she had no one to write to . . .*

Elle s'était acheré un buvard, une papeterie, un porte-plume et des enveloppes, quoiqu'elle n'eût personne à qui écrire . . . (p. 43/94; emphasis mine)

What Emma lacks is not a lover, but a receiver ("destinataire"), and what she desires through this receiver-pretext for writing is literary fame. To convince oneself of this, one need only compare the above quotation with another seemingly innocent remark which follows one page later. Emma wants Charles to become a great doctor because:

She would have wished this name of Bovary, which was hers, to be illustrious, to see it displayed at the booksellers', repeated in the newspapers, known to all France.

Elle aurait voulu que ce nom de Bovary, qui était le sien, fût illustre, le voir étalé chez les libraires, répété dans les journaux, connu par toute la France. (p. 44/95)

By bringing together these two segments of the same sentence, of the same phantasm, we witness the emergence of Emma's profound ambition: to be a famous novelist. Why then is this wish expressed on the one hand by an intermediary, projected onto Charles, and on the other hand occulted by the separation of the means (writing instruments) from the end (to be famous)? This repression, this censure, results from Emma's sex. What she envies in a man is not so much the possibility of traveling, but the possibility of writing; what she lacks in order to write are neither words nor pen, but a phallus.²

Imbued with eighteenth-century literature, Emma cannot conceive of a literary production other than a novel by letters, and the taking of a lover is the necessary condition for this form of writing. Once she becomes Rodolphe's mistress, Emma begins her epistolary novel. Rodolphe serves as both her initiator and her receiver:

2. Obviously this sentence was written before Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar framed the question "Is a pen a metaphorical penis?" (*The Madwoman in the Attic*, p. 3), thereby boldly inaugurating a new era in the study of the relationship between writing and sexual difference. This being said, the phallus is not a penis, however metaphorical—rather it is a symbol of the phallogocentric order. Much of the difficulty feminists have in accepting the distinction Lacan makes between the penis and the phallus—which underlies the privilege he accords the phallus as lynchpin of the symbolic order—has to do with the fact that the penis/phallus relationship appears to be more iconic (Peirce) than purely symbolic.

From that day on they wrote to one another regularly every evening. Emma placed her letter at the end of the garden, by the river, in a crack of the wall. Rodolphe came to fetch it, and put another in its place that she always accused of being too short.

A partir de ce jour-là, ils s'écrivirent régulièrement tous les soirs. Emma portait sa lettre au bout du jardin près de la rivière, dans une fissure de la terrasse. Rodolphe venait l'y chercher et en plaçait une autre, qu'elle accusait toujours d'être trop courte. (p. 117/191)

This little game of hide-and-seek inaugurates Emma's apprenticeship, which will go through three stages, the first of which is marked by the persistence of the illusion of communication. Rather than renounce this illusion, Emma brings to correspondence all those desires unsatisfied by conversation, continuing to valorize *exchange*, clinging to the double role of sender/receiver that defines the interlocutor. Thus Emma complains of the brevity of Rodolphe's letters; thus she demands verses from Léon:

She asked him for some verses—some verses “for herself,” a “love poem” in honor of her.

Elle demanda des vers, des vers pour elle, *une pièce d'amour* en son honneur . . . (p. 201/300)

If initially Emma writes to receive letters, to take pleasure in the communication forbidden, impossible on the speech plane, writing subsequently becomes the adjuvant of a “waning passion” in the manner of an aphrodisiac:

in the letters that Emma wrote him she spoke of flowers, poetry, the moon and the stars, naïve resources of a waning passion striving to keep itself alive by all external aids.

dans les lettres qu'Emma lui envoyait, il était question de fleurs, de vers, de la lune et des étoiles, ressources naïves d'une passion affaiblie, qui essayait de s'aviver à tous les secours extérieurs. (p. 205/304)

It is only during the third stage when the receiver-lover has been demystified, unmasked as the double of her husband—“Emma found again in adultery all the platitudes of marriage” (“Emma retrouvait dans l'adultère toutes les platitudes du mariage” [p. 211/311–312; an excellent example of the identity of opposites!])—that Emma must yield to the evidence: she no longer loves Léon, but she continues more and more to love to write. It is only at this stage that Emma fully assumes her role as writer:

She blamed Léon for her disappointed hopes, as if he had betrayed her. . . .

She none the less went on writing him love letters, in keeping with the notion that a woman must write to her lover.

But while writing to him, it was another man she saw, a phantom fashioned out of her most ardent memories, of her favorite books, her strongest desires, and at last he became so real, so tangible, that her heart beat wildly in awe and admiration, though unable to see him distinctly, for, like a god, he was hidden beneath the abundance of his attributes. . . . She felt him near her; he was coming and would ravish her entire being in a kiss. Then she would fall back to earth again shattered; for these vague ecstasies of imaginary love, would exhaust her more than the wildest orgies.

Elle accusait Léon de ses espoirs déçus, comme s'il l'avait trahie . . .

Elle n'en continuait pas moins à lui écrire des lettres amoureuses, en vertu de cette idée, qu'une femme doit toujours écrire à son amant.

Mais, en écrivant, elle percevait un autre homme, un fantôme fait de ses plus ardents souvenirs, de ses lectures les plus belles, de ses convoitises les plus fortes; et il devenait à la fin si véritable, et accessible, qu'elle en palpait émerveillée, sans pouvoir le nettement imaginer, tant il se perdait, comme un dieu, sous l'abondance de ses attributs . . . Elle le sentait près d'elle, il allait venir et l'enlèverait tout entière dans un baiser. Ensuite elle retombait à plat, brisée; car ces élans d'amour vague la fatiguaient plus que de grandes débauches. (pp. 211–212/312)

The “but” signals the passage from one stage to another, the final subordination of love to writing, the metamorphosis of writing dictated by conventions into writing that flows from the heart. The latter writing is diametrically opposed to conversation-communication in that it presupposes the absence of a receiver, compensates for a lack, thereby embracing emptiness. As Freud demonstrates in *The Poet and Daydreaming*, the fictive character, like this composite being who is sketched by Emma’s pen, is the product of all the unsatisfied desires of its creator. Transcoded into psychoanalytic terminology, the “phantom” that Emma perceives is a phantasm. Moreover, writing, such as Emma practices it (such as Flaubert practiced it), is a solitary pleasure: the phantasmic scene is one of seduction. The pleasure that Emma experiences in rewriting Léon, in giving herself a lover three times hyperbolic, is intensely erotic.

To write is to leave the prey for the shadow, and, in the end, writing is to become the shadow itself: the author-phantom must suc-

ceed the character-phantom. Thus, just before swallowing the arsenic, Emma appears to Justin "majestic as a phantom" ("majestueuse comme un fantôme" [p. 229/334]). The apprenticeship of the heroine-artist can lead only to death, but to an exemplary death, because suicide generates language. In the novel to die a natural death (*belle mort*) is to commit suicide, because suicide is the very act that links the coming to writing with the renunciation of life. Like Madame de Tourvel, like Julie, Emma does not die without having written a last letter: "She sat down at her writing-table and wrote a letter, which she sealed slowly, adding the date and the hour" ("Elle s'assit à son secrétaire, et écrivit une lettre qu'elle cacheta lentement, ajoutant la date du jour et l'heure" [p.230/335]). Of this letter we know only the first words; " 'Let no one be blamed . . . ' " (" 'Qu'on n'accuse personne . . . ' " [p. 231/336]). The fragmentary state of this letter is highly significant, because the gap created by the ellipsis leaves forever unanswered the essential question: in this ultimate letter, *ultima verba*, does Emma complete the final stages of her apprenticeship, does she succeed in inventing for herself a writing that goes beyond clichés, beyond the romantic lies that they carry with them? The first words are only a (negative) repetition of Rodolphe's words, tending to invalidate any hypothesis of last-minute literary conversion. This letter immediately evokes the imitative circuit. If, in the letter that Charles composes right after Emma's death, we find both thematic (novelistic ideas) and stylistic (use of the imperative: " 'Let no one try to overrule me' ") echoes of Emma's previous letters, we are struck, too, by the firmness of expression resulting from a very bold use of asyndeton. In fact, one could cite this passage as an example of Flaubertian enunciation which, according to Barthes' formula, is seized by "a generalized asyndeton":³

"I wish her to be buried in her wedding dress, with white shoes, and a wreath. Her hair is to be spread out over her shoulders. Three coffins, one oak, one mahogany, one of lead. Let no one try to overrule me; I shall have the strength to resist him. She is to be covered with a large piece of green velvet. This is my wish; see that it is done."

Je veux qu'on l'enterre dans sa robe de nocés, avec des souliers blancs, une couronne. On lui étalera ses cheveux sur les épaules; trois cercueils, un de chêne, un d'acajou, un de plomb. Qu'on ne me dise rien, j'aurai de la force. On lui met-

3. Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, p. 9. What I am suggesting here is that *Madame Bovary* stages the scene of its own production, a production which inextricably links writing to death. On the relationship of the corpse to figuration in Flaubert, see Eugenio Donato, "The Crypt of Flaubert," in Schor and Majewski, eds., *Flaubert and Postmodernism*, pp. 30-45.

tra par-dessus toute une grande pièce de velours vert. Je le veux. Faites-le. (p. 239/346)

Is this writing a personal find of Charles', whose writing up to this point vied in ineptitude with his speech (note the fifteen drafts that he writes to have Dr. Larivière come *before* Emma's death), or can one see in it the pale reflection, traces, of Emma's last letter?

In the Flaubertian novelistic universe, in which substitution chains organize the narrative, nothing is less evident than the principles of closure that govern this neurotic serialization. Since in Emma's mind the Viscount = Léon = Rodolphe (p. 106), what prevents her from continuing indefinitely this substitution of one lover for another? In theory the series is open-ended; the resources of a substitutive rhetoric and logic are inexhaustible.⁴ In effect, Emma's death is not synchronic with the exhaustion of the narrative because, after her death, she is replaced by other characters: formerly the *subject* of substitution, she becomes its *object*. Thus Félicité, her maid, wears her dresses: "[she] was about her former mistress's height and often, on seeing her from behind, Charles thought she had come back . . ." ("elle était à peu près de sa taille, souvent Charles, en l'apercevant par derrière, était saisi d'une illusion . . ." [p. 249/359]); and Charles begins to imitate her:

To please her, as if she were still living, he adopted her taste, her ideas; he bought patent leather boots and took to wearing white cravats. He waxed his mustache and, just like her, signed promissory notes.

Pour lui plaire, comme si elle vivait encore, il adopta ses préférences, ses idées; il acheta des bottes vernies, il prit l'usage des cravates blanches. Il mettait du cosmétique à ses moustaches, il souscrivit comme elle des billets à ordre. (p. 250/360)

But, on the actantial plane, on the plane of the novel's structuring opposition, Emma/Homais, Emma is succeeded by the blind man, a Beckettian character whose *symbolic* value has for a long time preoccupied the critics,⁵ and whose function still remains to be pinpointed. According to our reading, his function is above all heuristic: whereas the opposition between Emma and Homais is implicit, concealed by anagrams, that between the blind man and Homais is explicit, manifest on the plane of events.

The blind man's doubling of Emma is prepared a long time in advance: from his first appearance the blind man finds in Emma a lis-

4. See Raymonde Debray-Genette, "Les Figures du récit dans *Un coeur simple*."

5. For a discussion of the diverse symbolic readings of the blind man see P. M. Wetherill, "Madame Bovary's Blind Man: Symbolism in Flaubert."

tener; his melancholic song evokes an echo in Emma's mind (p. 193/291); later she gives him her last five-franc coin (see in this scene the opposition: Emma's excessive generosity vs. Homais's excessive greed; by her *gift*, Emma is united with the blind man against Homais [p. 219]). Finally, on her deathbed, Emma hears the blind man, believes she sees him, and pronounces her last words: "The blind man!" ("L'aveugle!" [p. 238/344]). The same common to Emma and the blind man is monstrosity, physical in the one, moral in the other. It is precisely the blind man's monstrosity that brings upon him Homais' hostility: Homais would like to cure the blind man, that is, reduce his difference, "normalize" him. The blind man/Homais sequence only repeats the clubfoot/Homais sequence; in both cases the science preached by the pharmacist is never anything but the means of replacing heterogeneity with homogeneity, thereby earning the gratitude and esteem of his clients. Nevertheless, unlike the crippled clubfoot, the blind-man-ever-blind flouts Homais, publicly exhibiting the wounds that the pharmacist's recommendations and pomades could not cure. Homais, unable to silence this embarrassing witness to the inefficacy of his speech, begins to pursue him through writing; a fierce fight ensues between the garrulous blind man and the prolix pharmacist:

He managed so well that the fellow was locked up. But he was released. He began again, and so did Homais. It was a struggle. Homais won out, for his foe was condemned to life-long confinement in an asylum.

Il fit si bien qu'on l'incarcéra. Mais on le relâcha. Il recommença et Homais aussi recommença. C'était une lutte. Il eut la victoire; car son ennemi fut condamné à une réclusion perpétuelle dans un hospice. (p. 251/362)

The superimposition of the Emma/Homais/blind man/Homais rivalries reveal within writing the same opposition that we detected above at the center of speech: efficacy vs. inefficacy. While Emma's writing remains, so to speak, a dead letter, transforming nothing, producing no impact on the external world, Homais' writing is able to exile, if not kill, and becomes a means of social advancement.

