

## CHAPTER TWO

THE town clusters round the horseshoe end of the lake. Bright villages, Zollikon, Kilchberg, Ruschlikon, Erlenbach, flicker along its shores. The Glarus mountains rise orange-white in the distance. Supple contours of hills accompany the lake's flight south-eastward. Stand on the Quaibrücke on a summer day, and the lake, tilled slopes, villages and far-off mountains, absorbed by the air, become unsubstantial colour essences, but when the Föhn wind blows, bringing malaise, migraine or exhilaration to the Züricher, the high hills on the right move towards the town, heavy, hard-featured, in sullen green and leaden ultramarine. Under the Quaibrücke the Limmat runs out of the overfull lake silkily and swiftly through the town. Big Snake (*Lindermage*) is the name under which the Helvetians and Alemannen veiled her divinity, and that is her name to this day. The sons of her right and left bank hug tightly the mother river. Up the steep right bank the houses rise thickly, tier on tier, to the pine woods. The left bank goes flatly away over the shallow Sihl to the working-class suburbs of Aussersihl. Tucked away in their sheds near the bridge are the slim shells of Seeclub eights and fours. The Tonhalle brightens the quai on the left bank with its minarets. Out of the dense mass of the town rise the heavy twin towers of the Grossmünster, built by Charlemagne over the graves of SS. Felix and Regula (Prosperity and Order), the slender spire of the Fraumünster,

the clocktower of the Peterskirche, the yellow renaissance façade of the Polytechnic, and the white walls and tower of the university. The Stadttheater stands on the Utoquai, right bank of the Limmat, a stone's throw from the lake. There is an open space in front of it whereon, every third Monday in April, is lit the Beltane fire of Zürich. "Sechseläuten," they call the feast, and the name of the demon of winter is the "Bögg." Guildsmen in burnous, in rococo plumed hat and gay cloak, gallop round the bonfire of the winter bogeyman. And there is no restriction, except that of good manners, placed upon them who want to drown the memory of the winter and greet the spring in wine.

From Zollikon, Meilen, Herrliberg, down the Seefeldstrasse, past the Stadttheater and the place where they burn the Bögg in spring, come in autumn, heavy country carts laden each with an immense barrel made gay with country flowers. The barrels contain Sauser, new wine, still fermenting, from the lakeside vineyards. There is no drink more full of uplift and downfall than Sauser, but it must be, as they say, "im Stadium," for it soon loses its quality. Therefore, while the elder brothers await the precious beverage in their favourite Wirtschafts in town, energetic youth goes out along the lake to drink it at the source. From village to village they go on their Sauserbummel, and from vintage to vintage as far as their legs will carry them.

The earliest Zürichers lived in stilthouses on the lake where now the roadmaker has effaced their marshy no-man's-land. Helvetians made themselves a strong place on the left bank of the Limmat; Romans and Alemannen took it in turn; Charlemagne dispensed justice there, and there the

Zürichers of 1898 swore allegiance to their brand-new constitution. But now the Lindenhof is a pleasant grove of lime trees garnished with convenient seats on which it is very pleasant to sit on summer evenings with Brissago and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. The Guilds, whose young men now head the Sechseläute procession and gallop round the Beltane fire, shared the rule of the town for three hundred years with aristocrat and merchant. They stood by Zwingli in the Reformation and fought at his side at Kappel, where the militant reformer fell, sword in hand. That cross-hilted sword now lies in the Landesmuseum in a glass case. Protestant Zürich was enriched by the arts of Locarner and Huguenot weaver. They brought silk to Zürich as the Huguenot brought silk to London and poplin to Dublin. Unemployed worker and work-despising aristocrat combined in renaissance Zürich to sell their strong arms for what they would fetch to foreign princes at war. Söldner mercenaries: "Wir zogen in das Feld." The conscience of the burgess, loss to the state, with Zwingli as spearhead of their attack, put an end to the inexpedient commerce in armed fighting men. The trade of the Lanzknecht came to an end, but his military virtue is still admired. Hodler has celebrated in paint the retreat of the Lanzknechte from Marignano. Massena crushed Suvaroff at Zürich when the French Revolution was making new laws and constitutions for Europe, and humane Lavater, admired by Blake, fell while succouring the wounded when the soldiers of the year VI took the town.

