
The British Delegation at the Synod of Dort—1618-1619

by M. W. Dewar

*Many of our readers know of the Canons of the Synod of Dort as one of the classical formulations of Reformed doctrine, still faithfully maintained by a significant number of our brethren in Holland and the lands colonized from Holland (not least around the shores of Lake Michigan). But to most of us the details of the Synod itself are unfamiliar. Political as well as theological interests were involved in the Synod, and figured also in King James's policy when he sent English delegates there. Dr. Dewar, who has made a special study of the period, believes that the English churchmen nevertheless conducted themselves with Christian grace and dignity throughout, and ranged Ecclesia Anglicana on the Reformed side in the seventeenth century as their predecessors had done in the sixteenth. He points out, justly, that the subject of his essay has been virtually untouched in English since A. W. Harrison, *The Beginnings of Arminianism* till the Synod of Dort (1926), and *Arminianism* (1937).*

WHEN the Thirty Years War began, Protestantism lacked an obvious "father-figure". That position, once held by William the Silent, and paradoxically by Elizabeth of England, devolved by default on their successors until the rise of Gustavus Adolphus. But the Stadholder Maurice, though now Sovereign Prince of Orange, was in the *United Provinces* only the servant of the States General. Oldenbarnevelt, the Advocate of Holland, was their chief executive. These two heirs of *le Taciturne* symbolized the dichotomy of the Dutch Republic. In Great Britain James I and VI suffered no such limits to his sovereignty. Heir to Elizabeth in Church and State, he resisted Presbyterianism in Scotland, and Puritanism in England, as inimical to the Monarchy. But a reaction from the Calvinian discipline of his youth had not entirely eliminated his sympathy for Calvinian doctrine.¹ His contribution to the events of 1618-19 was to support Maurice of Orange theologically at Dort, rather than his own son-in-law (the Elector Palatine) militarily in Bohemia.

No Tudor Monarchs took their titles of Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England more seriously

¹ J. L. von Mosheim, *Eccles. Hist.* (Murdoch) (1845), iv, p. 229; W. Barlow, *The Summe and Substance of the Conference at Hampton Court* (1604), pp. 80, 83.

than King James.² In Scotland and France Calvinism tended towards rebellion. In the Netherlands it had played a major part in the Spanish War, in which Oldenbarnevelt had secured at twelve year's truce. Dutch Calvinism enjoyed an almost unique quasi-Establishment position. William the Silent's own brand had been moderate. His Coligny widow and her son, Frederick Henry, were known supporters of the Arminian Uitenbogaert. He had previously been Maurice's chaplain. The Arminians had the support of the Advocate, and their "High Mightinesses".³ Maurice was a soldier, not a theologian. It was said that he did not know whether Predestination was green or blue, but he did know that in Dutch "Spain" and "Orange" rhymed.⁴ This gave him standing with the militantly patriotic mob against Oldenbarnevelt and the Oligarchy. What began as a dispute between the Leyden Professors, Hermensen (Arminius) and Gomar, ended in the division of Dutch Calvinism and a near schism between Church and State. The Synod of Dort was the closest to the Council of Trent that Protestantism was to know.

Uitenbogaert, a disciple of Arminius, had drawn up a "Remonstrance" against the strictly scholastic Calvinism of Gomar (1610). It seemed to him to exceed the Belgic Confession and Heidelberg Catechism, as well as Scripture itself, in its rigidity. Its chief issues were the five "Knotty Points" which had divided Pelagius from Augustine, and would divide the Jesuits from Jansen, and Wesle from Whitefield. It had been presented to the States through the Advocate who, with Hugo Grotius, was known to be Remonstrant in sympathy. But the majority of the Dutch Reformed clergy, except in Utrecht, were "Counter-Remonstrant". This alignment between "Orangeism" and strict Calvinism, and "Republicanism" and Arminianism was quite the opposite of the British situation. It seriously alarmed the King, who saw the similarity between himself and the egalitarian Puritans, and the Stadholder and the "Erastian" Arminians.⁵ His "No Bishop! No King!" foreshadowed the later Dutch "*Oranje Boven*" ("Up Orange!"). But his orthodoxy had been equally outraged by the appointment of another heterodox Professor to a Leyden Chair (1611). This was Conrad Vorstius, whose heresies were burned at Oxford, Cambridge and St. Paul's. He left the States, through his Ambassador Winwood, in no doubt that the heretic should have followed them to the flames.