Moreover, this superimposition permits the disengagement of an attribute, an invariant qualification of the *victim*: the victim, woman or blind man, is a being who lacks an essential organ, in fact, as Freud repeats at several points, the same organ, since according to his theory blindness = castration. The victim's final failure is inscribed in his/her body; Emma's monstrosity is physical as much as it is moral. The blind man's doubling of Emma punctuates the text, assures its readability: woman, this "defective" monster ("*monstre à la manque*"), is the privileged figure of the writer, and

especially of the writer Flaubert, a "failed girl" ("*fille manquée*") according to Sartre's thesis. It would, moreover, be easy to demonstrate that Emma's writing apprenticeship is consistent with an attempt to change sex, to reverse castration. The refusal of femininity, the temptation of virility, are not given once and for all from the beginning; before going that route, Emma will try to follow the path of integration, to accept the feminine destiny that Freud charts for the "normal" woman: marriage and maternity. But just as marriage ends in failure, Charles being unable to succeed *in Emma's place*, motherhood ends in disappointment: George, the phantasmic phallic-son, turns out to be only Berthe, a child worthy of Charles. Thus, much before Freud, Flaubert well understood that in order for maternity to fully satisfy penis envy, the child must be male (which would condemn at least half of all women to inevitable neurosis):

She hoped for a son; he would be strong and dark; she would call him George; and this idea of having a male child was like an expected revenge for all her impotence in the past. A man, at least, is free; he can explore all passions and all countries, overcome obstacles, taste of the most distant pleasures. But a woman is always hampered. Being inert as well as pliable, she has against her the weakness of the flesh and the inequity of the law. . . .

She gave birth on a Sunday at about six o'clock, as the sun was rising.

"It's a girl!" said Charles.

She turned her head away and fainted.

Elle souhaitait un fils; il serait fort et brun; elle l'appellerait Georges, et cette idée d'avoir pour enfant un mâle était comme la revanche en espoir de toutes ses impuissances passées. Un homme, au moins, est libre; il peut parcourir les passions et les pays, traverser les obstacles, mordre aux bonheurs les plus lointains. Mais une femme est empêchée continuellement. Inerte et flexible à la fois, elle a contre elle les mollesses de la chair avec les dépendances de la loi . . .

Elle accoucha un dimanche, vers six heures, au soleil levant. —C'est une fille! dit Charles.

Elle tourna la tête et s'évanouit. (p. 63/122–123)

Unable to obtain a phallus by "phallic proxy,"⁶ Emma seeks to satisfy her desire to change sex through transvestism. Partial at the beginning of the novel, the disguise is completed just before Emma's death:

6. Luce Irigaray, *Speculum de l'autre femme*, p. 106.

Like a man, she wore a tortoise-shell eyeglass thrust between two buttons of her blouse.

Elle portait, comme un homme, passé entre deux boutons de son corsage, un lorgnon d'écaille. (pp. 11–12/50)

. . . she parted it [her hair] on one side and rolled it under, like a man's.

. . . elle se fit une raie sur le côté de la tête et roula ses cheveux en-dessous, comme un homme. (p. 89/157)

"Could I go riding without proper clothes?"

"You must order a riding outfit," he answered.

The riding-habit decided her.

—Eh! comment veux-tu que je monte à cheval puisque je n'ai pas d'amazone?

—Il faut t'en commander une! répondit-il.

L'amazone la décida. (p. 113/186)

On that day of Mid-Lent she did not return to Yonville; that evening she went to a masked ball. She wore velvet breeches, red stockings, a peruke, and a three-cornered hat cocked over one ear.

Le jour de la mi-carême, elle ne rentra pas à Yonville; elle alla le soir au bal masqué. Elle mit un pantalon de velours et des bas rouges, avec une perruque à catogan et un lampion sur l'oreille. (p. 212/312)

But, as Sartre demonstrates, for Flaubert sexuality belongs to the realm of the imagination; disguise is, then, only an *analogon* of Emma's imaginary sex. In the last analysis, it is only on the imaginary plane, i.e., on the plane of the role *played* in the couple, that Emma's growing virility asserts itself. The order of her affairs, Rodolphe before Léon, thus assumes its meaning: whereas in her relationship with Rodolphe Emma plays the female role, traditionally passive, in her relationship with Léon the roles are reversed: "he was becoming her mistress rather than she his" ("il devenait sa maîtresse plutôt qu'elle n'était la sienne" [p. 201/300]).

It is not by chance that the writing apprenticeship and the "virility apprenticeship," if I may call it that, follow paths which ultimately converge at the time of Emma's affair with Léon, for their affair marks the triumph of the imaginary over the real, this being the precondition of all writing. If, insofar as the effect *on* the real is concerned, Homais' writing surpasses Emma's; considered in terms of the "reality effect," it is without any doubt Emma's (Flaubert's) writing that surpasses Homais' for the "reality effect" can only be

achieved through a total renunciation of any real satisfaction, can only be the just reward of sublimation, i.e., castration. For Flaubert writing thus has a sex, the sex of an assumed lack, the feminine sex.

It would seem, however, that all these oppositions are outweighed by Flaubert's radical distrust of language in general, a distrust evident in Emma's most bitter discovery, namely that ". . . everything was a lie" ("Tout mentait!" [p. 206/306]). For the Flaubert of *Madame Bovary* language is constantly undermined by its potential for lying, lying in the largest sense of the term, including hyperbole as well as the willful distortion of facts, and mystified idealization as well as cynical reductionism. The generalization of lying erases both the differences between forms of writing and the differences between writing and speech. Emma's letters and Homais' published pieces thus participate in the same "a-mimesis": both he and she depart from reality, embellishing facts, adjusting them to their needs. They "invent"—"Then Homais invented incidents" ("Puis Homais inventait des anecdotes" [p. 251/362]). On the other hand, Emma's idealization,—"irrealization," Sartre would say—of Léon on paper is only the resumption, the materialization of the oral self-idealization of the two lovers that occurs on the occasion of their reunion in Rouen:

this was how they would have wished to be, *each setting up an ideal* to which they were now trying to adapt their past life. Besides, *speech is like a rolling machine that always stretches the sentiment it expresses.*

c'est ainsi qu'ils auraient voulu avoir été, *l'un et l'autre se faisant un idéal* sur lequel ils ajustaient à présent leur vie passée. D'ailleurs, *la parole est un laminoir qui allonge toujours les sentiments.* (p. 169/260; emphasis mine)

Things would be too simple if there were not at least one exception to the rule; hence old Rouault appears to escape the treason of language. His annual letter enjoys a harmony both metaphoric (letter = writer) and metonymic (letter = reality contiguous to the writer). The hiatus between writer, words, and things is here reduced to a minimum. In fact, in the Flaubertian system the opposite of lying is not telling the truth, but immediacy, because the least distance between the sender and the receiver, the writing subject and the Other, as well as that between man and Things, opens a gap through which lies penetrate:

She held the coarse paper in her fingers for some minutes. A continuous stream of spelling mistakes ran through the letter and Emma followed the kindly thought that cackled right through it like a hen half hidden in a hedge of thorns. The

writing had been dried with ashes from the hearth, for a little grey powder slipped from the letter on her dress, and she almost thought she saw her father bending over the hearth to take up the tongs.

Elle resta quelques minutes à tenir entre ses doigts ce gros papier. Les fautes d'orthographe s'y enlaçaient les unes aux autres, et Emma poursuivait la pensée douce qui caquetait tout au travers comme une poule à demi cachée dans une haie d'épines. On avait séché l'écriture avec les cendres du foyer, car un peu de poussière grise glissa de la lettre sur sa robe, et elle crut presque apercevoir son père se courbant vers lâtre pour saisir les pincettes. (p. 124/200)

Examined more closely, this model of paternal writing is in fact threatened from all sides. In spite of the spelling mistakes and the intradiegetic metaphor which guarantee the writer's adherence to words and things,⁷ the gap is there, manifest in the form of a lack: thought is compared to a "half hidden" hen. Adherence is thus partial, and, if this letter conveys writing matter (letter + ashes), it is the matter itself that represents "the price to be paid": the symbolic Father is, as Lacan writes, the dead Father.

Two consequences follow from this. First, for the characters who, unlike old Rouault, maintain relations with the world that are strongly mediated by written as well as spoken language, such as Emma, there is only one way in which to enjoy immediacy, and that is to step outside language. The two great erotic scenes of the novel link *jouissance*,⁸ plenitude, with the suspension of all linguistic communication. The initiation by Rodolphe culminates in one of the great Flaubertian silences, to borrow another expression from Genette:⁹

7. See Genette, *Figures III*, pp. 246–41, and Jacques Neefs, "La figuration réliste," p. 472.

8. To footnote "*jouissance*" is at this belated poststructuralist moment to perform a highly ritualized gesture. This then is the obligatory metatextual note on *jouissance*. The difficulties in finding a suitable English equivalent to the French *jouissance* were to my knowledge first articulated by Roland Barthes' translators; see Richard Howard, "Notes on the Text," in Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, and Stephen Heath, "Translator's Note," in Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*. In the first instance the translator has chosen to translate the untranslatable word throughout by "bliss," a decision criticized by Heath, who adopts a more complex strategy which involves resorting to "a series of words which in different contexts can contain at least some of [the] force" (p. 9) of the original French term, I have opted for yet another unsatisfying solution, that favored by other (feminist) translators (Michèle Freeman, Alice Jardine, Parveen Adams): the nontranslation of the untranslatable. Thus, for example in her "Translator's Note," Jacqueline Rose explains that she has left such terms as *significance*, *object a*, and *jouissance* "in the original . . . in order to allow their meaning to develop from the way in which they operate." *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*, Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, eds., p. 59. For an illuminating and pertinent study of the peculiar linguistic status of *jouissance*, see Jane Gallop, "Beyond the *Jouissance* Principle," *Representations* (1984), no. 7: 110–115.

9. See Genette, "Silences de Flaubert," *Figures*.

Silence was everywhere. . . . Then far away, beyond the wood, on the other hills, she heard a vague prolonged cry, a voice which lingered, and in silence she heard it mingling like music with the last pulsations of her throbbing nerves.

Le silence était partout . . . Alors, elle entendit tout au loin, au-delà du bois, sur les autres collines, un cri vague et prolongé, une voix se traînait, et elle l'écoutait silencieusement, se mêlant comme une musique aux dernières vibrations de ses nerfs émus. (p. 116/189–190)

If in this scene the spoken word is supplanted by a nonarticulated, asemantic cry, in the coach scene the written word is torn to shreds, reduced to insignificance:

One time, around noon, in the open country . . . a bare hand appeared under the yellow canvass curtain, and threw out *some scraps of paper that scattered* in the wind, alighting further off like white butterflies on a field of red clover all in bloom.

Une fois, au milieu du jour, en pleine campagne [. . .] une main nue passa sous les petits rideaux de toile jaune et jeta *des déchirures de papier, qui se dispersèrent* au vent et s'abattirent plus loin, comme des papillons blancs, sur un champ de trèfles rouges tout en fleur. (p. 177/270; emphasis mine)

The euphoric form of the letter is thus the sperm-letter: in *Madame Bovary*, as in *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, happiness is "being matter."

But if fictional characters, these "paper beings," find their happiness beyond or without language, what of the writer who is condemned to work in an articulate and signifying language? The writer cannot be for Flaubert but a pursuer of lies, making do for want of something better, with available means, i.e., language, language which is always both judge and plaintiff, source of lies and condemner of lies, poison and antidote, *pharmakon*. There is in *Madame Bovary* a character who appears to fulfill this prophylactic function. It is, as if by chance, a doctor, Doctor Larivière, a character with quasi-divine attributes: "The apparition of a god would not have caused more commotion" ("L'apparition d'un dieu n'eût pas causé plus d'émoi" [p. 233/339]).¹ Note in what terms Flaubert describes his diagnostic gifts:

His glance, more penetrating than his scalpels, looked straight into your soul, and would *detect any lie*, regardless how well hidden.

1. For a magnificent demystification of this entire passage the reader should consult Sartre, *L'Idiot*, 1:454–61.

Son regard, plus tranchant que ses bistouris, vous descendait droit dans l'âme et *désarticulait tout mensonge* à travers les allégations et les pudeurs. (p. 234/339; emphasis mine)

These are exactly the same terms that Flaubert uses to define his stylistic ideal when, in a letter to Louise Colet contemporary with the writing of *Madame Bovary*, he criticizes Lamartine for not having "this medical view of life, this view of Truth."² Truth, it must be remembered, is for Flaubert a matter of style. To be true, the writer need only substitute for the doctor's look the equivalent instrument in his art, i.e., his style: "a style . . . precise like scientific language . . . a style that would penetrate into ideas like the probe of a stilet" (*Extraits*, p. 71). The structural homology of the two sentences in question, with, on the one hand, the scalpel glance which "looked straight into your soul," and on the other the "stilet-style" which "penetrates into ideas," underscores the identity of scriptural approach and surgical procedure. There is nothing less passive, less feminine, than the relationship with language known as "les affres du style" (pains of style): the reader of the correspondence concerning *Madame Bovary* cannot but be impressed with the aggressive and even sadistic relationship of Flaubert with the sentences and paragraphs of his novel that he sets about dissecting, unscrewing, undoing, unwriting, to use expressions found throughout his letters.³ To convey the inarticulate, one must disarticulate. As Sartre observes, "style is the silence of discourse, the silence in discourse, the imaginary and secret end of the written word."⁴

Flaubert's stylistic ideal completes his writing ideal; if Flaubert's writing refers to what one might call, playing a bit on Kristeva's terms, a "gyno-text," then his style aspires to a "phallo-text," a masculine "pheno-text":

I love above all else nervous, substantial, clear sentences with flexed muscles and a rugged complexion: I like male, not female, sentences.

J'aime par-dessus tout la phrase nerveuse, substantielle, claire, au muscle saillant, à la peau bistrée: j'aime les phrases mâles et non les phrases femelles.⁵

In the last analysis the "bizarre androgyn" is neither Flaubert (Sartre) nor Emma (Baudelaire), but the book, locus of the confrontation, as well as the interpretation of *animus* and *anima*, of the masculine and the feminine.

