A CAVALIER'S LIBRARY.

NOT the least of the troubles of the Civil War period in England, was the loss or destruction of many valuable libraries. The Parliamentary party had a keen scent for 'delinquents,' and swooped down in prompt and very energetic fashion on their belongings, so that many a man returned from the war to find his bookshelves cleared of their treasures. Amongst the records of that time still preserved to us, is a small folio volume containing the inventories of some eight or ten libraries, that had been seized by the Committee for Sequestrations, between the years 1643 and 1645. The largest of these is that dealing with the library of Edward, second Viscount Conway. This nobleman came of a very old Welsh family, and several of his ancestors had played distinguished parts in English history. His grandfather, Sir John Conway, was governor of Ostend in the days of Elizabeth, and was also the author of a devotional work; while his father, Sir Edward Conway, who died in 1631, was a soldier of note, the friend of the Duke of Buckingham, and successively Secretary of State and President of the Council in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. By the former monarch he was created Baron Conway of Ragley in the county of Warwick, and by the latter, Viscount Conway of Conway Castle,

and also Viscount Killultagh of county Antrim, Ireland.

His son, the second viscount, was educated at Queen's College, Oxford, where he acquired a taste for classical and what, in those days, would have been termed polite literature, which meant a knowledge of what was most readable in the French, Italian, and Spanish languages. We gather that in his younger days he was somewhat effeminate in his dress and habits, much given to ladies' society, and when in London a conspicuous figure at the Court. But with a slightly frivolous nature he combined a student's love of books, was a man of good judgement in literary matters, and an ardent book hunter. His friends, amongst whom were Archbishop Laud, Sir Theodore de Mayerne the king's physician, John Selden, Sir Kenelm Digby, Sir John Conyers and many other distinguished men, knowing the pleasure that he took in his library, kept him advised of what good books they heard of, sent him any work they thought would especially interest him, and gave him the benefit of their experience as to the best places on the Continent to procure second-hand books. He also had his agents in London and various continental cities, who kept him informed as to the new issues and the prices, and bought for him when desired. All this and a good deal more information is to be found scattered up and down amongst the correspondence and documents in the State Paper Office, and as it is not often that one can get so interesting a series of notes about a book-lover of a bygone age, I have ventured to bring them together with

such little skill as I have. I do not think I can do better than open with extracts from two letters written to Viscount Conway by Sir Kenelm Digby, one of the foremost literary men of the age, from Paris, during the year 1636. In the first he says:

‘MY GOOD LORD

‘Having very lately written unto yr lō: I would not have presumed to trouble you againe so soone, but that it is to recommend vnto yr knowledge this bearer Monsieur Cottard; whose brother is the chiefe booke seller in Paris for curious bookes; and hath correspondence in Italy, Germany, Spaine, and everywhere; so that any bookes yr lo: would have, he will fitt you withall better then any man I know if you please to employ him . . . I expect yr lo: should comānd me somewhat in yr service in those affaires that I wrote to you I should be able to give you some reasonable account of, I meane in buying bookes, old or new, or in great paper etc.’

The second letter, dated the same month, reads:

‘Mr Selden’s booke hath bin seene here, and is both much esteemed and much envied; but (as I heare) he is not to expect any reply from Grotius to maintaine his former assertion, w^{ch} he wrote (he sayeth now) as a Hollander, and is exceeding glad to see the contrary proved; by reason of the advantage such a iurisdiction upon seas, will bring to the crowne he now serveth, in regard to their seas. I am promised “La conquest du sang real” for you, and the Legend of S^r Tristran, and can procure you an entire collection of all the bokes knowne here of that kind, and in particular a curious Amadis in 12 volumes; but least I should buy what you have already, I beseech yr Lo: lett me know what you want and what is yr store; (for these are the deerest bookes here) be pleased also to lett me

know if you would have such of them as are extraordinarily bound for curiosity and cost, or whither the vulgar meanest binding will serve . . . I have searched John Trundle his shoppe of Paris, and have found an Almanake and a Thesis of conclusions in the Sorbone, w^{ch} for the pictures sakes adorning them I make bold to send y^r Lo: etc.'