Giants of German literature, Klopstock, Wieland, Goethe, Kleist, knew Zürich and praised her. Wozzeck's poet, in love with death, quitted life with the image of Zürich in his eyes. Wagner roamed the shores of the lake, head full of harmonies

of Tristan and Isolde. "Tristan's Ehre." None knew land, people and legend better than the Züricher, Gottfried Keller, poet, novelist and state secretary. He wrote of his townsmen with shrewd wit and profound humanity. Nietzsche proclaimed that Swiss a master among prose writers. His seat and table are piously preserved in the "Apfelkammer." Conrad Ferdinand Meyer wrote his novels and poems in quiet Kilchberg. Pestalozzi was Zürich born and bred. His Argovian farm has been bought with the pennies of Swiss school children.

In Meilen lives Dr. C. G. Jung, curer of sick and harassed souls. He added to the doctrine of psycho-analysis, and made the Zürich school of adepts in that science. The studio of my friend August Suter, sculptor, stands in the neighbouring village of Zollikon. He has made a series of figures for the Amtshäuser in Zürich. Harmoniously yoked to his plastic vision are the forces of temperament and high intelligence. Now he has made for Liestal, native town of Carl Spitteler, poet of Prometheus, a Prometheus with counselling angel in bronze—the poet's vision made three-dimensional. Architect Karl Moser built the art gallery and the university. Crowds pack the aula to hear Professor Fleiner on constitutional history, so rare it is that so much learning and sanity are served by such persuasive eloquence. The Tonhalle overlooks the lake. When Ferruccio Busoni is to play he walks thither from the Bahnhof buffet in the company of an enormous hound. Citizen and stranger throng the Bahnhofstrasse on their evening promenade. All know him and his errand, and respect his solitude. D'Albert is a citizen of Zürich and plays in the Tonhalle. Clouds are descending upon the spirit of Lehmbruck, most sensitive of German sculptors, where

he works in the Seefeldstrasse. The Dadaists are planning yet another revolution in the arts over Sprüngli's teashop. The waiter at the Odeon will tell you discreetly which of the guests is Leonhard Frank, famous for *Der Mensch ist Gut*. He will tell you too where sat Lenin, calmly, confidently awaiting the call that came in 1917. Vladimir Ilytch was a silent listener to hot word battles they say, here and zur Linde, but his was the last word when the conflict of half-truths had shaped the conclusion he desired. To another guest of Zürich, Willy Münzenberg, legend ascribes the organisation of Lenin's departure in the famous locked train. Münzenberg organised his own departure from Germany just as efficiently and his Mercedes Luxuswagen has been seen waiting for its master outside the Casino de Paris.

There is no street in London that can equal the Bahnhofstrasse for metropolitan smartness. But let the smart shops and broad pavements go as a matter of course. Its crowning glory is its avenue of lime trees that on summer evenings enrich the air with a delicious scent of lime blossom. Gottfried Keller celebrated perhaps just these lime trees in one of his loveliest verses. The trams that pass on the other side of the tree trunks are painted bright cobalt blue and white, colours of the town of Zürich, colours of the Greek flag, colours of the covers of *Ulysses*. No town in Europe is more cosmopolitan than Zürich in war time, and of all streets in Zürich the Bahnhofstrasse is the most cosmopolitan. And it is everybody's promenade, stranger and citizen, millionaire silk merchant and Aussersihl proletarian. Conspicuous among the business foreigners, legitimate and illegitimate, among the spies and propagandists, deserters and refractaires, poor and rich, were a number of young men of

olive complexion, black hair and assured mien, wearing khaki gaberdine suits tightly and coquettishly cut. They were well nourished, for the half-belt at the back of their coats was overlapped in both senses by a roll of fat. They puzzled an observer of social phenomena.

"Who are these people?" I asked of a Züricher.

"They are garlic millionaires from the Balkan States," he said promptly.