By definition a *restricted* thematic study cannot claim to be all-

2. Flaubert, *Extraits de la correspondance*, p. 71.

3. See Barthes, "Flaubert and the Sentence," in *A Barthes Reader*, p. 302.

4. Sartre, *L'Idiot*, 2:1618.

5. Flaubert, *Extraits de la correspondance*, p. 30.

encompassing. We are thus able to take note of a final demarcation separating the new thematic criticism from the old: concerned with thematic structure or, better still, structuring themes, new thematic criticism must not go beyond the framework of the individual novel (poem, drama). (This does not, of course, exclude intertextual allusions and references.) Defining the corpus in this manner, restricted thematics reintroduces a diachronic dimension into the always synchronic or a-chronic apprehension of traditional thematic criticism, thereby substituting "a new hermeneutic, one that is syntagmatic, or metonymic" for "the classical hermeneutic that was paradigmatic (or metaphoric)."⁶ As we have observed, the writing/speech paradigm overdetermines not only the actantial distribution of characters but also the consecutive progression of the narrative sequences. I mean *overdetermine* because a thematic approach cannot by itself account for the multiple functioning of a text, but, given its "intent," one cannot really do without it.

JANN MATLOCK

From Censoring the Realist Gaze†

* * *

Not surprisingly, the focus of the censorious gaze of the state in 1857, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, was imagined seducing its women readers with "its brutal paintings, its coarse sensualism, its flattering pictures of libertinism, its poetry of vice and the ugly." The "great ladies and honorable *bourgeoises*" were imagined flocking to its "studies of depraved morals" in ways resembling men caught up by street prostitutes.¹ Just as in the trial of *La Part des femmes* in 1847, the text was imagined capable of seducing with its vivid "paintings." This rhetoric of visuality was accompanied, all the more powerfully, by a fantasy of gendered looking that all the more disturbingly seemed to require the censorship of critics and the state. And by 1857, all the censors seemed convinced that what threatened most belonged to a type of text they chose to call "realism."

"The offense against public morals" of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, according to the government prosecutor of 1857, lay precisely in the "lascivious pictures" such "realistic literature" deployed:

6. Genette, "Table ronde," pp. 91–92.

† From "Censoring the Realist Gaze," in *Spectacles of Realism: Body, Gender, Genre*, eds. Margaret Cohen and Christopher Prendergast (Minneapolis: UP of Minnesota, 1995). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

1. Eugene Poitou, *Du Roman et du Théâtre Contemporain*. 2d ed. (Paris: Durand, 1858), pp. 17, 15.

"M. Flaubert knows how to embellish his paintings with all the resources of art, but without the circumspection of art. With him there is no gauze, no veils, it is nature in all its nudity, in all its crudity."² Despite its arguably "moral conclusion," Pinard complained, its dangers warranted the intervention of state censors precisely because of the dangers of its "lascivious details" to an imagined female public:

The frivolous pages [*les pages légères*] of Madame Bovary fall into hands still more frivolous [*des mains plus légères*], into the hands of young girls, sometimes of married women. Well, when the imagination has been seduced, when this seduction has fallen upon the heart, when the heart has spoken to the senses, do you believe that cold reason would have much power against this seduction of senses and feeling? . . . Lascivious paintings have generally more influence than cold reason. (F386, E33)

The "paintings of passion" Pinard imagines on display here are rendered "without bridle, without limits." "Art without rules," he explains, "is no longer art," but rather strangely like the character of the novel he would ban: "It is like a woman who would take off all her clothing" (F388, E36).

Fears about women's looking, here and elsewhere, have a strange way of slipping into accounts of women's exposure. In a century in which women's access to artistic training is prohibited in part because of debates over the life class, in which the nude body is turned into smut by ever-increasing concerns over women's access to the nude, and in which even the pornographic cashes in on women's gaze on display, the stories told about the female gaze repeatedly engage the woman's body in struggles over the positions from which she might be allowed to look. This is an era in which, rather than simply being "forbidden" in the terms of a recent essay by Tamar Garb, the woman's gaze is elicited, evoked, and problematized—in texts ranging from these trials to pornographic images to caricatures that explicitly poke fun at the limitations placed on women's vision.³

2. "Réquisitoire, Plaidoirie et Jugement," in Gustave Flaubert, *Madame Bovary* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1966 [1856–57]), 373, 382. Translations are modified from the trial report in *Madame Bovary: A Tale of Provincial Life*, in Gustave Flaubert, *Works*, vol. 2 (Akron, Ohio: St. Dunstan Society, n.d.), 10, 26. All references to these editions of the trial reports will appear in the text by page number, noted as F (French) and E (English).
3. See Tamar Garb, "The Forbidden Gaze," *Art in America* 79, no. 5 (1991): 147–56. I discuss these issues in *Desires to Censor: Spectacles of the Body, Moral Vision, and Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century France*. As I have suggested in the chapter titled "Exhibiting and Exposing: Historicizing the Gaze," presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the College Art Association in Chicago (February 1992), July Monarchy pornography frequently depicted women in art classes, museums, and looking through optical instruments.

“Ladies were not under any circumstances admitted,” reads the inscription next to the title page of Bertrand-Rival’s revolutionary project for a wax anatomy museum in 1801. Anticipating museums like the Dupuytren, this museum used wax casts like those that would appear in the 1830s in medical schools. There, the medical sculptor sought to create a space where citizens might take their sons to learn of the human body, envisaged in its “normal state” as a nude male and a pregnant female, and where “moral instruction” might be achieved through the witnessing of bodies ravaged by disease—particularly by the malady of masturbation. Women were excluded from both museum and catalog with the same prurience that several decades later would mobilize the anxieties expressed about the Musée Dupuytren.⁴ Poitou’s 1858 question, “Why not make public the Musée Dupuytren?” thus comported not only a fear of the exposure of scientific knowledge—the hitherto invisible made violently visible—but the exposure of women and girls.

The politics of such exposures are reflected in contemporary pornography in ways that suggest the dangers to girls who take looking into their own hands (Figure 1) or in caricature in terms suggestive of the erotics of vision, as in Bourdet’s image (Figure 2) of a mother shown attributing a particularly disturbing female malady to her daughter’s visual intercourse: “Sir,” pleads the mother, “my daughter has a tumor [*grosseur*], we don’t know what it is and it worries us a great deal. Mightn’t it be conjunctivitis [*une ophthalmie*]?” Women’s entry into public spaces of the gaze seems, repeatedly in such popular imagery, censorship trials, popular literary criticism, and, ultimately, even in the novel itself, to elicit fears that some kinds of looking might expose simply too much. “The overflowings of the powers of nature can be for the imagination a spectacle,” writes Vapereau of *Madame Bovary*. “Let us not forget that they are also for us plagues.”⁵ The association of spectacles with the ravages of disease relays with a kind of brutality the maladies imagined to evolve from a seduced gaze. This caricatured girl, pregnant with looking too much, is fixed in wax museums of her own era as naturally with child (Figure 3).⁶

And yet, in the first decades of the nineteenth century, women

4. Jean-François Bertrand-Rival, *Précis historique physiologique et moral, des principaux objets en cire préparée et colorée d’après nature qui composent le muséum de Jean-François Bertrand-Rival* (Paris: Richard, 1801) opens: “I begin by saying that this book is not for the vulgar, or for children, or even for women; but only for careful, wise, and enlightened people.”

5. Louis-Gustave Vapereau, *L’Année littéraire et dramatique* (Paris: Hachette, 1859), p. 54.

6. Another of the centerpieces of the popular pathological anatomy Spitzner collection (founded 1856) depicts a woman’s pelvic region, with changing images of a pregnancy from conception through the ninth month. See *Cires anatomiques du XIXe siècle, Collection du Dr. Spitzner* (Paris: Centre Culturel de la Communauté française de Belgique, 1980), 22.

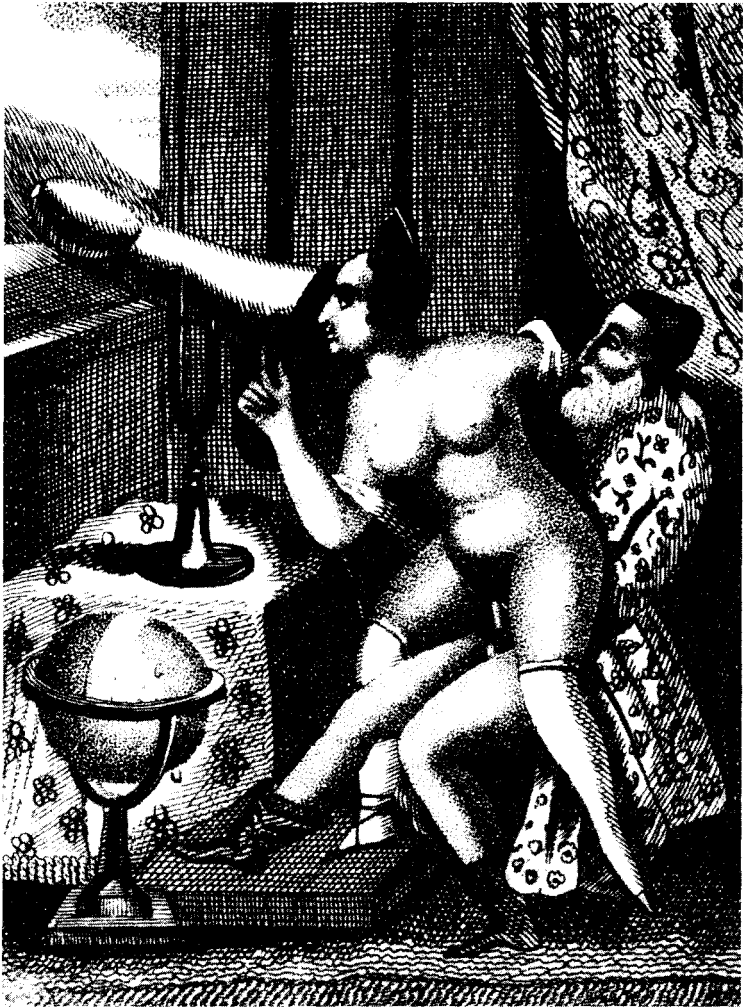


Figure 1. Anonymous engraving depicting woman looking through a “telescope” (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Réserve du Cabinet des Estampes).

have a curious way of turning up whenever there is a question of looking in some new way. Depictions of new visual technology exploited female fascinations with the powers of looking. The kaleidoscope, invented in 1818, was quickly depicted—not without the innuendo regularly attached to all contraptions of vision—as drawing women in particular into intrigues (Figure 4). Pornographic imagery regularly positioned women in front of magic boxes and behind tele-



Figure 2. Bourdet, *Béotismes parisiens*, lithograph from *Le Charivari*, September 2, 1836. Reprinted with permission of Department of Printing and Graphic Arts, The Houghton Library, Harvard University.

scopes. Popular caricature reveled in the depiction of women's access to new optical instruments, as in the Daumier of 1845 (shown in Figure 5). "Mesdemoiselles, I forbid you to look at the moon," scolds the mother in the Bourdet of 1836 shown in Figure 6. "It seems that one sees men there . . . and horrors of men even!" Though the lorgnon began as the ornament of "tout homme bien né [every well-born man]" (Figure 7), it was quickly "exiled" to the noses of "women of letters"⁷ and taken up in a magic form as the subject of a novel by just such a woman, Delphine de Girardin.⁸ Likewise, the lorgnette

7. "Le Lorgnon," *Aujourd'hui, Journal des Ridicules* (August 15, 1839): 2. The fashion of the *lorgnon*, as Figure 3.9 suggests, first belonged to "muscadins" and "incroyables," part of what Nicole Pellegrin has called an "epidemic" of myopia affecting young unmarried men of good families trying to avoid military service. It then became associated with high class standing and anti-Jacobin politics (*Les Vêtements de la liberté* [Paris: Alinea, 1989], 113). See also Jean-Claude Margolin, "Vers une sémiologie historique des lunettes à nez," in Pierre Marly, *Lunettes et lorgnettes* (Paris: Hoëbeke, 1988), 13; Mme Alfred Heyman, *Les Lunettes et les lorgnettes de jadis* (Paris: Leroy, 1911), 23; and Katell Le Bourhis, ed., *The Age of Napoleon: Costume from Revolution to Empire* (New York: Abrams, 1989), 49–69. See its significant appearance in the hand of Ingres's *Madame Marcotte de Saint-Marie*, 1826.

8. Delphine de Girardin, *Le Lorgnon* (Paris: Gosselin, 1832). The person with the magic lorgnon is male. By the 1840s, the use of a lorgnon seems to have become unmannerly, as notes the gossip column of *La Gazette des Femmes* (November 25, 1843): I "We know that it is forbidden to honorable ladies . . . to use a lorgnon." Why this may be so seems to relate to a further censorship of their gaze. It is also "forbidden" "to look assiduously around the room."