Whenever he was in London, Viscount Conway was a familiar figure in the bookshops, and not the least interesting of these documents is a portion of a book of expenses, kept by his steward during one of these visits, in which, amongst entries for gloves and scent, are the following:

	£	s.	d.
' Paid to Mr Bee for a great book	1	5	0
For Books	0	14	6
More to Mr Huggens for his books	0	5	0
To a porter that brought books from " Bead- lum "	0	1	0
For books in Westminster Hall	0	1	6
For three books in Pauls Church Yard	0	1	8
Paid to the French bookbinder	0	10	0
For three books at the Temple	0	1	3
For five play books	0	4	0
For ballads & a play book	0	3	6
Paid to the book binder with withered hand	2	11	0

In another place we find a bill of his for £16 2s. 10d. for certain Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish books, the titles of which are set out, bought at the Latin warehouse; but unfortunately the bookseller who receipted the bill omitted to put his name to it.

The Viscount's home was at Lisneygarvey, co.

Antrim, where he employed the village schoolmaster, Philip Tandy, and his chaplain, William Chambers, in making a catalogue of his library. On the 26th December, 1636, Tandy wrote as follows to George Rawdon, his lordship's secretary:

‘I am setting Lord Conways books in alphabetical order, and give all the time to them that I can spare from my school. I classify them also by volumes and sciences. In the Christmas holidays I unchested the chested books and put them into the drawing room, where they are often aired by good fires.’

In another communication he sets out the titles, place of printing, date, and size of some books which by the Viscount's instructions he was sending him. Another and much larger list of books, probably by the same hand, is found a few months later. In this some three hundred works are mentioned, but most of them were duplicates, or, as the compiler termed them, ‘double and imperfect books,’ which no doubt the Viscount, who was then in London, proposed to sell or exchange; but amongst them is mentioned a copy of ‘Shakespeare's workes,’ which certainly is not found amongst the folios in the inventory of the library drawn up by the Parliament. This list also set out the titles of some of the plays that were in the consignment, among which we notice ‘The Tragedye of Othello the Moor of Venice,’ ‘A Courtly Masque or the World Tost at Tennis’; and Dekker's play, ‘If it be not good the Devil is in it.’

From time to time Viscount Conway was called away from his beloved books on public service.

He served, but without distinction, in the fleet sent out first in 1636, and again in 1637, to guard the English Channel from the French and Dutch navies; and it was, no doubt, in order to have something to pass away the tedious hours on ship-board, that he sent for the books detailed in the above lists. In connection with this an amusing mistake occurred. Lady Brilliana Harley, Conway's sister, wrote to his secretary, Rawdon, that she was sending his lordship 'a box of pies,' but Rawdon read it as 'a box of papers,' which brought the following letter from her ladyship:

'GOOD MR ROYDON.

'I adventure to trubell once more with the delivery of these inclosed letters. . . . I thanke you for your promised care to deliver the box I sent up to my lord, but shure I mistoake in writeing or you in readeing for I sent a box of Pyes and not Papers, but I think if I could a found out a Box of Boockes that has not yet bine seene, my lord would have bine as well pleased with them as with any other present.'

Another letter of that time shows that before quitting London, the Viscount had ordered a large paper copy of a work called 'Theophylacti Epistolae,' perhaps the Lyons quarto edition of 1617, and he begs his secretary to send him some gilt paper in large quarto 'to write to women.'

On his return to England in 1637, he was appointed a member of the Council of War, and in January, 1639, he received a summons from the King to join him at York on the 1st April, with a troop of horse. The assembly was, however, delayed

for nearly a twelvemonth, and meanwhile we may notice the following letter to his lordship, from a correspondent at Brussels:

'I have sent enclosed¹ the names of the books which are here to be had at present, but in ten days time I shall receive from the mart at Frankfort a printed catalogue of all books printed this year in all parts of the world, which I will send you . . . I have heard of a rare book, priced at ten patacoons, lately printed in France named, *Les plans et profils de toutes les principales villes et lieux de France*, par le sieur Tassin. 2 vols,² and I hope to procure it here very shortly, and if you like it I will present it to your Lordship.'