Seven years later a Dutch National Synod was called at Dort

² The term "*Dilettante-Theolog*" was invented for him by W. Goeters: *Die Vorbereitung des Pietismus* (Leipzig, 1911), p. 16.

³ i.e., the States General.

⁴ i.e., "Spanje, Oranje".

⁵ P. Heylin, *Hist. of the Presbyterians* (1672), p. 397.

(Dordrecht) in the Province of Holland. The new British Ambassador, Sir Dudley Carleton, had been sedulously stoking the fires against the Remonstrants.⁶ The Stadholder had no authority to call the Synod, for which his supporters were pressing. That was the privilege of the States, who were not as enthusiastic as the Counter-Remonstrant clergy. But in June 1618 invitations were sent to all the Dutch Provincial Synods, as well as the other foreign Reformed Churches. These included France, Geneva, the Swiss Cantons, several West German States, Brandenburg, and England. They were essentially Calvinist, and "Conformist" Churches. The Augsburg Principle of "*Cujus regio, ejus religio*" was then as acceptable to Dutch Calvinists as to the Lutherans and Roman Catholics. Louis XIII refused to allow the Huguenot nominees to leave France.⁷ The Calvinist Elector of Lutheran Brandenburg diplomatically did the same. In England the Dutch congregations, previously represented at the Synods of their National Church, were prevented from sending delegations by King James's influence.⁸ He had a horror of Dissent, both at home and abroad, no less than Archbishop Laud in the next reign.

The English Delegation was itself appointed by him and not by the Church. This Erastianism was characteristic of the English, though not of the Scottish Church. The first four English delegates included a Bishop and two future Bishops. They were Dr. George Carleton (he was not related to the British Ambassador), Bishop of Llandaff; Dr. Joseph Hall, Dean of Worcester; Dr. John Davenant, Master of Queens' College, Cambridge, and Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity; and Dr. Samuel Ward, Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and Archdeacon of Taunton. Jacobean clergy have sometimes been dismissed as time-servers, but these men bridged the gap between the Elizabethan and the Laudians with consistency and dignity.⁹ Writing of Archdeacon Ward over a generation later, Thomas Fuller's tribute could have included them all: "he turned with the times as a rock with the tide; and for his uncomplying therewith was imprisoned in St. John's College in Cambridge. In a word he was counted a Puritan before these times, and Popish in these times, and yet being always the same was a true Protestant at all times".¹⁰ As Elizabethans they were Calvinists to a man. But they were "Protestants", not "Puritans". John Whit-

⁶ J. Hales, *Letters from Dort* (Golden Remains) (1673), p. 304.

⁷ G. G. Brandt, *Hist. of Ref. in and about the Low Countries* (1723), iii, p. 6.

⁸ H. H. Kuyper, *De Post Acta* (Amsterdam, 1909), pp. 208-13. They were Emden (1571), Dort I (1578), and Middelburg (1581).

⁹ T. F. Kinloch, *The Life and Works of Joseph Hall* (1951), p. 142. H. R. Trevor Roper, "King James I and his Bishops" (*History Today*, Sept. 1955, pp. 571-81).

¹⁰ T. Fuller, *Worthies* (1662), i, p. 299.

gift, Elizabeth's favourite Archbishop, had set his seal on the Lambeth Articles (1595), which were a hyper-Calvinist extension of the Thirty-Nine. James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, wrote the Irish Articles (1615), which passed almost verbatim into the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The Delegation received their royal mandate at Newmarket in October 1618. They were urged to inure themselves fully to the Latin tongue, to show unity among themselves, to keep to Scripture and Anglican doctrine, to avoid controversial theology in the pulpit, to encourage the Dutch divines to do the same, to act as mediators between the disputants as well as between the Continental Confessions, i.e. Lutheran and Calvinist, to keep in touch with him through his Ambassador, and to use moderation in everything. There is no doubt that the Delegation was faithful to the King's instructions in every detail. The two Cambridge dons, Davenant and Ward, were granted a further royal audience for two hours at Royston. They took their several ways to the coast, casually managing to miss the Dutch boat sent to fetch them over. Taking a later boat to Middelburg, they reached the Hague on October 27 in time for the Stadholder's reception.¹¹