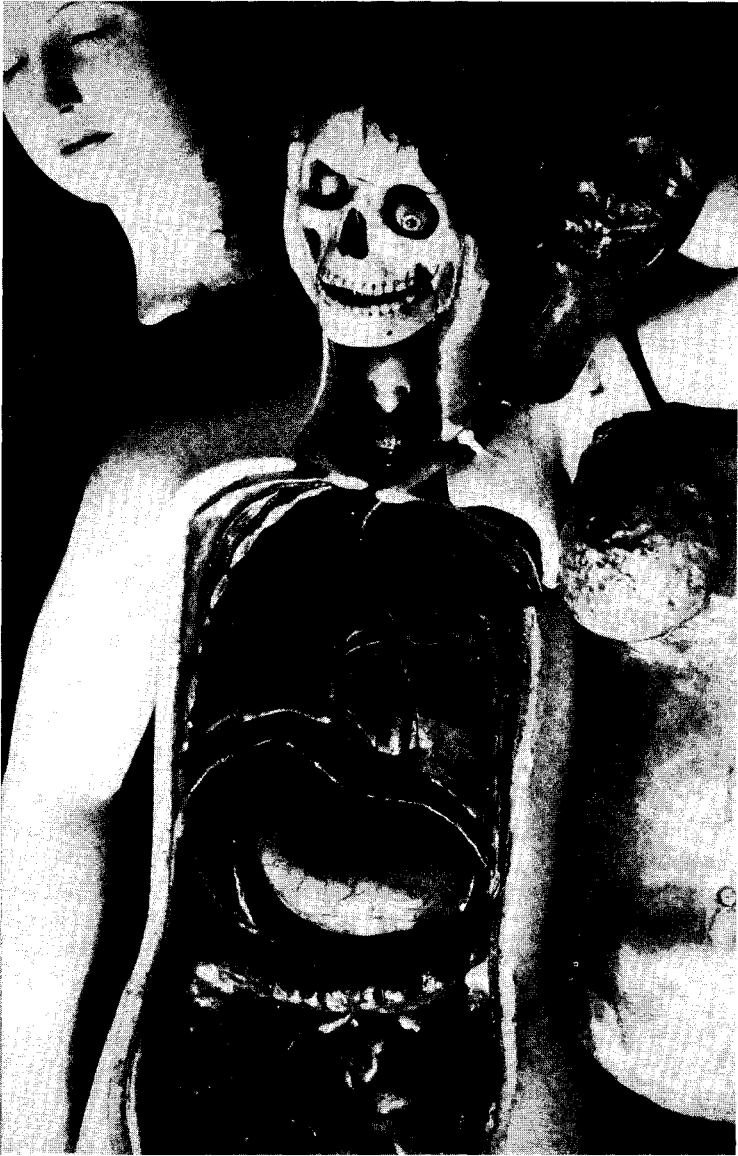


Figure 3. *La Vénus anatomique*, wax anatomical sculpture with forty movable pieces, including fetus, a centerpiece of Spitzner's "Grand Musée Anatomique et Ethnologique" (founded 1856). Illustration from *Cires anatomiques du XIXe siècle: collection du Dr. Spitzner* (exhibition catalog) (Paris: Centre Culturel de la Communauté française de Belgique, 1980), 14.



Figure 4. *Le Marchand de kaleidoscopes*, from engraving from Mme Alfred Heyman, *Les Lunettes et les lorgnettes de jadis* (Paris: Leroy, 1911), 37 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris). The caption reads: “Oui, j’en ai de toutes les formes, de grands, de petits, et d’énormes. Mesdames, entre nous, Comment les voulez-vous? [Yes, I have all shapes: large, small, and enormous. My ladies, between us, how do you want them?].”

(Figure 8), depicted by a 1768 dictionary as a special mark of importance and honor for “les élégants,” had become by the July Monarchy such a mark of bourgeois women’s style that it was listed by the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* as one of the four objects that “a fashionable woman must have at the theatre.”⁹ During the July Monarchy, women’s most favored fashion accessory, the fan, was adapted to current fads by the insertion of a small lorgnette in its center (Figure 9). Such eyeglasses gave a new twist to the stories told about curiosity, for they were particularly useful for women, whom they allowed to see close up from afar, all the while enabling them to maintain

9. Caraccioli, *Dictionnaire critique* (Lyon, 1768), 1:384, cited by Pellegrin, *Les Vêtements*, 113; *Journal des Dames et des Modes* (April 20, 1823). The lorgnette’s importance as part of the “new style” of the postrevolutionary period is emphasized by an engraving depicting new fashion confronting old fashion. The woman of the old fashion holds a fan (Châtaigner inventory no. 5.9, reproduced in Le Bourhis, *The Age of Napoleon*, 25); the new woman gazes at her through a lorgnette. An image I discuss in “Exhibiting and Exposing” from Gavarni’s *Petits Bonheurs* (*Le Charivari* [April 8, 1837]) depicts the working-class girl trying a lorgnette, which is imagined to confer status to the aspiring worker.

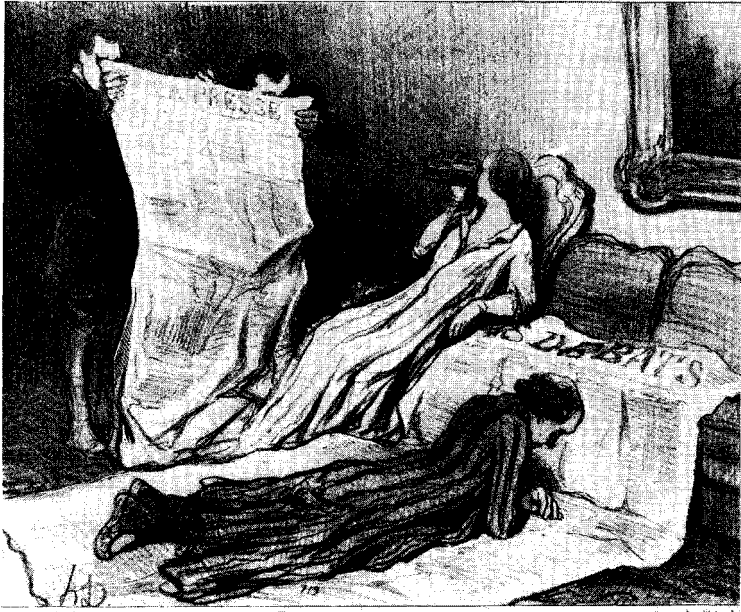


Figure 5. Daumier, *Subscribers Receiving Their Newspaper and Seeking the Way to Use It*, lithograph from the *Actualités* series, *Le Charivari*, January 31, 1845, 3. Reprinted with permission of Department of Printing and Graphic Arts, The Houghton Library, Harvard University.



Figure 6. Bourdet, *Béotismes parisiens*, lithograph from *Le Charivari*, April 6, 1836. Reprinted with permission of Department of Printing and Graphic Arts, The Houghton Library, Harvard University.



Chapeau en Pateau Rabbit Couleur Crotin Culotte de Peau

Figure 7. Horace Vernet, *Incroyable with lorgnon*, engraving from Roger-Armand Weigert, ed., *Incroyables et merveilleuses* (Paris: Rombaldi, 1956) (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris).

distances dictated by propriety. Yet the root of the word from which both *lorgnette* and *lorgnon* derive suggests a kind of looking repeatedly evoked by critics of realism as the source of textual danger: *lorgner*—to gaze with desire and covetousness, to cast a sidelong glance, to ogle, to leer, or, provocatively, to make eyes.

That Emma Bovary is shown early in Flaubert's novel wearing a special looking glass replicates a fascination with the objects that alter vision running from July Monarchy caricature through the Third Republic. What seems peculiar to the two or three decades mid-century during which fears of "realism" emerge is the emphasis on women's looking and the eroticism fantasmatically attached to that vision. "What was really beautiful about her was her eyes," writes Flaubert's narrator of Emma at the moment early in the novel when Charles first watches her pricking her fingers as she sews: "Her gaze came at you frankly, with a candid boldness" (F49). Significantly, however, Emma does not *look* through the special looking glass with which she might aggrandize her vision, but wears her "*lorgnon d'écaille*" (tortoiseshell eyeglass) dangled around her neck "like a man, thrust between two buttons of her blouse" (F50). Though her wearing of the eyeglass is depicted as giving her a kind of male allure, it nevertheless seems to attract, from its provocative position at her bodice, quite another version of the male gaze.¹

Yet it is precisely Emma's viewpoint that disturbs the critics and censors in 1857. "How the eyes of this woman enlarge!" exclaims the prosecutor Pinard, in his excoriation of the moments of the novel he believes glorify adultery and threaten to seduce the young women of France into thinking such pleasures desirable. She is, because of her eyes somehow, never more "dazzling as in the days after her fall," never more "ravishing" than after she has bared herself to adultery and illusions. What we see through Pinard's citations and commentary during the trial is a gaze upon this woman "without a veil" (F378, E19). Exposed to a gaze that is somehow not at all that of the women of France he believes endangered, Emma is imagined by the prosecutor in her physiognomic nakedness: "The poses are voluptuous, the beauty of Madame Bovary is a beauty of provocation" (F375, E14).

1. Some clue to the appropriate way for a woman to wear a *lorgnon* might be gleaned from Ingres's *Portrait de Madame Marcotte de Sainte-Marie*, Paris, Musée du Louvre, where the woman decorously wears her looking glasses on a chain hanging nearly to her waist. Illustrations in *La Mode* (e.g., May 1836) depict women holding their looking glasses, like handkerchiefs or umbrellas, in their hands—never tucked between buttons of their blouses. A clue to the style Emma imitates—the way men may have worn their glasses—may be found in the Second Empire "Portrait de Laffière," in Louis Maigrin, *Le Romantisme et la mode* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1989). Félicien Rops's charcoal (ca. 1860) of a woman with a *lorgnon* hanging around her bared neck suggests the "charms" of such an imitation: Jacques Derrida, *Mémoires d'aveugle* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1990), plate 37.

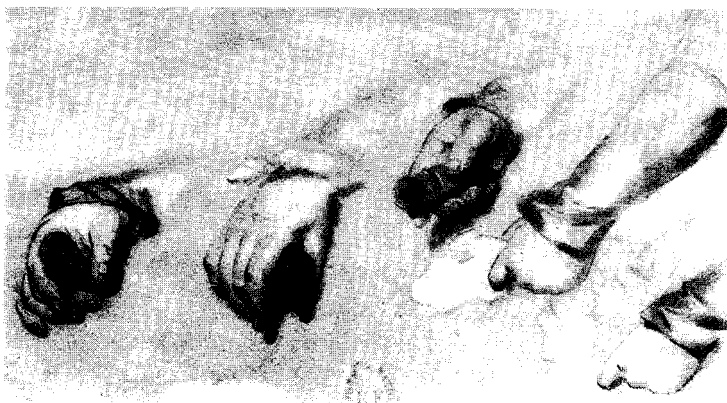


Figure 8. Boilly, *Etudes de mains tenant la lorgnette*, drawing from Mme Alfred Heyman, *Les Lunettes et les lorgnettes de jadis* (Paris: Leroy, 1911) (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris).

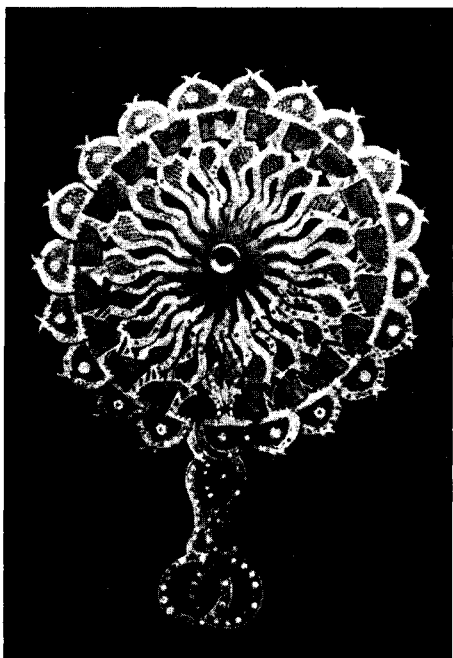


Figure 9. Fan with lorgnette in center, photograph from Mme Alfred Heyman, *Les Lunettes et les lorgnettes de jadis* (Paris: Leroy, 1911), facing p. 34 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris).

Emma's gaze at herself in the mirror, after her first encounter with Rodolphe, convinces Pinard that the "lascivious pictures" of this novel cannot be redeemed by some moral message in its ending. "From this first fault, from this first fall," fulminates the prosecutor, "she glorified adultery, she sang its song, its poetry, and its sensual pleasures. This, gentlemen, to me is much more dangerous and immoral than the fall itself!" (F377, E17). What Pinard says he wants here, "a sentiment of remorse that she feels, in the presence of this deceived husband who adores her," is replaced by Emma's own delighted vision of herself in her looking glass: "Never had she had eyes so large, so black, of so profound a depth," writes Flaubert of what she *saw* in the mirror (F191; trial citation, F377, E17). This greedy vision, these all-encompassing eyes, that covetous gaze of the adulteress, is precisely what the critics, the censors, and the Flaubertian narrator alike imagine as characterizing its protagonist. She is a woman imagined by the novel and censors alike as having both an expansive point of view and an indomitable moral vision of her own. The prosecutor claims, he confesses, to have "sought in this book a person who could rule this woman" and found "none there": "Only one person is right, rules, dominates, and that is Emma Bovary" (F387, E35).

That Emma Bovary's vision might "dominate" this text proves more than daunting to the novel's critics as well. Gustave Merlet treats the novel as a "realist" "exhibition of paintings," which might give the reader pleasure to "lorgner de près cette jeune fille [give a long hard look at this girl]" but ultimately might overwhelm.² Like those critics who summoned wax museums as reference points for the realism they believed endangered readers, Merlet compares Flaubert's novel, to the closed rooms of the Museo Borbonico in Naples, otherwise known as the "secret museum," where sexually explicit material from Pompeii was hidden from the public until the 1860s. *Madame Bovary* is like, Merlet writes, a "cabinet reserved for a certain number of paintings that the crowd seems to seek out, but which we will not speak of, because, according to us, it would have been wise not to show them to the public. It would have rather been necessary to close them under lock and key."³ Like the Musée Dupuytren, Merlet's imaginary censored "cabinet" serves as a touchstone for the contents

2. Gustave Merlet, "Le Réalisme physiologique," in *Réalistes et fantaisistes*, 2d ed. (Paris: Didier, 1863 [1860]), 95, 96.
3. *Ibid.*, 99. On the locked cabinet of the National Museum of Naples, known as the Museo Borbonico from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, see Walter Kendrick *The Secret Museum: Pornography in Modern Culture* (New York: Viking, 1987), 6–15. Kendrick points out that this "secret museum" of Pompeii was the referent for the meaning of the word *pornography* in the mid-nineteenth century (13). The first complete guide to the museum, M. L. Barré. *Herculanum et Pompei*, 8 vols. (Paris, 1875–77), compares the "untoward" parts of the museum to the cadavers before which an anatomist would not flinch (cited in Kendrick, 15). Daria Colombo's Harvard honors thesis research on nineteenth-century French tourist guidebooks to Italy confirmed that travelers knew of the locked cabinet but were prohibited admission until the late 1860s.

of the "realist" novel. What Merlet will call its surgical dissections and cold-blooded anatomical work are likened to brutal paintings we would choose rather not to show publicly.⁴ Abandoned to the "spectacle" Merlet believes ruled neither by heart nor by conscience, we are made to share the narrator's impassive "gaze"—an eye that is again compared explicitly to that of Emma Bovary. To the realism that "kills eloquence and poetry" and "pretends to please us with tastes for depraved things," Merlet gives the name of the one with whose vision he believes Flaubert too much colluded—"le bovarisme."⁵

Could we say, then, that "realism" names a way women look? Or a way women are imagined to look? Or is it, rather, a way men might look when they look *like* women (who ought not to be looking to begin with)? Or perhaps even the way men look who want to look like fallen women? No matter how we retell this story of imagined spectacles, we find that "realism" in these trials and in this criticism refers repeatedly back to a series of terrors about certain kinds of looking and certain kinds of viewers.