At length, in the spring of 1640, Viscount Conway quitted London for the north, and, with the title of Master of the Horse, occupied Newcastle. The army of the Scots under General Leslie was as yet within its own borders, but Conway's task was a sorry one, if we may judge from his own description of it in a letter to the Duchess of Devonshire:

'I am teaching cart horses to manage & men that are fit for Bedlam & Bridewell to keep the ten commandments: so that General Lesley and I keep two schools, he has scholars that profess to serve God, and he is instructing them how they may safely do injury and all impiety: mine to the utmost of their power never kept any law either of God or the King and they are to be made fit to make others keep them.'

It was small wonder therefore that, with an insufficient force, ill fed, ill clothed, and ill paid, he hesitated to attack the Scottish army. But at length by the remonstrances of his friends in London, he

¹ The enclosure is lost.

² Paris, 1636. Obl. 4to.

was goaded into making at least a show of attack. He attempted to dispute the passage of the Tyne, but his men fled at the first charge of the enemy, and he was forced to abandon Newcastle and retreat on Durham.

Yet in the midst of ceaseless anxiety and work, he found solace in his books, with which, as the following letter shows, he took care to keep himself supplied. The writer, Captain Edward Rossingham, was evidently at that time his agent in London, and sent him the latest news as well as books, as several lengthy newsletters from his pen are printed in the Calendars of State Papers.

'MY GOOD LORD,

'I have receaved y^r ldp's letter, and as you have commanded I have obeyed; all the books but one are procured, and this night to be packt up in a box, with 8 quier of Paper Royall, w^{ch} my ld. Generall commanded me to provide & send to y^r ldp. for his use, to draw designes upon: I doe send them in some Newcastle man whose name & ship I doe not yet know, but I shall, to send y^r ldp. by the next post: I doe direct the box to y^r ldp: to bee left at y^r ldp's lodgings in Newcastle, therefore I desire y^r ldp would take some care to have them receaved, in case y^r ldp should goe from Newcastle . . . but if there is a land carrier that goes weekly to Newcastle, I will follow my directions & send these books by land. M^r Martin's wife is not well & therefore I can rarely find him at home, yet by the next he tells mee he will provide mee¹ the list of such new books as bee . . . on the way for England.' [Dom. S. Papers, Ch. I., vol. 463. 32.]

¹ This sentence is badly put together, but its meaning clearly is that Mr. Martin had promised to send him on the list by the next mail.

A cessation of hostilities enabled Viscount Conway to return to London, and subsequently he was appointed Governor of Londonderry and Marshal of Ireland. Little is known of his movements between 1641 and 1643, but in that year he was declared a 'delinquent,' his books were seized and the inventory mentioned at the beginning of this article was made. It is in two handwritings, and there is strong evidence of its having been made very hastily. It covers eighty-nine closely written folio pages, and deals with some six thousand works. The books were entered according to sizes, and as briefly as possible under their titles. Sometimes, but very rarely, the date of publication is given. As for the valuation, it was a mere farce. The valuer was probably a bookseller of the stamp of Michael Sparke or Robert Bostock, who would not be likely to offer much for the books of a royalist. Another cause of the miserable prices affixed to these books was undoubtedly the glut of the market. At any rate, in the case of Viscount Conway's library, twenty or thirty books were frequently bracketed together and valued at a couple of shillings, and in other instances we come across the entry, '18 books scarce worth valewing,' and the total sum offered for the library was two hundred pounds. As regards its character, all that can be said is that it was rich in foreign literature, in the classics, works on history, military science, navigation and travels, heraldry and architecture, as well as in French, Italian and Spanish romances, novels, plays and poems. It was poorest in English literature, although the chief works of the day, the writings of Bacon, Camden, Hakluyt,

Selden and the chief controversial works were represented.

The loss of his library must have been very keenly felt by Viscount Conway. He had spent much time and money in getting it together, and as we gather from that brief sentence in Lady Brilliana Harley's letter, he looked upon his books as valued possessions. We suspect that this seizure had as much as anything to do with his early desertion of the royal cause. At any rate, in the spring of 1644 he made overtures to the Parliament through the Earl of Coventry, and finally, after much delay, he was allowed to have his books back, on paying a fine of twenty pounds for them. It is not quite clear, however, whether he recovered the whole of them, as amongst the papers of the year 1644 is a list of some dozen, bought by a certain Mr. Gillespie, who undertook to pay the Committee at Camden House in cash for them, or to return the books. There is also a reference in another letter to certain books belonging to the Viscount that were stolen. Such losses were only to be expected, and on the whole he must be considered lucky to have recovered any of them.