On November 3 the Synod of Dort began. Like the Westminster Assembly, with which it has been compared by Richard Baxter, it was a theocratic assembly convened by Erastian means.¹² The next six months were a testing time for the varying loyalties of the Anglicans as Christians, Calvinists, and Episcopalian. This essay is not concerned with the intricacies of theology or of church government, but with the interplay of the Britons against the international background of this semi-Ecumenical Synod. Two other Englishmen played considerable parts at Dort, though not members of the British Delegation. Their position was not analogous to that of the Scottish Commissioners at Westminster, who so greatly influenced the Assembly of Divines. Here Scots were "observers" only, with no voting power. But William Ames and John Hales were not members of the Synod at all. The "ever memorable" John Hales of Eton was Chaplain to the British Ambassador. His *Letters from Dort*, written to Sir Dudley Carleton, give as clear a picture of the background of the Synod as Robert Baillie's delightfully gossipy *Letters and Journals* of the Westminster Assembly. Hales' natural tolerance and rational approach modified his own Calvinism and also, perceptibly, the Counter-Remonstrant sympathies of his master.¹³ On the other hand "Amesius" was one of those English Puritans who had found his spiritual home with

11 T. F., *Ch. Hist. of Brit.* (1868), iii, pp. 308-9.

12 R. Orme, *Life of Richard Baxter* (1830), p. 69.

13 J.H., pp. 72, 178.

"Dutch Divinity". His position at Dort was anomalous. As the only English Puritan present he was "employed" by the Counter-Remonstrants to keep a watching brief over the deliberations. As an exiled English Calvinist of Dutch sympathies, he was *persona non grata* with the English Court, even with the Calvinistic Archbishop Abbot. Yet he continued Hales' work of reporting to the Ambassador when Hales, like Hall, had gone home. On one occasion he displeased Bishop Carleton by handing him some of his anti-episcopal writings in a book of Grevinchovius, a Dutch co-religionist.¹⁴ Otherwise he seems to have maintained the English tradition of impartiality.

The Synod was divided into *Interi* (Dutch and Walloons) and *Exteri* (Foreigners). The former consisted of thirty-seven ministers, nineteen lay elders, and eighteen representatives of the States General. There were also five Divinity Professors, including Episcopius, the chief spokesman of the Remonstrants. The *Exteri* numbered twenty-six. A painting by P. Weyts shows them in session, exactly representing a crude engraving in the official *Acta Synodi Dordrechtii* (1620), and also the Dort Medal. The members can be identified by their names and "Colleges". The meeting place was a secular, not a sacred building, but fitted with box-like pews for the Delegates. The Moderator (*Praeses*) was John Bogermann, a Frisian from Leeuwarden, supported by Festus Hommius and Daniel Heinsius as "scribes", both from Leyden, the storm centre of the controversy. They sat, with their assessors, at the top of the hall; a long table for the Remonstrants running down its length below them. The representatives of the States were on their right, and the other Netherlanders beyond them. The *Exteri* were on their left, from the British down to the Emdeners. Next to the favoured Anglicans were the empty seats for the French, which only served to emphasize the absence of the eirenic Pierre du Moulin of Charenton, and the "Huguenot Pope", du Plessis Mornay. Beyond them sat the Palatines. Below the bar of the house the general public, some four or five hundred of either sex, were admitted. The Netherlanders shared with the Scots a passion for polemics, coming as the Persians came "to see wild asses fight", as John Selden was to write of the Westminster Assembly.

After the Synod had assembled and elected its officers, the first official business was the taking of the Oath. In view of the severe treatment accorded to the Remonstrants it was afterwards suggested that an Oath was taken to condemn them unheard and out of hand. Although this may have been the policy of the Counter-Remonstrant majority, it was not so stated in the Oath. It was indignantly denied

¹⁴ J.H., p. 53; cf. W. Goeters, pp. 61-80; also B. Brook, *Lives of the Puritans* (1813), ii, pp. 403-8.

as late as 1651 by Joseph Hall, who was always at great pains to defend the integrity of the Synod.¹⁵ Although Remonstrants were "predestined" to defeat, and then the Articles soundly condemned, the British, the Bremeners, and the Hessians tried to ensure that they received a fair hearing. But these "Colleges" were a minority among the *Exteri*, the most rigidly Gomarist being the Palatines and Genevans. Years later the Independent John Goodwin was controverted by Bishop Hall on this very issue of discrimination against the Remonstrants, although he had not stayed to hear the most severe attacks against them.¹⁶