* * *

AVITAL RONELL

From Crack Wars†

* * *

IX

The structure of addiction, and even of drug addiction in particular, is anterior to any empirical availability of crack, ice or street stuff. This structure and necessity are what Flaubert discovers and exposes. A quiver in the history of madness (to which no prescription of reason can be simply and rigorously opposed), the chemical prosthesis, the mushroom or plant, respond to a fundamental structure, and not the other way around. Of course, one can be hooked following initiation and

4. Merlet, "Le Réalisme physiologique," 114–15.

5. *Ibid.*, 115, 141. Merlet's notion of that realism took root in the French language. *Le Petit Larousse*, 29th ed. (Paris, 1967), defines "bovarysme" as an "insatisfaction romanesque consistant à vouloir s'évader de sa condition en se créant une personnalité idéalisée, comme le fit l'héroïne de Flaubert Madame Bovary."

† *From Crack Wars: Literature, Addiction, Mania* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1992). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

exposure but even this supposes a prior disposition to admitting the injectable phallus.

A mysticism in the absence of God, a mystical transport going nowhere, like the encapsulated carriage once again. This is not far from Bataille's "inner experience" of ecstasy, a "mysticisme dégagé de ses antécédents religieux . . ." that is, a mysticism without mysticism or experience without truth.¹

What do we hold against the drug addict? What do we hold against the drug addict?

It is possibly of some importance that a flower of a different sort, a hallucinated woman, be made to experiment with what we can still call the transcendental street drug—or with feminine incorporations of a phallic flux. A strong concept of purity shot through with virility will come to dominate the history of Madame Bovary, who bears so many traces of manliness.

Any way you look at it, Emma Bovary carries the marks of her many incorporations of a foreign body. We have yet to grasp the male sex she carries with her, for Emma is not a simply gendered woman. Her prime injections of a foreign body follow the multiple lines of an interiorizing violence.

"a pince-nez which she carried, like a man, tucked in between two buttons of her bodice"

X

In the first place, Emma's moments of libidinal encounter are frequently described as experiences of intoxication. The second place, however, may be of more interest. In the second place, then, we discover that drugs, when submitted to Flaubert's precision of irony, are after all not viewed as a conduit of escape but as present at the base of life:

What do we hold against the drug addict?

He seemed to her contemptible, weak and insignificant. How could she get rid of him? What an endless evening! She felt numb, as though she had been overcome by opium fumes. (217)

An evening with her husband, Charles Bovary. How could she get rid of him?

Emma judges Charles to be a weak man. The judgment is sounded from a position of feminine

1. "Ne peut-on dégager de ses antécédents religieux la possibilité, demeurée ouverte, quoi qu'il semble à l'incroyant, de l'expérience mystique? la dégager de l'ascèse du dogme et de l'atmosphère des religions? la dégager en un mot du mysticisme—au point de la lier à la nudité de l'ignorance." Georges Bataille, *L'Expérience intérieure*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 5 (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), p. 422.

virility. His nullity, overwhelming, turns her into a hit man (how to get rid of him?). From the sense of the deadening infinitude of this confrontation, the threatening limitlessness of what is mediocre, Emma reconstitutes existence as an effect of an overdrawn downer. Not only does this passage argue for the refinement of difference—this opiate acts differently from other insinuations of her substance/husband abuse—it also shows the opium base to be at the bottom of life. Life in its essential normalcy (they are at the dinner table when she ODs) yields to death because it is on the side of an endlessness that numbs. And so Emma Bovary's body gets rigid with the presentiment of nothingness.

Like the Western world, there is no place or moment in the life of Madame Bovary that could be designated as genuinely clean or drug-free, because being exposed to existence, and placing one's body in the grips of a temporality that pains, produces a rapport to being that is addictive, artificial and beside itself. The history of mood, or aesthetic theory, from Baumgarten to Heidegger deals ecstasy (Nietzsche: *Rausch*), zoning out (Schopenhauer), inspired trance (Kant). But Emma, she is only a rookie trafficking in abstract forms of forgetting. She suffers endlessly from her finitude, sitting there face to face with her husband. "She felt numb," which is to say, she felt non-feeling. Life assigns itself to her with a drained sensation of its own nothingness.² If Emma is going to take drugs seriously, it will be only in order to diminish the power, to decrease the dosage that numbs. She needs a counterdrug, something to repel the ruthless continuity of the opiate, "life." In another sense, this need inscribes the same kind of logic that consists in taking drugs for the sake of an experience, that is: "for the experience" of that which hounds the limits of experience but nonetheless belongs to a decisive zone of experience.

Life's vacant terror

2. Cf. Flaubert: "My youth drugged me with some kind of opium of boredom for the rest of my life" (letter of October 21, 1851, in Flaubert, *Oeuvres* [Paris: Pléiade edition, Gallimard, 1951]).

To the extent that drugs delineate the experience of experience as a moment which slips or turns away from responsible consciousness and self-stability, they offer a reflection of the non-present nature of experience whose marked interpretability follows lines of delay and reconstitution, forgetting and *Nachträglichkeit*.

What then is the difference between these experiential zones? It's too soon to tell, and one doesn't want to fall into the pits of defending Being-as-drugs (of the ecstatic or calming sort). Still, it is absolutely necessary to hazard a preliminary hypothesis and to take risks. What is Emma, literary philtre, on to? On the one hand, drugs are linked to a mode of departing, to desocialization—much like the activity of writing, to the extent that it exists without the assurance of arriving anywhere. Considered non-productive and somehow irresponsible, a compulsive player of destruction, Being-on-drugs resists the production of value which, on another, more Bataille register, indicates that it disrupts the production of meaning. Emma exists somewhere between the drug addict and the writer (she is a writer; at least she owns the equipment, the stylus).³ Obsessed and entranced, narcissistic, private, unable to achieve transference, the writer often resembles the addict. This is why every serious war on drugs comes from a community that is at some level of consciousness also hostile to the genuine writer, the figure of drifter/dissident, which it threatens to expel. Like the addict, such a writer is incapable of producing real value or stabilizing the truth of a real world. The differences between them are not difficult to discern, and yet a single logic of parasitism binds the two activities to each other. The drug addict offers her body to the production of hallucination, vision or trance, a production assembled in the violence of non-address. This form of internal saturation of self, unhooked from a grander effective circuit, marks

3. On Emma Bovary as writer see Naomi Schor, "For a Restricted Thematics: Writing, Speech and Difference in *Madame Bovary*," trans. Harriet Stone, in *The Future of Difference*, ed. Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), pp. 167–92.

the constitutive adestination of the addict's address. Going nowhere fast, as we say, Madame Bovary in this regard signs up for the drug program to the extent that she resumes the violence of non-address.

She had bought herself a blotter [*un buvard*], writing-case, penholder, and envelopes although *she had no one to write to*. . . . (52) (italics added)⁴

With nowhere to go and little to do, these mis-sives, along with the equipment that maintains them, can only be routed inwardly. But it is an inwardness of diminished interiority, a kind of dead letter box—an impasse in destination. Still, writing for no one to no address counts for something; it is the writer's common lot. For Flaubert, this movement of the simulacrum without address (or in another idiom: without purpose, point) is associated with the toxic pleasure of a certain narcissism:

I have condemned myself to write for myself alone, for my own personal amusement, the way one smokes or rides.⁵

It is important to weigh this violence of non-address because it designates a most vulnerable type of writing that is, like smoking, susceptible to acts of nihilism, burning out. Unaddressed or unchanneled pleasure, condemnation to solitary confinement, with or without a community of smokers, belongs to the registers of a "feminine" writing in the sense that it is neither phallically aimed nor referentially anchored, but scattered like cinders. At no point a prescriptive language or pharmacological ordinance, it is rather a writing on the loose, running around without a proper route, even dispensing with the formalities of signing. The impropriety of such writing—which returns only to haunt itself, refusing to bond with community or affirm its health and

Flaubert
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4. I should like to point out that "a blotter" and "*un buvard*" recuperate the link between writing and drinking in the novel, but also refer us to the proper name of its title: buvard, bovary. Cf. "to be blotto," to be smashed, drunk.

5. Cited in Francis Steegmuller, *Flaubert and Madame Bovary: A Double Portrait* (Chicago: University of Chicago P, 1977), p. 108.

value—consistently reflects a situation of depro-
 priation, a loss of the proper. Thus the heroine
 (who is also, sometimes, Flaubert: “Madame Bo-
 vary, c’est moi!”) not only has no one to write to,
 but also lacks a proper name (“ ‘Madame Bovary!
 Everyone calls you that! And it’s not even your
 name—it’s someone else’s . . . someone else’s!’ He
 buried his face in his hands” [134].) Still, this is
 the name that entitles the book, and cosigns its
 cover. But the countersignatory functions like a
 bad check, destined to collapse upon itself and
 bounce. The destinee of a drug addict or such a
 writer responds to the hallucinated other of
 Kafka’s *Judgment*, the “friend in Russia” whose
 existence a paternally muscled law can at any
 time deny or appropriate. But even when the
 other is smoked out, there’s a chance that writing
 will take place.

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XI

Someone has referred to *Madame Bovary* as a
 paranoid text. It wasn’t me. Constantly on the
 lookout for details, it feels entrapped by a clo-
 surally threatening movement of the real; addi-
 tionally, it makes certain obsessional pacts with
 itself, not letting very much slip by its screening
 devices. It has the clandestine rapport to machin-
 ery for which paranoid strategists are famous.
 Surveillance apparatuses, the listening device,
 and the magnifying glass all belong to its narra-
 tology. Flaubert himself developed a rhetoric of
 machinery to describe his activity of writing. Not
 quite at the level of Dr. Schreber’s *Memoirs*, the
 narrative gestures are nevertheless too surgical to
 evade nervous technicity.

On the narrative level of textual experience,
 the eruption of paranoia is felt at those times
 when Emma Bovary gets a hit. When signs are
 everywhere readable, signification becomes per-
 secutory. Take one morning when “she glanced
 around uneasily, looking intently at every figure
 moving on the horizon, at every dormer window
 in the village from which she might be seen. She
 listened for the sound of footsteps, voices and

plows, and whenever she heard something she would stop in her tracks, paler and more trembling than the leaves of the poplars swaying above her head.

One morning as she was coming back she suddenly thought she saw a long rifle being aimed at her." (142–43)

"and her soul,
sinking into that
intoxication"

Such passages of sensitive terror dominate the residue of intoxication. And so the narrative, as codependent and accomplice, shows Emma adopting strategies to help her avoid coming down from what it calls "love." "Love had intoxicated (*enivrée*) her at first, and she had thought of nothing beyond it. But now that it had become an essential part of her life she was afraid she might lose part of it, or even that something might arise to interfere with it" (142). On the loose and on the run, she dives into a paranoid crash position which organizes her "downfall" in the novel.

XII

GOING DOWN What goes hand in hand with her decline is a kind of crash economy, an exorbitant expenditure with no reserve: we call this "narcodollars." Quite understandably, little has been said about Emma Bovary's radically losing economy, save to mention perhaps her creditor, a certain Mr. High and Happy—Monsieur Lheureux. No doubt this topos fails to gain easy currency within readings that limit themselves to variants of housewifely neurosis, unmastered lovesickness, "Bovarysme," or even frustrated writing habits. Yet all these conditions are linked to expenditure. To support her habit—while to a certain degree objectless, it is still maintained as a substance in the novel—Emma Bovary invests a field of liquidity that involves incredible manipulation of interest rates, capital gains, mortgaging and even, indeed, laundered money. She keeps a whole village economy vibrating, cutting deals like a shrewd cartel. She is dealing however for her own consumption and not trading properly. She borrows too much (in

the way she borrows—cites, lives off—literature). At any rate, Lheureux pulls a fast one and the narcodollars overwhelm her. In the end, she's liquidated.

liquidare (med.)

The momentum of a savage cash flow cannot be contained by a reading of *Madame Bovary* that restricts itself merely to following her down the adulterous path, however charming this might seem. There's the question of a libidinal economy, of course, and of the spermatic economy in which she spends herself. Her lovers, fairly well endowed with capital flow, do not leave clues as to why she should be running such a relentlessly losing economy. Her uncontrollable expenditure at once points to a complete divestiture of property (she secretly sells the inheritance and property of her husband) and to the flow that is being drawn from her. She quite literally is being drained of resources: something is vampirizing Emma Bovary. Now this drainage which in itself produces nothing—there is no transfer of energy or funds—will terminate only when the cash flow gushes out of her mouth at the scene of her suicide. This is when the concept itself of currency becomes assimilated to her circulatory systems. Within the larger economy of the novel, these speculations are nothing new, for the narrative has dropped hints along the way.

liquidare (med.)

