OBLOMOV I. A. GONCHAROVA. By *E. Krasnoshchekova.* Moscow: "Khudozhestvennaia literatura," 1970. 94 pp.

Krasnoshchekova's monograph is one of the few essays on *Oblomov* worth reading. It traces the effects of the long duration of composition (ca. 1847–58) upon the design of the novel. Part 1, written mostly in the forties, recalls the style of Gogol and the natural school. The love story of parts 2 and 3, written in 1857, reflects the growing psychological interest and dramatic emphasis of the Russian novel of the fifties and sixties. It also resembles Turgenev's writings in its "spiritualization" of reality (p. 51). In part 4 Goncharov returned to the concrete rendering of everyday life, as in part 1, for the Agafia Matveevna sections, though the treatment is now warm and lyrical—a "pathos" of things (p. 69) for the earlier comedy of things. The Stolz-Olga love, on the other hand, is told rather than shown. Unfortunately, Krasnoshchekova does not ask what holds these different stylistic elements together. She does try to introduce a new view of Ilia Oblomov into Soviet criticism by insisting upon his ambiguity. Oblomov is not only a symptom of his age; he also incarnates a protest. His protest, however, is safely confined to nineteenth-century Russia, and Krasnoshchekova's reading, refreshing as it is, fails to capture the universality of Goncharov's creation.

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ANTON ANTONOVIČ DEL'VIG: A CLASSICIST IN THE TIME OF ROMANTICISM. By *L. Koehler.* Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 79. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1970. 270 pp. 50 Dutch guilders.

Like Walter Landor or Amy Lowell, A. A. Delvig is less a poet we read than a name we recognize. We know that he was a close friend of Pushkin's and a member of the Pléiade; and we may recall Mirsky's claim that he was a poet of rare metrical originality and technical skill. This entourage and these alleged gifts notwithstanding, his poetry has failed to win many readers. Why?

The answer, argues Mrs. Koehler, the author of the first full-length study of Delvig in English, is that his exquisite, classically inspired verse could not be understood by the "utilitarian" school of critics, whose founder specifically rejected its value, and that the shadow of Belinsky's condemnation has stretched to this day. Perhaps. Certainly no one would claim that the Russian critical temper over the last one hundred fifty years has been notably receptive to Arcadian idylls and elegantly stylized folk songs. Still, doubts are permissible. For if the basic cause of Delvig's neglect has been a hostile *Zeitgeist,* what about the relative popularity of the equally untimely Muse of Fet? Rereading Delvig one wonders if the "incompetent" Belinsky (the epithet is Mrs. Koehler's) was not basically right. For one may concede the virtues claimed by Mirsky, and still find the poet's skilled, graceful, but bloodless exercises a bit of a bore. As for the author's contention that Delvig's metrical innovations have yet to receive their due, is this quite logical? The importance of a poetic innovation lies in its capacity to influence other poets; and, for better or for worse, Delvig's experiments in Greek meters were stillborn.

These are, of course, areas in which the doctors may disagree; and even if justified, my misgivings do not invalidate a study whose basic aim is not to evaluate but to situate, describe, and analyze. Judged on these terms, it represents, I