Before Episcopius and his party arrived, the Synod got through the more positive part of its agenda. This included the setting up of a Committee on the lines of the Hampton Court Conference, for the translation of the Bible into Dutch. Other preliminary discussions ranged from the propriety of illustrated and annotated Bibles to the baptism of the children of slaves ("Ethnicks") in the East Indies. But the entry of the Remonstrants was the *pièce de résistance* for which their orthodox brethren eagerly waited. Hitherto their only sympathizers had been a small group from Utrecht, who had the dangerous privilege of introducing them when they arrived on December 6, at the twenty-second session. It has not been lost on a modern Scottish church historian that Episcopius' name is simply the Latinization of "Bishop", which did not predispose later Scottish theologians to favour his views.¹⁷ His opening speech was very eloquent and made a good impression on the Anglicans. It must be remembered that *both* parties were then "Calvinists", the Gomarists being stricter than the Arminians, who reserved the Protestant right of private judgment and of protest.¹⁸ Their appeal to reason struck John Hales very forcibly. A member of Lord Falkland's Great Tew circle, like William Chillingworth, whose *Religion of Protestants* so antagonized the Westminster Divines, he was a man of latitude. His friend Anthony Farindon records that at Dort he "bid John Calvin goodnight".¹⁹ It may be doubted however, whether John Hales had ever really bid Calvin "good morning". His Calvinism was probably no more than the contemporary Englishman's admiration for the fighting creed of the Continental Protestant at a distance. His change of heart is attributed to the "well pressing" of St. John 3: 16 by Episcopius. This was the favourite Arminian proof text with its promise of universal salvation. But it seems more probable that this

¹⁵ D. Neal, *Hist. of the Puritans* (1733), ii, pp. 313-4.

¹⁶ J. Goodwin, *Redemption Redeemed* (1651), p. 395.

¹⁷ A. L. Drummond, *The Kirk and the Continent* (1956), p. 119.

¹⁸ H. D. Foster, "Liberal Calvinism, the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dort" (*Harvard Theol. Review*, 1923).

¹⁹ J.H., Introduction, n.p.

exposition was by Matthias Martinus of Bremen, the most "literal" minded of all the *Exteri*, not excepting the Anglicans.²⁰ Consequently John Hales reported, drily, to Sir Dudley that: "Our Synod goes on like a watch, the main wheels on which the whole business turns are least in sight. For all things of moment are acted in private sessions. What is done in public is only for show and entertainment".²¹

The Remonstrants soon discovered that they had not been invited to a theological conference but summoned to a heresy trial. Kept under strict surveillance, they registered a protest against a "packed" house. They pertinently compared it with a *Lutheran* Synod sitting in judgment on *Calvinist* doctrine.²² This shrewd comparison was unanswerable, as the analogy was too close to be acceptable to the Counter-Remonstrant majority. A letter from the Huguenot absentee, du Moulin, was read, urging that a Confession be drawn up to satisfy both Lutherans and Calvinists. But the Moderator only gave "fair words" and marked it "to be considered". Sir Dudley wrote to the Calvinist Archbishop Abbot that this "does ill suit with our business of suppressing the Arminians, and therefore it will not be thought fit to make mention thereof in the Synod".²³ George Abbot was always a shadowy figure at Lambeth, "caretaking" during this Calvinist interlude between the strict "churchman" Bancroft and the stricter Laud. He was approached by Bishop Carleton on behalf of the British on the vexed question of universal or limited redemption, on which they were divided. The majority inclined to his own stricter interpretation.²⁴ Later, having the misfortune to shoot a gamekeeper, he remained in formal office till his death. His influence on the Delegation was, however, less strong than that of either the King or the Ambassador, although his Chaplain, Dr. Thomas Goad, was appointed to succeed Dean Hall.

The sudden departure of this ablest of all the Anglicans, as a controversialist, has always had an air of mystery about it. He had readily accepted the invitation to "entertain" the waiting Delegation with a sermon, declined by the more cautious Bishop Carleton. This "polite and pathetic" sermon was well received, although it ended with an appeal to do away with the "ill omened" names of Remonstrant and Counter-Remonstrant, Calvinist and Arminian, and to "lay aside all prejudice and party feeling that we may be happily united in the enjoyment of the common truth".²⁵ This was

²⁰ J.H., p. 92.

²¹ J.H., p. 94.

²² G.B., iii, p. 70.

²³ J.H., p. 178.

²⁴ J.H., pp. 182-84.