When we first came upon her, Emma Bovary, displaying symptoms of auto-vampirism, was running an internally regulated circulation, a currency whose losses she could initially absorb:

as she sewed, she kept pricking her fingers
and raising them to her lips to suck them.
(12)

Suturing and opening, stitching and wounding—she at once textures and bleeds. Into her mouth. The marks of a vampire should in any case come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Charles's taste in women, for his first wife—the second Madame Bovary—“was skinny; she had long teeth” (16). When, on the other hand, Emma's vampiric traits arise, they are accompanied by another trademark of a foreign body invasion, which

is to say, she begins to exhibit virile features, she enters a semiosis of masculine properties: "She had a shell-rimmed pince-nez which she carried, like a man, tucked in between two buttons of her bodice" (13). Or, again:

Finally even those who still had doubts lost them when she was seen stepping out of the Hirondelle one day wearing a tight, mannish-looking vest . . . (165)

Periodically growing signs of an indwelling alterity, Emma Bovary appears to suffer incorporation. There is something other gnawing at her, a beloved, but at the same time a Persecutor whom she has to feed and nourish. This may in part furnish an explanation for her inability to

nurture
her
child.

* * *

The tensions rumbling through the novel derive from a secret war against artificial, pathogenic and foreign invasions. And thus Emma Bovary invades the space of the infant as a missile of toxicity, an emetic mother, artificial and dangerous. Invading and polluting what is naturally polluted ("dirty water"), she inspires toxic desire in others. As she is about to leave, the wet-nurse thus asks Emma Bovary for coffee and alcohol.

"if you'd just let me have"—she gave her a supplicating look—"a little jug of brandy," she said at last. (81)

She is dealing, even over the body of her child.

Tenderness "I'll rub your little girl's feet with it; they're as tender as your tongue." (81)

Emma, in any case, cannot feed her child, she cannot bend her body to postures of maternal abundance or "natural" forms of vampirism. She will not let her child eat her, but something is eating her and she herself cannot stop consuming. We still have to deal with the cemetery, but later.

XIV

First let us spend the night with Madame Bovary. It is a night of devoration and one which—perhaps we have succeeded in demonstrating as much—is not doing “organic food.” When does Emma Bovary start doing the artifice for which she officially gets busted? When does she start hallucinating literature? “When she was thirteen her father took her to town to place her in a convent school. They stopped at an inn at the Saint-Gervais quarter where they ate their supper from plates on which scenes from the life of Mademoiselle de la Vallière were painted. The explanatory captions, interrupted here and there by knife scratches, all glorified piety, the sensibilities of the heart and the pomp of the court” (30).

From this point onward, literature presents itself now as an addictive substance, now as a kind of birth control pill, simulating pregnancies of the imagination, keeping the body open to comestible fictions. In any case, as she downs literature, her palate adjusts to these plates with their cutting traces. She consumes literature without end. This, however, always refers her to the possibility of food or its refusal, a kind of symbolic order about which Flaubert remains tenaciously explicit. This supper, in the company of her father, at the threshold of the convent, may represent her last supper. She was thirteen. Henceforth she would receive other communions, touching off different registers of incorporation. Shortly thereafter, in fact, on one occasion, “she tried to fast for a whole day, to mortify herself” (30).

She is not the only one. Others have a similar rapport to the thing, literature, that they swallow. And so the narrative brings up the addict-supplier, the old spinster, as it was then said of the solitary feminine, who came to the convent to mend linen. A dispossessed aristocrat, she

secretly let the older girls read the novels she always had in her apron pocket (the good lady herself devoured [avalait] long chapters

eat-speak-
interiorize

from them during the intervals in her work).
(31)

When she has a good hit of literature Emma experiences “raptures.” Flashback. What is going down?

Eating disorders The primary order of depravity on which the novel reports, prior to any loosening of the libidinal bolt, concerns Emma’s eating habits, which forms the great metaphoric reserve for everything she takes and rejects. Her appetitive needs are at no point conceived either as natural or conventional, but somewhere between what these categories legislate. In an early outline profiling the sequence of events, Flaubert noted marginally:

Depraved appetites of Mme Bovary, loves unripe fruit, likes her food undercooked, drinks vinegar, and eats pickles for breakfast.⁶

This would indicate a starting point for reading the tables of her law, the fundamental question of appetite (taste, desire) in its asserted relation to depravity. What does it mean when one refuses to eat properly or according to convention? What is being projected when someone develops bad eating habits? And what about the particularity of Emma Bovary’s taste, or any judgment of taste?

Check out the menu; what does it prepare for us?

Resembling the alcoholic who frequently drinks in order to preserve an incorporated other, Emma’s depravity consists in favoring the marinated, the preserved, or the object not yet converted to a food substance, a dubious feast of vampiric wonder (“likes her food undercooked”).

“In times of crises, on TV, someone The trajectory of the eaten in the novel goes from her father’s annual gift of a turkey, intended to celebrate Charles’s successful binding

6. Steegmuller (*Flaubert*, p. 355) publishes a reproduction of the second scenario prepared by Flaubert. The quoted passage was inserted, in the outline, next to “—departure from Rouen, drunk with love and tears, with the thought of his hair, with champagne—she trembles and perspires in the carriage on the way back as she thinks of it all,” and not far from “the thought of seeing him again is intoxicating. . . —they become lovers again—intoxicating—she tries to return to Charles.”

of his leg, to her first suicide attempt, which was provoked by a note delivered in a basket of apricots. The basket case came compliments of Rodolphe. He has decided not to share the projected trip with her. This early contiguity of death threat and fruit cocktail that blasts its way through her house forces down her throat the poison that Emma must swallow.

always resorts to making coffee. Maybe coffee was the right thing at this moment."
—Cookie Muo

Why do these toxic eruptions transfix a woman's body? Why could it not have been Monsieur Bovary that inaugurated a certain form of quotidian psychosis? Perhaps you find these questions unsatisfying. The response, even more so: it all comes from the issue of her body, the sudden spill of liquid, the way she's stained and shredded by anguish. Coming from her, originating in her, it is nonetheless a foreign body, ever replacing the newly born body. Catastrophe of the liquid oozing. She has a mortgage out on her body, a monthly payment. PMS

Freud: "I am beginning only now to understand the neurosis of anguish; menstruation is its physiological prototype, constituting a toxic condition which has as its basis an organic process." (Letter to Fliess, 1 March 1896)⁷

ROBERT STAM

From Madame Bovary Goes to the Movies†

* * *

Flaubert's precise articulation of angle of vision anticipates not only camera "setups" but also a favored technique in Robbe-Grillet's novels of clearly marked character vantage points within voyeuristic structures. Flaubert's technique, true to the logic of the proto-cinematic, also anticipates a signature device of one of the cinema's

7. Sigmund Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1877-1904*, trans & ed. by Jeffrey Mossaieff Masson (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1985).

† This essay is based on material from Robert Stam's *Literature Through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*. Reprinted by permission of the author. Extracts from *Madame Bovary* are from the 1964 Signet Classic edition.

most popular directors, Alfred Hitchcock, who often practices rotating point-of-view among various characters. In *The Birds*, for example, point-of-view shots are accorded not only to the main character (Melanie) but also to other major characters (Mitch, Lydia), as well as to passersby (the unseen "acousmatic" young man who whistles at Melanie in the opening shot; the man on the dock at Bodega Bay whose regard follows Melanie as she gets into her boat). Most innovatively, Hitchcock grants "the right of regard" to the birds themselves at crucial junctures in the film—the beginning, the aerial/avian views of the burning gas station, and the finale, where the birds watch the departing humans.¹

Like Hitchcock, Flaubert is the master of the manipulation of what in the cinema is called "focal length." Note, for example, the abrupt move that takes us from the long shot of the Rouen cab, carrying Leon and Emma making hurried love, to the close detail shot of Emma's "torn-up note," followed by the chilly distancing that turns Emma into a generic "femme" descending from a vehicle:

Then, about six o'clock, the carriage stopped in a side street of the Beauvoisine section, and a woman stepped down, walking away with her veil pulled down and without looking back. (p. 234)

This rotating approach allows Flaubert to achieve a kind of variable focus and focal length. This variability is ideally suited to the ambivalence in the narrator, who at some points identifies with Emma—"Madame Bovary, c'est moi"—and who at others seems to be repelled by her. This technique can take us from extreme intimacy on the one hand—Flaubert places us within the very eyes and skin of Emma, so that we look with her, strain our eyes with her, feel our heart beat with her, even enjoy orgasm with her—to an icy and judgmental distance on the other. We find here the literary counterpart, as it were, not only of the "axis match"—a succession of shots from the same angle but using different focal lengths—but also of "rack focus," the procedure whereby foreground and background are successively made to switch places in terms of clarity and focus.

Flaubert's destabilized portraiture, not only in terms of physical milieux but also in terms of character, is again reminiscent of the cinema, where character is often rendered as a flowing composition in time. Not only do Flaubert's characters refuse to sit still for their

1. This process begins even with the film's logo—the whirling globe of Universal—on which is superimposed the cries of birds (implying a avian point of view) and invoked again in the final shots, where a line of birds is implied to be watching the departure of Melanie and Mitch and the others from a scene that the birds have come to reappropriate from human beings.

portrait; the portraitist (Flaubert, or better the narrational camera) also refuses to stay still. Charles' first encounters with Emma, for example, are not rendered by a static description of Emma's fixed "traits" but rather through Charles' fleeting impressions:

A young woman in a blue wool dress trimmed with three flounces came out of the threshold of the door to receive Monsieur Bovary, and she invited him into the kitchen, where a large fire was blazing. The farmhands' dinner was boiling around it, in small pots of varying sizes. Some damp garments were drying inside the fireplace. (p. 37)

Emma Bovary, although she is the title character, is not even named: she is simply "a young woman," exactly the status to which she returns after the cab sequence. The encounter with Emma, seemingly rendered from Charles' point of view, is quickly lost in sensuous details that have nothing directly to do with Emma, who at this point has not yet come to rivet Charles' (or the narrator's) attention.

* * *

Madame Bovary is, above all, relentlessly visualist. In his correspondence, Flaubert described himself as having "almost voluptuous sensations from the mere act of seeing . . . the plot is of no interest to me, I aim at rendering a color, a shade . . ." He conceives of himself, then, as a kind of word painter, a formulation that undercuts the verbal/visual divide erected by many critics. Flaubert shapes an artistic universe where things are seen and perceived and felt before they are known. Interestingly, the appreciative words about reading that Flaubert places in the mouth of Leon might apply equally well to cinema:

Motionless we traverse countries we fancy we see, and your thought, blending with the fiction, toys with details, or follows the outline of the adventures. It mingles with the characters, and it seems as if it were yourself palpitating beneath their costumes.

Here Flaubert comes close to describing what Metz later called the processes of primary and secondary cinematic identification, the process whereby our thoughts blend with the filmic fiction, mingling with the characters in a strange amalgam of self and other, lived as a virtual, shared experiential *duree*.

In a famous 1863 essay in *Le Figaro*, Charles Baudelaire used the term "modernité" to designate an art of the "ephemeral, the fugitive, and the contingent."² Like the impressionists, Flaubert's

2. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, p. 13.

art was anti-academic, the literary equivalent of “broken brushwork.” Bypassing the Academy’s rules concerning technical procedure, the impressionists concentrated more on the mode of perception than on the object perceived. Flaubert’s decentering of the portraiture of Emma corresponds to the inappropriate shadow cast by the parasol in Monet’s portraits, or to the intrusive fan obscuring the woman’s face in *Berthe Morisot with a Fan* (1872). Like *Madame Bovary*, impressionist paintings too were accused of being “incoherent,” “failures,” and “travesties.” The impressionists were accused of elevating the *ébauche* (sketch) to the status of the finished product. “With her talent,” art critics asked of Berthe Morisot, “why doesn’t she take the trouble to finish her paintings?” Flaubert’s rendering of Emma’s fleeting, inattentive, and selective glance, within what might be called an “aesthetic of glimpses,” corresponds to the selective focus and variable precision of Manet’s *Concert aux Tuileries* (1862), which disdains correct composition in favor of rendering the modern experience of the passing glance and the glimpsing of faces within a swirling crowd. Even Flaubert’s choice of writing about “nothing,” recalls the impressionist indifference to subject matter, to Manet’s search for the insignificant, for example. Rather than the grand manner of the *style historique*, the impressionists presented human detritus and popular types, as in Manet’s *Le Vieux Musicien* (1862).