When matters were cleared up and he had made his peace with the Parliament, Viscount Conway settled at Petworth in Sussex, the seat of the Earl of Northumberland, where he passed a quiet life amongst his books. His friends had most of them fled to the Continent, and with them and members of his family he kept up a constant correspondence, in which his wide reading and love of books frequently show themselves. The following character-

istic letter was written to his daughter-in-law, Lady Anne Conway, in 1651:

‘ . . . bycause I see your iudgement is good I will tell you some conceptions of mine concerning new bookes, all being either written according to the rules of former writers in the same subject, or else being totally new or in part differing from former Rules. They live or dye according to their complexion and spirit. Somme of those that are written according to old rules are thought worthy to live so long as the world lives; others never outlive their first Impression. Those that are writt contrary to or beside the old Rules, have their fates according to the affection of their readers or their reall trueth, as it will be found upon experience. Lucan is found fault with for not writing according to the lawes of a Poeme, but he gaines so much upon the affections of men that he will live so long as Latine or English. Strada is found faulty by the Cardinal Bentivoglio for writing rather like a Biographer than an Historian, but the trueth which he writes and his handsome delivery of it will make him ever esteemed. Our English Playes are not written according to the rules of Antient Comedies or Tragedies, but if the English language were understood by other nations they would certainly imitate them. Ramus hath had many followers in Cambridge but Aristotle hath prevailed against him. One of the Fathers was of opinion that it was Hæresy to say that there were Antipodes, which by the navigations of these latter time is plainly disproved. There is one a Jesuite and an Astronomer that hath changed all the figures of beasts and other things, which the Ancient Astronomers had made, into the shapes of Saints; but I beleave his booke will never be reprinted. Copernicus hath divers followers, not bycause his opinion is true, but bycause the opinion is different from what all men in all ages ever had. For he hath not proved that there is any ill consequence by holding that the Earth doth stand still and the heaven move, or

discover[ed] the least error in this Tenent; but only he hath very ingeniously shewed that it may be as well demonstrated that the heavens stand still as that the earth stands still. We shall know no more then we doe if we thinke as he doeth, but beleave otherwayes then we doe, and against the wordes of the Scripture directly, to which he makes an answeare seemingly faire but altogether unwarrantable; My paper would faile me as I beleave your patience doth you, if I should reckon up the severall bookes and opinions which were new and never grew old and those which have bin received and live, as the notes in Musique, Printing, Gunpowder, and divers things both in Physicke and Anatomy; but it is good to try all things and to hold that which is best, and vntill experience have confirmed to suspend the assent. Allthough I have troubled you sufficiently yet I must give you a little more in making a request to you, that since you write like a man you would not seale your letters like a woman. Your last letter was sealed vpon the wrighting, and in the opening two or three wordes were torne out, allthough the letter was opened with providence that the wrighting was in danger of tearing; Daughter, an old man is an ill thing; he is full of diseases and troubled in himselfe and he is full of wordes, making himselfe a Schoole master that he is troblesome to others. Therefore thanke God I have no more paper then will serve to say that I am most hartily

‘Yr most affectionate father

‘CONWAY AND KILULTA.

‘Petworth. July 8. 1651.’

Add. MSS. 23,213 f. 9.

In the same year he received two letters from the great physician, Sir Theodore de Mayerne, in which the following passages occur:

‘Very often in the matter of books “parturiunt montes,
 12 nascitur ridiculus mus.” Writing is a great disease with

which most people, especially in Germany, are smitten, and what is more "scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim." . . . You will oblige me by sending me "L'escole de Salerne," a burlesque in verse by the Ovid of fine humour; I have seen it already. If I feared death, I should be afraid, by reading it once more, of putting myself into a burlesque humour, which I am dissuaded from doing by the colour of my beard. The shortest follies are the best. But as for "L'escole de Salerne," that is in my line.' (State Papers, Dom. Ch. I., Vol. 16, 57.)