At the lake end of the Bahnhofstrasse is visible the hotel Baur au Lac, first hotel in Zürich. Mrs. MacCormick has a suite of rooms there. She is daughter of a king, an oil king, born Edith Rockefeller, and one of the richest women in the world, therefore in Zürich supremely rich. Fantastic, distinguished, benevolent, she walks the town scattering right and left charities, houses and yachts. She is a believer in psychoanalysis and all its prophets and disciples, and did much to spread a taste for its culture. She has founded the MacCormick Stiftung, which will acquire the pictures of the impecunious painter if a committee considers them worthy. The fund should be for Zürich painters only, but as I am an Anglo-Saxon, needy, and my work not unworthy, I am allowed to participate. Mr. Rawson, a friend of Joyce, taught Mr. MacCormick to whistle "It ain't gonna waltz no more."

Here and there about the town one sees a tall bearded man of royal carriage. An exiled king? They are becoming common. No, a reigning monarch. His realm is called the "Meierei," a grill-room in Niederdorf, where every week in their day Keller and Böcklin met. His name is Oom Jan. With kingly air he asks if the beefsteak grilled by him is to his guest's liking and, sure of the enthusiastic "Ja," passes on to another table. Perfection must please.

"I should like to go to England," said a Züricher to me. "The beefsteaks there must be wonderful."

"Stay in Zürich," I counselled him. "In the world are no better beefsteaks than those grilled by Oom Jan in the Meierei."

I heard with grief of the death of that great Dutchman. *Où sont les bifteks d'antan?*

Robed in fine linen, with canary gloves and patent leather shoes, another Dutchman walks the town, sometimes in the company of James Joyce. He is dentist, cinema producer, dealer in shirt-waists, synthetic pearls and synthetic bouillon. His name is Juda Devries, alias Joe Martin, alias Jules Moreau. He has written a film scenario entitled *Wine, Woman and Song*, and he writes letters on pink notepaper headed with the crossed flags of the allied nations. His father is the venerable gynæcologist of Amsterdam. Joyce was once instrumental in getting him out of jail into hospital, and he, being as ingenious as he was enterprising, made a wooden money-box in the form of a Bible for his serviable friend. It bore, by way of title, "My First Success," by James Joyce. One time professor in the higher school of commerce in Vienna, Sigmund Feilbogen haunts the *Café des Banques*, with an eartrumpet which he orients and occidents night and day to catch rumours of peace anywhere at any hour. Butcher Lenz, in girth surpassing Velasquez's actor, takes up all the platform of a tram designed for five and a conductor. *L'homme qui rit* walks round the bourse with a copious English newspaper held up to his face. He has a lion's mouth that stretches from ear to ear. In the *Olivenbaum* restaurant a swarthy, diminutive young man, his breast pocket full of pens and pencils, evidently a Levantine, goes from one Zürich working-man to the other talking to

them all with an air of authority, making notes the while with one of his fountain pens. He doesn't look like a trade union leader, and is not a working-class party leader. Is he tallyman or conspirator? But you can't conspire in crowded teetotal restaurants, and the tallyman comes, according to tradition, on the family doorstep. We gave it up. "He's Füllfederowski, and up to some mischief," said Suter. Occasionally during the day, but for sure at about six o'clock in the evening, from the corner of the Usterstrasse to the Paradeplatz, a young man, shoulders bunched, oblivious of his surroundings, walks with long eager strides, and now and then breaks out into a stiff-legged trot. He has the great dark eyes of a sensitive intelligent deer and the combative jaw of a terrier. Steadily marching Eidgenossen wonder who the preoccupied young man may be. It is my chief. Often his staff gathers at the corner of the street to watch with wonder his erratic progress lakewards. All the British soldiers in khaki doing light work in the Consulate are invalided out of Germany in exchange for an equal number of Germans out of British hospitals and prison camps. Whitcomb is a Gloucestershire man badly knocked about at Ypres. He attends a machine in a coal mine in South Wales and in his spare time carves figures in wood. Tennant is one of the hundred and fifty lucky ones of the South African brigade to escape out of Delville Wood with their lives. All through the war the newspaper seller outside the central railway station, his chest plastered with telegrams of all nations, Reuter, Wolff, Havas, Stefani—pay your money and take your choice—cried monotonously: "Zürizitig Extra-blatt!" with Vierwaldstätter je m'en foutisme.