Madame Bovary is a badly written novel, much as Godard’s *Breathless* is a badly made film, or *Dejeuner sur l’herbe* a badly done painting. What all these works share, I would suggest, is their anti-grammaticality, their subversion of the dominant codes of artistic decorum. The suspense, in all these cases, has less to do with plot content than with style as an absolute way of seeing things. Even Flaubert’s refusal of plot anticipates the impressionist refusal of grand historical narratives and mythological references. Flaubert’s counterpointing of literary styles, meanwhile, foreshadows the counterpointing of painterly styles that we find in *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* just six years after the publication of *Madame Bovary*.³

3. Dominick LaCapra, in his illuminating study *Madame Bovary on Trial*, sees Flaubert’s novel as profoundly subversive, less in the surface content of its social portraiture than in its stylistic subversion of aesthetic norms. LaCapra points out that Flaubert subverts a whole gamut of aesthetic norms, notably: 1) *norms of description*, e.g. the assumption that every detail must be germane, relevant, while Flaubert is digressive and disproportionate, apparently giving “excessive” emphasis to gratuitous details (e.g. Charles Bovary’s cap); 2) *norms of narration*, the assumption that a novel should develop a totalizing meaning revolving around a moral center; in *Madame Bovary* the narrator is multiple, fickle, perverse, capriciously changing perspective and attitude; the narrator warms to the characters and then suddenly cools and becomes sarcastic, as if irritated by them; 3) *norms of character*, whereby character becomes de-ontologized, less a repository of fixed moral meaning than a precariously glimpsed complex of contradictions; 4) norms of coherent *theme*, in that the apparent theme—woman corrupted by art—is contradicted by the latent theme—the transparent love of art that animates the book itself. The book stages this ambivalence; the author/narrator’s complicity with Emma exists in

Madame Bovary, like any text, inevitably enters into the ongoing processes of artistic dialogism and intertextuality, generating new texts in its wake. The novel as hypertext thus generates various hypertexts in the form of other texts both literary and cinematic. The post-text of *Bovary* is vast, and it is both literary and cinematic. Harry Levin mentions a Methodist tract based on the novel, subtitled *The Consequences of Misbehavior*.⁴ But *Madame Bovary* is also one of the most filmed of all novels, with at least ten versions made around the world: two French versions (Renoir in 1934 and Chabrol in 1991); two Hollywood versions, a modern dress update called *Unholy Love* (1932) and the Minnelli version in 1949, along with a German version in 1937, an Argentinian version in the 1940s, Indian and Russian versions in the 1980s, and a Portuguese version in the 1990s (by Manuel de Oliveira). Here I will speak in detail of just [three] adaptations of *Bovary*, notably those by Jean Renoir, Vicente Minnelli, and Ketan Mehta. * * *

We will not linger much on Jean Renoir's version of *Bovary*, a film already analyzed in depth by a number of commentators. The film suffered a type of problem not very common in literature—production problems. Originally three and a half hours in length, the film was cut to two hours at the distributor's insistence. (Renoir joked that the shorter version was interminable, while the longer version seemed much shorter.) What most strikes us in the Renoir version is its combination of theatricality (for indoor scenes) and pastoral naturalness (in the outdoor scenes). What attracted Renoir to the project was the opportunity to work with some of his favorite stage actors, performers like Valentine Tessier (Emma), and his own brother Pierre Renoir (Charles). Renoir's motivation seems a bit anomalous in that the novel is not theatrical at all; as we have seen, the film has minimal dialogue and reads more like a screenplay. At the same time, the nature scenes of the film recall in their lyricism the painterly Renoir of *Partie de Campagne* (*A Day in the Country*). We are reminded of Jean Renoir's genetic filial link to the celebrated impressionist painter Auguste Renoir, famous for his exuberant, luminous renderings of natural scenes and privileged moments of sunlit leisure. In a mediated fashion, Renoir picks up some of the cues offered by Flaubert himself, with his novelistic anticipations of impressionist techniques and themes. In the film, Jean Renoir shows great sensitivity to light, to the dappled beauty

tension with his condemnation of her. In fact, the theme of the novel cannot be easily summarized, it lacks a teleological movement toward an overriding message. The very interest of the novel, like that of Godard's films, resides in transgressions, in an implicit "aesthetic of mistakes," in its nature as an "incorrect" and "out of tune" work according to regnant norms.

4. Harry Levin, *The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, 1972), p. 262.

of the forest leaves during the seduction scene, for example, to the speckled light on Emma's dress, generating a kind of sylvan lyricism.

Although the film never touches directly on what we have called the literary theme—the ways that Emma is shaped (and misshaped) by a romantic literature that provokes dreams and desires that real life can never fulfill—the theme is present in displaced form. Valentine Tessier communicates through her performance style a sense of theatricality and dreamy desire. When she attends the op-eretta *Lucie de Lammermoor*, she becomes entranced, dizzy; she projects herself into the singers' performance. Blind to the erotic drift of her transports, Charles reductively attributes her dizziness to the effect of the gas lamps. The staging of Emma's spectatorship in her "loge" reminds us of the many impressionist paintings portraying spectatorship, not only Renoir's own father's *La Loge* (1874) and *La Première Sortie* (1876) but also Mary Cassatt's *Woman in Black at the Opera* (1879) and *Lydia Seated in a Loge, Wearing a Pearl Necklace* (1879).

Valentine Tessier's theatrical self-staging becomes the performative equivalent of the literariness of the novel. While we do not see Emma read, or hear her speak about reading, or see visual traces of books, she acts out, as it were, the literary commonplaces that have moulded her imagination. For the tension between literature and life, characteristic of the novel, Renoir substitutes the tension between two styles: (1) the (indoor) theatrical acting of the principal players; and (2) the (outdoor) naturalism of the country scenes, with its cows, farms, foliage, and animal noises. The Darius Milhaud music, meanwhile—modernist, ethereal, melancholy, subdued, dissonant—might be called "neo-impressionist," and in this sense it provides a musical analogue to the visual impressionism and the proto-modernism of Flaubert's novel. (Renoir's musical choices here contrast dramatically with the bombastic grandiloquence of the Hollywood-style music typical of the Minnelli version). Unlike both the Minnelli and the Chabrol versions, the Renoir version eschews voice-over to convey either the voice of the novelist or the voice of the characters. Here the film itself, as the "grand imager" (to use the term Gaudreault borrowed from Albert Laffay) becomes the film's "impersonal" narrator. In this sense, Renoir creates a possible cinematic equivalent for Flaubert's narrator, refined out of existence, dispersed into the characters and their actions, not directly interventionist or judgmental like the Fielding-esque or the Balzacian narrator. And Flaubert's intermittent capacity to enter into all his characters without prejudging them becomes Renoir's "everyone-has-his-reasons" humanist generosity.

Unlike Flaubert's novel, the Renoir adaptation in a certain sense

“desubjectivizes” Emma’s story. The novel, as we have seen, brings us not only into Emma’s perspective—we are made to see through her eyes—but even into her very viscera—we feel her heartbeat, sense her dizziness, tingle with her orgasm. The Renoir film, in contrast, lacks even the usual subjectivizing devices of Hollywood cinema. There are very few point-of-view shots to suture us into an individual perspective, few close shots (with the exception of the suicide finale) to convey closely observed emotional reactions, and very little subjectively motivated camera work. On one level, this desubjectivization is typical of Renoir’s sensibility, in that Renoir generally favors medium shots or even more inclusive shots, with very few close-ups. Renoir tends to avoid the conventional Ping-Pong of shot/counter shot for dialogue, for example, favoring instead deep focus and multiple spatial planes.

In this sense, Renoir’s adaptation might be said to conform to only *one* of the many styles deployed in *Madame Bovary*—the realist style. One might even speak anachronistically of the Renoir within Flaubert himself, that is, the ways in which Flaubert and Renoir share a similar approach to “managing” dialogue and description as part of a sharply imagined space. Both Flaubert and Renoir share a fondness for a multi-planar space peopled with multiple intersecting conversations. Flaubert’s journals, in this sense, uncannily anticipate the working notes of a filmmaker. In a September 19, 1852, letter to Louise Colet concerning the “agricultural fair” passage, Flaubert writes: “I have to place simultaneously, in the same conversation, five or six people (who talk), several others (who are talked about), the whole region, descriptions of persons and things—and amid all this I have to show a gentleman and a lady who begin to fall in love with each other because they have tastes in common.”⁵ The passage evokes, proleptically, the musings of a filmmaker grappling with the challenge of staging the intersecting dialogues of multiple characters against diverse backdrops. Many of Renoir’s exegetes have noted precisely this kind of skillful manipulation of multiple dialogues and multiple spaces.

In *Madame Bovary*, Renoir generally adheres to the anti-montage style that is his trademark, emphasizing continuity, long takes, and depth of the field. This rule applies, surprisingly, even in his handling of the very passage that struck Eisenstein as anticipatory of filmic montage—the agricultural fair sequence. In the Renoir version, the juxtaposed speeches of the politician and the Don Juan, which would seem to call for cross-cutting and leveling (mise-en-equivalence), are dealt with, somewhat counterintuitively, in an

5. Quoted in Vladimir Nabokov, *Lectures on Literature* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1980), p. 147.

anti-montage manner, as if Renoir were deliberately shunning the cues provided by both Flaubert and Eisenstein.

Renoir also does pick up one of the central visual leitmotifs in the novel—mirrors—but with a curious twist. Like Flaubert, Renoir's *mise-en-scène* favors frames-within-frames, especially in interiors, and on numerous occasions Emma is framed by doors or windows. But in Flaubert, windows provide a sense both of enclosure and of an opening up onto an elsewhere. In the novel, we look through windows with Emma; but in the Renoir adaptation she is *framed* by windows rather than *looking out* of them, a technique that generates a feeling of imprisonment and closure rather than of dreamy escape.

In 1949, fifteen years after Renoir, Vincente Minnelli also turned to *Madame Bovary*. The Minnelli version has already been rigorously analyzed, by George Bluestone and Stephen Harvey among others, and I will try not to recapitulate what has been said already. Bluestone discusses the adaptation very much within a normative framework wherein both novel and film are seen as having a "vocation for realism," an essential affinity with the natural, material world. For Bluestone, Minnelli "betrays" this vocation by emphasizing the spectacular, the bombastic, the overstated, and the showy. Bluestone speculates that Flaubert, who agonized over refining himself *out* of his work, would be appalled at the "retailing" of Emma's story. Stephen Harvey, less judgmentally and more usefully, points out the diverse "mediations" and conjunctural constraints that inflect the Minnelli film: (1) Minnelli's ongoing preoccupations as *filmmaker-auteur*: for example, the themes of artistic expression versus conformity, tensions between high and low art, themes that might conceivably align him with Flaubert; (2) the author's *personal problems*, notably the disintegrating mental health of Judy Garland, which led Minnelli to conflate Emma's problems with those of his wife); (3) *professional specialization* (Minnelli's background as art designer makes him emphasize details of decor, costume, and *mise-en-scène*. (One might say that Flaubert's obsession with "le mot juste" becomes an obsession with "le costume juste"); (4) *generic proclivities*, whereby Minnelli's expertise in the musical leads him to search for any possible pretext for grand production numbers in the MGM manner, for example, the ball at Vaubyessard; (5) *biography*: Minnelli's "French connection," first as a designer influenced by Parisian design movements (art nouveau, impressionism, surrealism) and fashion magazines (*Vogue*) but also because Minnelli at one point aspired to go to Paris to paint; (6) *studio* (MGM as the studio most associated with classy entertainment and a galaxy of popular stars; (7) *copyright pressures*, which led Minnelli to adopt certain strategies for warding off the

threat of any potential censorship of the film in the conservative period of the Breen office. By beginning the film with Flaubert's obscenity trial, for example, Minnelli tries to shame the censors in advance, as if to warn them that any censorship of his film would betray the same kind of short-sighted philistinism displayed by those who accused the great writer Flaubert a century earlier.⁶

Minnelli begins, then, with Flaubert's obscenity trial, with James Mason playing Flaubert speaking in his own defense. This brings up a new aspect of "fidelity"—in this case, fidelity to the historical record. In fact, of course, the *Bovary* trial was nothing like that portrayed in the film. Flaubert did not speak in his own defense, and much of the argument in Flaubert's favor was *ad hominem*, largely resting on Flaubert's status as a bourgeois from a respectable family. The prosecutor, moreover, focused less on the crime of pornography than on the sin of blasphemy, and specifically on Flaubert's constant yoking of sexuality and religiosity. Both prosecutor and defense attorney showed tender concern about the sexual propensities of the minds of vulnerable young girls—the minds of young boys were presumed not to be in danger. In the film, Minnelli has "Flaubert" (James Mason) speak in his own voice, largely in terms of three classical arguments against censorship: (1) I painted reality ("Madame Bovarys can be found all over France"); (2) I painted vice to exalt virtue; and (3) "forgiveness is still among the Christian virtues." But in fact, the trial was vastly more interesting, a case of warring hermeneuts deploying divergent *explications de texte*. The prosecution quoted passages from the book to show that it was a lascivious portrait of a serial adulteress. The defense contextualized the same passages to show that the novel portrays reality in a manner consistent with Christian values and societal norms. The voice of Flaubert speaking (in synchronous sound) in his own defense at the trial then segues to that same voice, but now with an altered function and status, as voice-over narration for Flaubert's account of Emma's early life.

Analysts of narration remind us that the biographical author (here Flaubert) and the novelistic narrator (the narrator of *Madame Bovary*) are not strictly equivalent. Despite this difference in theoretical status, Minnelli conflates the two by having the voice of "Gustave Flaubert," speaking in his own defense, mutate into the voice-over narration of the film. Minnelli thus equates the biographical Flaubert with the narratological agency of the novel, whereas literary theorists take pains to distinguish between multiple instances: (1) the biographical author (the flesh and blood Flaubert); (2) the implied author (a construct to be inferred from

6. See Stephen Harvey, *Directed by Vincente Minnelli* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989).

the textual cues provided by a specific novel: e.g., Flaubert insofar as he authors *Madame Bovary*, an authorship mediated by genre, style, and so forth); and (3) the novel's narrator, who might be linked to (1) and (2) but also potentially quite distant from them. (Humbert Humbert, the narrator of *Lolita*, for example, is a murderer and a pedophile, while the author Vladimir Nabokov is presumably neither.)

But quite apart from this theoretically problematic conflation of author and narrator, the content of the voice-over goes against the grain of Flaubert's own aesthetic. Flaubert's narrator in *Madame Bovary* is largely refined out of existence, dispersed into his characters or into a diffuse textual modality of traces and effects. Blue-stone is quite right, therefore, in remarking on the strangeness of Minnelli's insistence on reinscribing the traces of what we would now call "enunciation": resuscitating a narrational presence that Flaubert himself had labored so hard to efface. The novel's narrator is largely implicit, present only in style and tone, a narratorial agency to be inferred on the basis of subtle textual cues. Minnelli's narrator, in contrast, is physically present, embodied, particularized through posture, body language, timbre, and grain of voice. Minnelli's narrator, unlike Flaubert's, is interventionist, explicitly condemning Emma's dreams as "silly" and "absurd" and "impossible," formulations whose hyper-explicit and harshly judgmental nature makes them more reminiscent of a Balzac or a Dickens than of Flaubert. James Mason as Flaubert argues that Emma is not the shameless hussy described by the prosecutor but rather an unhappy woman victimized by pulpy romances and fashion magazines. Yet here too we discern still another paradox: whereas Mason/Flaubert defends Emma from her accusers in the opening sequence, the film itself as a whole renders a rather ambivalent, and at times harsh, judgment on Flaubert's heroine.