'Thanks for the burlesque poems you sent me; but they do not approach Lalli, who first parodied Virgil. It is easy to swell out books when half is the work of others, witness Merlin, Cocaje, and Bellay's macaronic verses. Rhyme is easy to all sprightly spirits like the Provençals. I send you some miserable burlesque verses to make you laugh. If you return me Lalli's *Franceide*, send me also his *Vespasian* and *Octavian*. As I have lived four lustres at the court of princes, I can witness that Lalli speaks the truth. . . . You will receive Fabri's nine volumes; I find as much shell as kernel.'

Here is another glimpse of the Viscount at this time. Writing to a correspondent whose name is not given, under date the 14th October, 1652, he says:

'Our troubles are not yet ended, as the land in Ireland is sequestered, and there are many other uneasinesses in this world, which are good documents, if one have a will and understanding to learn. I am often troubled with gravel, which is almost as bad as the stone, and I grow deaf, which, if it increases, will be very troublesome; for I have not delighted in anything so much as reading and discoursing, and if I lose my hearing, I lose the one half of the joy of my life, which, if I can bring myself to part

with without discontent, I shall be the fitter to make a visit to my father and mother.'

The 'visit' was not far off, but in spite of increasing infirmities of body, and anxiety of mind, he still called for books and more books. Between October, 1652, and October, 1653, the Conway papers include two letters to the Viscount from James Allestree the bookseller, who afterwards became publisher to the Royal Society and whose shop was the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Churchyard. In the first he writes:

'I have been at Oxford for the last fortnight. I have received the cuts and books, but the carrier would not pay the 45s., pretending he had not received any of you. As for the "*Platina delle vite de' Pontefici*," you know very well the old edition can never honestly be sold, since there are so many additions to the new one, neither is there anything in it that should provoke gentlemen to buy it, but the lives of these late Popes, which not being in yours, it will be altogether unfit for my sale. Your "*Lubini Antiquarius*" is imperfect, as you know, and if I knew of whom it was bought, I would endeavour to get them make it perfect, or change it for some other book, but I have taken notice what leaves it wants, and in my next letters to Lyons, will desire my correspondents there to send them amongst the books to me, unless you can appoint any other course.

'There are two maps of the city of Venice, one in 6 large imperial sheets, by Albert Durer, which will cost 12s, and the other in 5 smaller sheets, 8s. the 5th tome of Atlas I expect by the next ship from Ostend.

'The arrest is not only taken off our books, but they are all shipped again, and will come with the first convoy . . . I have sent you Gataker's *Cinnus*, which is 4s. 6d.,

and Ireland's Husbandry 1s. 6d.; Ammianus Marcellinus Valesii is not at present to be procured.'

The second letter is dated July 18th, 1653:

'I perceive you have been at much pains to transcribe out of the Frankfort catalogue divers books you desire, and am sorry I cannot send them; but it is a very usual thing for the booksellers of Germany to send the titles of their books to be put in the catalogue before they are printed, so that at present they are not to be had. I now send you Altorfii Harmonia, 12s.; Grotius de Imperio, 3s.; and the French Gazettes. 1s.; and by the next carrier will forward the following which I could not get bound in time: Geterus in Proverbia et Ecclesiasten; Casulanus de Lingua, Shickardi Horologium, and Iohnstoni Historia Naturalis de Insectis et Serpentibus, fol., which are all I have of your notes, except Zwelferi Animadversiones, which is the same you have in octavo, and Languis de Annis Christi, which is an old book, printed in Holland five years since, which I think you have seen. We have a book entitled Bibliotheca Portabilis, sive Totius Theologiæ Nucleus et Systema Integrum 4^{to}. 1653, 3 vols, which sells exceeding well and is much esteemed.'

This is the last echo we hear in the State Papers of Viscount Conway and his books. Late in the autumn of 1653, he went abroad, and was in Antwerp in the early part of 1654. After that nothing more is heard of him, but it is believed that his death took place at Lyons in June, 1655. He was succeeded by his son Edward, the third Viscount Conway.

H. R. PLOMER.