Switzerland in war time had some of the character of a beleaguered town, although all belligerents



found it expedient to respect her neutrality. All foreign and overseas supplies had to be borne over the territories of nations at war, and these could give only a minimum of transport material. The produce of Swiss orchards and pastures had to be bartered for the indispensable supplies of coal and iron for her railways and industries. This painful necessity was mother to the electrification of the federal railway system, carried through with resolute efficiency as soon as the war was over. "Moppa necessity mother of injuns." Life was a thing of Ersatz and Zusatz and doing without. Bread was rationed to a minimum. There was a great planting of maize and potatoes all along the lake shore. The potato crop failed. Boiled chestnuts became a staple dish. Frogs' legs appeared on meatless days. Saccharine pills replaced the usual sugar-lumps alongside the coffee cup. Next to every item on the menu stood a warning numeral and fraction. This was the amount of fat involved in the dish, and the waitress tore the like ciphers off the fat card. Who counted them afterwards? Butter was a grievous question. It was debated with no less ardour than the war situation, politics and psychoanalysis. About a quarter of a pound a month was our ration. Not worth scraping or saving, thought some of us, and we ingeniously contrived to eat our ration on the first day so that for the rest of the month we had neither butter nor worry. Irsome all this, and for the weak and sick probably distressing, but those of us who could put up with what came along suffered no real harm.

The perpetual neutrality of Switzerland was guaranteed by all the powers, but so was that of Belgium. And scraps of paper were at a discount at the time. Anyway, perpetual neutrality was merely an extra piece of frontier to be defended.

All frontiers and fortresses had to be manned, a task which involved keeping the fighting forces of the country on a war footing. There was a perpetual ebb and flow of grey blue men of all military ages between the interior and the frontiers. One look at the map of Europe is enough to convince the intuitive observer that Switzerland is a sceptical country. It is a small country with a long frontier and a long memory. At every point of the compass stands a powerful and dangerous neighbour. During the war all Swiss talked war strategy and politics, and in general all were pacifists. The working class of Switzerland, outnumbered as it is by bourgeois and peasants, is inclined to be revolutionary in the Central European manner. Their pacifism was of a plague on both your houses kind. Swiss pacifism did not rule out preference, and preference took the line of language cleavage, with this modification, that the West Swiss, French-speaking, were more pro-French than the German-speaking Swiss were pro-German. This was expressed in popular wit: "Paris wants to make peace, but Lausanne won't hear of it." The sympathy of the German-speaking Swiss for the countries nearest of kin was tempered by a jealous fear of the over-mighty neighbour. I always felt that the Swiss knew the Germans more intimately than we. In his hostile moments the German is to him a "chaibe Schwob," in which phrase, with appropriate intonation, he expresses his resentment and mistrust for the rich, pushing and cunning neighbour. To the Englishman the Germans were Huns, a numberless horde of cruel and rapacious marauders coming from a far-off place, or (to the soldiers in the trenches) they were Jerry or Fritz, just as he was Tommy or Taffy, Jock or Pat. This was trade union familiarity. When the Frenchman said "Boche," the term

indicated a rude uncultivated lout. The patriotism of the Swiss was intense, but not aggressive. Their perpetual neutrality barred all thought of territorial expansion, but there was in them a certain tendency to spiritual expansionism. The world should admire and copy their admirable institutions. Expressed with over-emphasis in a students' debate: "Wir müssen die ganze Welt helvetisieren."