Instead of Flaubert's impersonal narration, based on limited perception and focalization, Minnelli gives us Flaubert/Mason's know-it-all, voice-of-God commentary, buttressed by the rather manipulative commentative music that virtually dictates our mood and response. Music, in this sense, is "adjectival"—it directs readerly response by telling us what we should think. It is hard to imagine Flaubert ever being so explicitly judgmental; first, because of his sympathy for the heroine; and second, because his aesthetic was designed to leave a space for the reader to render judgment, to leave questions ultimately open. In reading the novel, one is struck by Flaubert's indirection, his refusal to be explicit, his way of using detail to prod the reader to *infer* judgments that he himself refuses to state. The uncut pages of Charles' medical books, for example, lead us to infer that Charles is a mediocre doctor; he fails to keep

up with the research and scholarship, but Flaubert never uses the word “mediocre.” Or Flaubert shows Emma gazing with admiration at a slobbering and deaf aristocrat at the Ball at Vaubyessard, but he never uses the word “naive” about Emma or “decadent” for the aristocrat.

The paradox in Minnelli is that he makes Flaubert, the consummate artist, express philistine opinions that seem almost hostile to art. The Flaubert of the film proffers two of the most hackneyed clichés about art. First, he argues that art simply shows us “reality.” Like some contemporary rappers, Minnelli’s Flaubert insists that he has simply drawn his portrait from life itself. What disappears, in this claim, is art, the care taken by Flaubert to shape impressions and find *le mot juste*. Second, Minnelli’s Flaubert claims that he shows us vice in order to preach virtue. This latter point seems more redolent of hyprocritical Defoe-style sanctimony (or of the Hollywood ethos of titillating moralism) than of anything the historical Flaubert might have said or thought. And if Flaubert/the narrator in Minnelli’s film condemns Emma’s artsy dreams as silly, what do we make of Flaubert’s notorious identification with Emma, his famous declaration that “Emma Bovary, c’est moi”? Through Emma, Flaubert exorcizes his *own* love of a certain kind of literature. He identifies with Emma’s artistic sensibility—evident in her rapturous response to music, to theater, to literature—and he renders her consciousness via affectionate pastiches of precisely the romantic literature that he himself had formerly loved (and perhaps continued to love) and which he was now only partially repudiating.

What becomes, then, of the “literary theme” in the Minnelli version? Renoir, as we have seen, shifts the theme to the register of theatricality and performance. In Minnelli it is referenced explicitly—indeed Minelli’s version has the major merit of being one of the few adaptations that *does* reference this absolutely fundamental theme in the novel—both verbally (through dialogue) and through images and music. But although we do see Emma actually reading, and though the frame is frequently filled with books, the greater theme of literary influence is largely dispersed into a more comprehensive entity: the arts, and especially the visual arts. Thus the novel’s portrayal of Emma’s adolescent passion for book reading becomes in the film a passion for a panoply of *visual* images: novel covers, portraits, landscape paintings, fashion magazines, and paintings. The literary theme is also displaced onto the register of performance in the emphasis on Emma as role-player who performs various roles: as the grande dame, as the caring mother, as the seducer desperate for financial help. On the other hand, we find here a symptom of the mingled distance and sympathy that

both Minnelli and Flaubert share in relation to Emma Bovary; in both novel and film we look *with* Emma while also looking *at* her. Emma is criticized by the off-screen narrator, but she is also herself an artist (like Flaubert and like Minnelli). She arranges her bedroom as an artist would. Indeed, Stephen Harvey points out that Emma's bedroom in the film, evoked in repeated pan shots, resembles Minnelli's own workplace, where he would prepare a scene by tacking suggestive, potentially usable bits of visuals to the wall.⁷

* * *

Every adaptation of *Bovary* filters the novel through the grid of a national culture and through a national film industry, with its generic corollaries and so forth. The Minnelli version clearly, and perhaps inevitably, "Americanizes" Flaubert. The Indian version of *Madame Bovary*, meanwhile, Ketan Mehta's *Maya Memsaab*—"Maya" is Hindi for "illusion"—"Indianizes" the Flaubert novel. In the Mehta version, the French novel is filtered and channeled through the conventions not only of the "art film" but also through the conventions of Bombay ("Bollywood") popular cinema. Along with Govind Nihalani, Mrinal Sen, and Shyam Benegal, Mehta belongs to a kind of "third way" within Indian cinema, a style that negotiates between apparently antagonistic traditions. Mehta strives for a "middle cinema" located between the fantastic, colorful, dance-dominated and very popular Bollywood cinema, on the one hand, and the austere, low-budget, independent, and realist "new Indian cinema" on the other. *Maya* also straddles and to some extent scrambles the frontiers between a number of genres: mystery, musical, erotic film, popular, and art cinema. While relatively realist within Bollywood norms, *Maya* also features the extravagant musical production numbers typical of Bombay cinema. Through a generic division of labor, the nonmusical episodes represent life in a fairly verisimilar manner, while the songs represent life as dreamed and fantasized. (Film analysts have often said that music, in the American musical, for example, forms its "id," its latent desire, while the narrative proper represents the reality principle and the superego.) While the plot resembles life, as Ratnapriya Das puts it, the songs represent dreams.

Mehta produces a dramatic shift in genre. Unlike the novel, *Maya* begins as a murder mystery, with two investigators trying to discern whether Maya/Emma died by suicide or by murder. The film then gives way, a la *Citizen Kane*, to successive testimony from witnesses who knew Emma: the pharmacist who sells her the poison, the servant who reads her diary, Charu (Charles Bovary), Lalit, Rudra, and even the crippled beggar. The occasional voice-overs,

7. See Harvey, p. 204.

interestingly, are not given (as in both the Minnelli and the Chabrol versions) to the narrator, but rather to Emma/Maya herself.

As Maya is cradling her baby, Chaya, for example, she muses:

For many days nothing happened. Oh, I have a daughter now—Chaya. Maya's chaya (shadow). Everyone says I'm lucky—I have everything. Now the dreams don't come any more."

Maya's words ironically echo Flaubert's own words about *Madame Bovary* as a novel in which "nothing happens." Mehta also makes a substantial change in Emma's social status. Wealthy thanks to her inheritance, Maya is rich from the outset; she lives in a mansion, surrounded with mirrors. The wealth that Emma only half-consciously strives for in the Flaubert novel—the desire for wealth is implicit in her desire for a "higher," more aristocratic love, and in her enthusiasm for the horseback riding and elegant balls characteristic of the aristocratic ethos—belongs from the beginning to Maya, thus stripping Emma of the quiet but tenacious social arrivisme that characterizes her in the novel.

The foiling of these different genres and styles in Mehta's film forms an analogue to Flaubert's own counterpointing of the romantic and the realistic style throughout *Bovary*. In Indian terms, as Ratnapriya Das points out, *Maya* violated a number of taboos, much as Flaubert's novel did in its time. The director displays Deepa Sahi, the director's real-life spouse, well known as an actress in alternative cinema, in a state of passion and nudity. (The innovation of a wifely presence recalls, if only by analogy, the indirect referencing of Judy Garland in the Minnelli version.) Whereas the eroticism of Bombay films was customarily sublimated into highly eroticized dances while paying lip service to the taboo on kissing and erotic contact, this film is openly and straightforwardly erotic. The love scene with Lalit features the usual topoi of "erotic" filmmaking—bare breasts, love bites, shredded pillows, and importantly, female orgasm. The finale of the film evokes still another genre, the Hindu mythological. Maya's body disappears in a blaze of light, with nothing left, thus underlining the core trope of the film, inherent in the protagonist's name: "maya" (illusion). But to convey this translation into another realm, Mehta appeals to the magical conventions of the mythological.

It is revealing to compare the various versions of *Madame Bovary*. Both Chabrol and Renoir, for example, adopt the passage where Emma tries to confess her spiritual and erotic frustration to an uncomprehending priest. (In an ironic inversion, the priest speaks only of earthly things, of sick cows and hungry peasants, while Emma speaks of the spiritual.) Minnelli, perhaps worried about

ensorship pressures from the Catholic Church, omits the scene altogether. What is perhaps most disappointing in virtually all of the adaptations of *Bovary* is that no filmmaker seems really to have tried to forge the equivalent of Flaubert's specific stylistic achievement—to wit, the counterpointing of styles that pits the exalted, romantic, metaphoric, and grandly literary style against the flat, boring, banal, metonymic style, and to do this in terms of specifically cinematic techniques and genres, through lighting, camera movement, music, and so forth. Minnelli evokes the literary theme but fails to counterpoint it with provincial boredom. Chabrol takes the opposite tack; he emphasizes the boredom but neglects the literary. Mehta perhaps comes the closest to a real counterpoint by contrasting the Bollywood style musical sequences with the more realist style. Nor has any filmmaker tried to create the cinematic equivalent of Flaubert's painterly impressionist style—the active light, the attention to gaseous movement in the atmosphere—although the cinema is superbly equipped for such effects. (Renoir and Chabrol very occasionally do strive for such effects through a kind of dappled, forest lyricism.) Nor has any adaptation tried to actualize the satiric and socially critical side of the book. There has been no feminist adaptation of *Bovary*, for example. For all these reasons, there is more than enough room for new “hypertextual” variations on Flaubert's infinitely suggestive text.

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Gustave Flaubert: A Chronology

- 1821 December 12: Birth of Gustave Flaubert in Rouen.
- 1832 Enters the Royal College of Rouen.
- 1835 Writes his first stories. Falls in love with Elisa Schlésinger (on
–36 whom he partly models Madame Arnoux in *L'Éducation sentimentale*).
- 1837 Writes *Passion et vertu*, containing episodes that will appear in *Madame Bovary*.
- 1840 Passes the baccalauréat.
- 1841 Studies law in Paris and begins the first version of *L'Éducation
–43 sentimentale* in 1843.
- 1844 Has a nervous seizure (probably due to epilepsy) of a sort that he suffers repeatedly over the next decade. Ends his study of law and lives in his family's country house in Croisset, outside of Rouen.
- 1846 Death of his father and sister Caroline. Begins his friendship with the poet and playwright Louis Bouilhet. During a visit to Paris, starts his first affair with the poet and novelist Louise Colet, which lasts about a year and a half.
- 1848 Witnesses the February insurrection that leads to the fall of King Louis-Philippe and the establishment of the Second Republic. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, serves as president. France abolishes slavery in April.
- 1849 Travels with Maxime Du Camp through Egypt, Palestine,
–51 Rhodes, Asia Minor, Constantinople, Greece, and Italy. Shortly after return to Croisset, he and Colet begin another affair.
- 1851 September 19: Begins *Madame Bovary*. His letters to Colet until their breakup in 1855 describe his progress on the novel and elaborate his aesthetic theories.
- 1852 After staging a successful coup in November 1851, Louis Napoleon establishes the Second Empire and names himself Napoleon III.
- 1856 Completes *Madame Bovary*. With scenes cut against Flaubert's will, the novel appears in six installments in the *Revue de Paris*.
- 1857 Flaubert and the editors of the *Revue* are tried for and acquitted of offenses against public morality, religion, and decency in the wake of *Madame Bovary's* serialization. In April, the novel is published in book form amid acclaim and controversy. Both Sainte-Beuve and Charles Baudelaire praise the work. Baudelaire publishes *Les Fleur du mal*, and Champfleury his manifesto, *Le Réalisme*.

- 1858 Travels to Algeria and the ruins of Carthage while working on *Salammbô*.
- 1862 Publishes *Salammbô* in serial form starting in November. He
 -63 responds to Sainte-Beuve's criticisms of the novel, including the charge of "sadism." Earlier in 1862, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* appears.
- 1863 Defends himself against the accusations of *Salammbô*'s historical inaccuracy lodged by archaeologist Wilhelm Froehner. In an article, George Sand champions the novel. Flaubert and Sand begin corresponding and establish a friendship. Amid controversy, *Salammbô* achieves sensational success, enflaming Parisian salons, inspiring costume balls, and influencing fashions. Flaubert begins corresponding with Ivan Turgenev.
- 1864 Returns to work on what will be a much-revised version of *L'Éducation sentimentale*.
- 1866 Named a knight of the Legion of Honor.
- 1869 Publication in November of *L'Éducation sentimentale* to hostile reviews. Flaubert mourns Bouilhet's death in July and Sainte-Beuve's in October.
- 1870 France declares war on Prussia in July. On September 4, the Legislative Assembly proclaims the end of the Empire and establishes the Third Republic. The Prussians begin their siege of Paris. Flaubert has a short-lived career as lieutenant in a company of the Rouen national guard. In November, Prussian units occupy Croisset.
- 1871 After months of famine, Parisians surrender on January 28. On the same day, the armistice is signed. In March, workers seize control of Paris and establish the Paris Commune. It exists as an independent political entity for seventy-two days until late May, when troops of the French national government crush it. Casualties near 19,000. Flaubert visits Paris in the first week of June.
- 1872 Death of Flaubert's mother. In a letter to Sand, Flaubert writes that he "feels as though a piece of my guts has been torn out."
- 1874 Publication of *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*.
- 1877 Publication of *Trois contes*, containing "La Légende de Saint Julien l'Hospitalier," "Un coeur simple," and "Hérodias."
- 1877 Revision of *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (first worked upon 1872-74).
 -80 His financial situation declines. In 1879 the government awards him an annual pension of 3,000 francs.
- 1880 May 8: Flaubert dies in Croisset from a cerebral hemorrhage.
- 1880 Publication of *Bouvard et Pécuchet*.
 -81

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