

full of local news, and funny. She recounts a literary conversation with her mother: "'Who is this Kafka?' she says. . . . A German Jew, I says, I think. He wrote a book about a man that turns into a roach. 'Well, I can't tell people *that*,' she says. . . ."

**BLUE WINE AND OTHER POEMS**

by John Hollander  
Johns Hopkins, 1979  
71 pp. \$8.95 cloth,  
\$3.95 paper  
L of C 78-20514  
ISBN 0-8018-2209-2  
0-8018-2221-1 pbk

Hollander, a Yale professor of English, writes some of contemporary America's most intriguing verse, at once scholarly and accessible, humorous and meditative. *Blue Wine* offers a range of tones—from speculations on painting and sculpture to unabashedly lyrical love poems. The title work was inspired by a row of bottles that Hollander saw in *New Yorker* artist Saul Steinberg's kitchen, decorated with "mock (or rather visionary) wine labels." The poet bore the vision of these homeward, "In the clear cup of his own eye, to see what he will see." His meditations—in 11 distinct styles, including mock-Homeric—sound the relation of life to art, the boundaries between the seen and the unseen. In "A Statue of Something," Hollander gives a clue to what this collection is about: *He is leading his model out into interpretation, / Life afier art, re-engagement with a world whose shadows / Are insubstantial and always full of motion.*

**BLOOMSBURY: A House of Lions**

by Leon Edel  
Lippincott, 1979  
288 pp. \$12.95  
L of C 79-4341  
ISBN 0-397-10043-5

In 1906, the Stephen sisters, Vanessa (Bell) and Virginia (Woolf), and their brother Thoby were living in London's "antiquated, ex-fashionable" Bloomsbury district. As a student at Cambridge, Thoby met future economist John Maynard Keynes, writer Leonard Woolf, biographer Lytton Strachey, art critic Clive Bell, and literary critic Desmond MacCarthy. Before he died, Thoby introduced them to his sisters. Later joined by painters Roger Fry and Duncan Grant, this group began meeting on Thursday nights to read poetry and discuss art, politics, sex. Drawn together by common interests in art and philosophy (as agnostics, they were all influenced by G. E. Moore and Bertrand Russell) and by a penchant for unconventional

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sexual arrangements, they kept meeting, and sometimes cohabiting, until 1930. In public, they forever protested that they were a circle. (It made it easier for them to praise one another.) But few were fooled. Leon Edel, author of the five-volume *The Life of Henry James*, traces the lives and interactions of the nine principals to 1920, when they were all middle-aged, firmly established in their separate careers, and had begun to record their own histories. He concedes their arrogance and snobbery but prefers to emphasize their sizeable contributions to the arts and British society. Virginia Woolf's stream-of-consciousness technique helped move the modern novel away from the ensconced tradition of straightforward narration. Fry coined the term "Post-Impressionism"; he and Bell introduced that school of painters to England. And Keynes—who wrote of the group, "I can see us as water spiders, gracefully skimming, as light and as reasonable as air, the surface of the stream without any contact at all with the eddies and currents beneath"—went on to revolutionize economics with *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936).

*Science & Technology*

**SCIENTISTS IN POWER**

by Spencer R. Weart  
 Harvard, 1979  
 356 pp. \$17.50  
 L of C 78-21670  
 ISBN 0-674-79515-6

Early in 1939, physicist Frédéric Joliot and several colleagues at the Collège de France in Paris discovered how an atomic chain reaction could be ignited in a mass of uranium. By the middle of the year, writes Weart, a historian at the American Institute of Physics in New York City, they had prepared, and kept secret, an application for a patent on a crude uranium bomb; planned a workable nuclear reactor; and persuaded the French government and the Belgian mining firm Union Minière du Haut-Katanga (which had discovered uranium in Africa) to underwrite their research. The 1940 German invasion of France cut short Joliot's efforts. Several members of his research team fled to Britain, the United States, and Canada (where some of