There are probably more local differences of character in Switzerland than in most countries. Take the two opposite numbers, the Züricher and the Basler. The Züricher is robust, independent, optimistic, go-ahead. Unlike the Basler, he has his own hinterland. Basel is a frontier town, hemmed in on two sides by Alsace and the Grand Duchy of Baden, and frontier towns have always their own state of nerves, racial and cultural admixtures, and the many customs barriers cramp their economic style. Therefore the Basler is sceptical, ironical, watchful. And no wonder, for in Basel the war was at the gates. Cannonades on Hartmannsweiler Kopf and on the bridgehead at St. Louis rattled the Basler's windows, and from his streets he could see the shrapnel of anti-aircraft guns bursting and their cotton-wool clouds drifting over his town. The Züricher could rarely hear cannonades, and there were no customs barriers at the gates of his town. Owing to its commercial eminence and its distance from inconvenient and dangerous frontiers, Zürich was one of the most cosmopolitan towns in Europe during the war. I once heard that the floating population of foreigners was equal to forty per cent of the native population. Any big town with foreign business relations and a central position has its quota of foreign business men, agents, travellers and so on. But the great mass of foreign residents in Zürich in war time was made up of

deserters, refractaires, and political agents of all kinds, and the legitimate business agent was reinforced by a much larger element whose house of business was any quiet corner of any convenient café on the Bahnhofstrasse, and whose business consisted in trading in contravention of war time regulations. Zürich was the Schiebers' paradise, and the headquarters of spies of all nations. The trade of the spy seems to me to be no worse than that of the combatant soldier. It has always been a part of war-time service as essential as the firing of a gun, or the making of a bullet, or the making of bread for the man who makes the bullet or for the man who fires it. But the awkward thing in a town like Zürich is that when spies are around in great numbers nobody knows who is a spy and who isn't, with the result that everybody is likely to think that everybody else is a spy unless there is clear evidence to the contrary. One harmless instance of this distorting spy atmosphere is Joyce's mistaking me for a Consular agent. Austrian spies had watched his movements in his earlier Zürich days.

Another category of foreigners were those on neutral soil for the purpose of national propaganda. The Ministry of Information, in which I was employed at the time I met Joyce, was an institution for the spread of British propaganda in neutral countries. They found me unemployed in Zürich and gave me a job. The idea was to convince the Swiss that it was pleasanter and more profitable to be friends with the Allies than with the Germans. The printed word was our principal instrument. There was a rare scramble amongst all belligerent propaganda agencies for Swiss newsprint. As they were debarred from founding newspapers themselves, the next best thing for the foreign propa-

gandists was to get as much space as possible in newspapers already existing. It was generally believed that the *Zürich Post* was under German control. Whether from sympathy or interest, it was certainly Germanophile. The newsvendors in their local patois called it the "*Züri Boche*," and the passer-by smiled approval. Generally speaking, however, the method was to send out articles and pars of all kinds, and on their own merit, or with the aid of a friend at court, they would usually find a place in some paper or the other. To aid us in our enterprise the M. of I. in London sent us from time to time big bundles of articles written somewhere in Whitehall or the Strand. One of the best was a carefully written study on bent wood furniture, but unfortunately we couldn't place it. Our difficulty was that if we wanted an English newspaper more or less up-to-date we had to go and buy it at the station kiosk like anybody else. Still, considering the lack of straw, our output of bricks was as good as that of the rival firms. France and Germany had the best of the cultural propaganda. Germany scored heavily with music, and France with the pictorial and plastic arts. They had the cards and were in a position to play them. The only attempt to make the Swiss public acquainted with English dramatic art in the English tongue was made by Joyce himself who, with the assistance of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Sykes, founded the English Players.

Rising steeply and elegantly out of the Limmat there is a flight of seventeenth-century houses, one of the architectural glories of the town. It is called the Schipfe and is now, I understand, condemned by a progressive municipality. I had a top room in the corner house, No. 23. Joyce had a flat in the Universitätsstrasse. From No. 38, where he lived

when I first met him, he soon moved to No. 29 over the way, to remain there until he left for Trieste at the end of 1919. For some reason that she could never successfully define, my landlady, a Bavarian woman married to a Liechtensteiner stonemason, was afraid of Joyce. The chorus girls in the Stadttheater were more definite. They nicknamed him "Herr Satan." One evening on my return from the consulate she handed me a small parcel.

"Your friend, the tall gentleman with the beard, left this for you," she said with awe.

It contained *Dubliners* and those copies of the *Little Review* in which fragments of *Ulysses* had appeared. Six episodes were there. These were to be followed by another six, and then the *Little Review* was to fall beneath the effective wrath of outraged American propriety. The *Nausikaa* episode was more than the American censor could stand. That which to do is no crime, although by many serious judges thought inadvisable, that which may be discussed by word of mouth, frivolously or seriously according to taste, may not in print be hinted at, such potency for corruption resides, apparently, in the written word.

Joyce's flat was in a modernish house of no particular character. Mrs. Joyce complained that a superfluity of mice and a shortage of culinary utensils cramped her style in the kitchen, but, apart from that, it seemed to me not a bad apartment as apartments go. Joyce's own furniture was, of course, left in Trieste. At the door of the flat one heard the clear shapes and metallic tones of the Italian language. Italian was the house language, and for the children, Giorgio and Lucia, the mother tongue. At that time they spoke English hardly at all and in talking to each other used mainly the Zürich

dialect, Züridütsch. In about a year at school in Zürich they had learned it, so astonishingly quick are the young on the linguistic uptake. Lucia was a dark-haired, blue-eyed girl, slenderly and elegantly built; Giorgio a dark boy, built on more powerful lines. He was an excellent swimmer, champion at his age amongst Zürich schoolboys over a distance of two miles. Such were his natural aptitudes for this exercise that two or three years later in Paris he proposed entering for the annual *traversée de Paris* from Charenton to Auteuil. Mrs. Joyce was a stately presence, but what most impressed on acquaintance was her absolute independence. Her judgments of men and things were swift and forthright and proceeded from a scale of values entirely personal, unimitated, unmodified. In whatever mood she spoke it was with that rich, agreeable voice that seems to be the birthright of Irish women. Generally at the time I arrived it was the children's bedtime. To Giorgio was said, "Porta del legno"; to Lucia, "Vade a letto"; and when Mrs. Joyce came in with a carafe of the always desirable Fendant we were already talking, usually about Joyce's *Ulysses*.

"Now that's too bad," said Mrs. Joyce, as she set down the wine. "And is he talking to you again about that old book of his, Mr. Budgen? I don't know how you stand it. Jim, you ought not to do it. You'll bore Mr. Budgen stiff."

Any disparaging remarks of Mrs. Joyce about *Ulysses* always made Joyce's eyes glitter with suppressed laughter. He protested mildly.

"If I bore Budgen," he said, "he must tell me. But he has the advantage of me. He can understand and talk about my book, but I don't understand and can't talk about painting."

Mrs. Joyce turned to me in the same vein of mocking disparagement.

"What do you think, Mr. Budgen, of a book with a big, fat, horrible married woman as the heroine? Mollie Bloom!"

I said I thought there was nothing wrong with being fat and married. Anyway a fat, married woman is a change from the sylph-like sweethearts we usually read about.

Strolling through the street one day Joyce laughed and said to me:

"Some people were up at our flat last night and we were talking about Irish wit and humour. And this morning my wife said to me, 'What is all this about Irish wit and humour? Have we any book in the house with any of it in? I'd like to read a page or two.'"

Joyce and his family settled in Zürich right away on coming from Austria, and stayed there about four years. From Basel I came to Zürich and outstayed Joyce there for the greater part of a year. Their flat in 29 Universitätsstrasse was the fourth of their Zürich habitations. Previously they had lived in the Seefeldstrasse, sharing a flat first with Philip Jarnach, Busoni's secretary and assistant Kapellmeister at the Stadttheater and later the same flat with Charlotte Sauermann, one of the leading sopranos of the Zürich opera. We both watched the fortunes of war change for the combatants (Joyce more objectively than I), celebrated the armistice, experienced the grippe epidemic, the Swiss general strike of 1918, many Föhn winds, much good wine (for noble Turricum, in spite of rationing, abounded in all manner of goodly merchandise) and many fluctuations of our own personal fortunes. And it was in Athens on the Limmat that Joyce wrote the half of *Ulysses*.