²⁵ *Acta Synodi Dordrechtii* (1620), p. 47.

entirely in keeping with the King's counsel to "mitigate extremism" and to "promote unity". But within a fortnight Hales wrote that "Mr. Dean of Worcester is very crazy and sickly of late and keeps his chamber, neither hath he been in the Synod some of these last Sessions".²⁶ By the New Year he had slipped away to the Hague, "giving notice to no man". Hales "wisht him an ill journey, for this discourtesy", but "hoped he had a good one"(!)²⁷ In later years Bishop Hall was accused of feigning a diplomatic illness, and evading the controversies that would arise, and of accepting the Arminian conclusions.²⁸ This was strongly denied in his correspondence with Davenant, then also a Bishop. It was not suggested at the time, when he took a graceful farewell, apparently *in absentia*, and was publicly thanked for his services. He was loaded with gifts, including a generous travel allowance, and the Dort Medal and chain, now in the possession of his old Cambridge College, Emmanuel, a Puritan foundation. In a lively passage Thomas Fuller noted that thirty-three years later ("What cannot God and good air do?") he had "gone over the graves of all his colleagues".²⁹ Joseph Hall seems to have had a genuine aversion from damp climates and difficult situations. Appointed by Lord Chief Justice Popham as the first Headmaster of Blundell's School, Tiverton, he had withdrawn, accepting the living of Halstead in Suffolk instead. He excused himself by saying, "God pulls me by the sleeve, and tells me it is His will I should rather go to the east than to the west".³⁰ At Dort, as in Devon, Joseph Hall had a ready explanation for his sudden changes of plan. In the late spring he was writing to Samuel Ward about the King's health, the Queen's funeral, and his own "Hollandish distemper". Clearly his own and his Sovereigns' healths were of great interest to him.³¹

Unlike the Westminster Fathers, who worked rather ostentatiously over Christmas, the Dordracenists dispersed for the holidays on December 21. Holland on the eve of its Golden Age was very different from England of the Solemn League and Covenant. In this period, between the departure of Dean Hall and the coming of Dr. Thomas Goad, another royal representative arrived in Holland. Compared with the enigmatic Walter Balcanqual, Joseph Hall seems positively opaque. But this is largely because later generations have misunderstood Balcanqual's position at Dort. Often thought to "represent the Church of Scotland", he was

²⁶ J.H., p. 53.

²⁷ J.H., p. 67.

²⁸ G.B., p. 308.

²⁹ T.F., p. 312.

³⁰ J. Jones, *Memoirs of Bp. J. Hall* (1826), p. 67.

³¹ G. Goodman, *The Court of King James I* (1822), ii, pp. 194-96.

neither a member of it, nor a Presbyterian minister.³² The Scottish Church, under pressure from King James, more “canny” than that of Charles I and William Laud, was entering its Episcopal phase. But the younger Balcanqual, son of a strictly Presbyterian father, had no mandate from or to the Church of Scotland, either before or after Dort. Some writers have seen him as another Presbyterian in an almost Pan-Presbyterian Synod instead of a solitary Scots Episcopalian forming a united *British College* with his English brethren.³³ This confusion may be partly due to his High Calvinism, which was equally shared by the Bishop of Llandaff and the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Chaplain.³⁴ *It was certainly not a Presbyterian prerogative in the early seventeenth century.* All the Westminster Divines were in Episcopal Orders,³⁵ except for the two Huguenot Pastors of London, representing the Channel Islands in the Diocese of Winchester. Neither was High Calvinism then incompatible with what was later called “High Anglicanism”, as may be seen, for example, in Archbishop Whitgift, who held both. It is a mistake to read back modern ecclesiastical alignments into the Tudor and Stuart periods.

The confusion could also be due to a curious disclaimer by Sir Dudley to Archbishop Abbot of any “undecency of apparel” on Dr. Balcanqual’s part; and a confirmation of “the general satisfaction” he had given.³⁶ There is also an interesting note that a special box-pew had to be built for him in front of the other Anglicans, throwing it out of symmetry with the others! Weyts’ painting shows a solitary beruffed and high-hatted divine seated in front of the others. But his seat is now symmetrical with the stoves in front of the other Delegates’ benches. Any divergence between Balcanqual and the other Episcopalians would have been on grounds of nationality, not doctrine or discipline. The Scottish Episcopalians, like the English, preached in black Geneva gowns. The Scottish Presbyterians wore cloaks of “Presbyterian true blue”.³⁷ A graduate of both Edinburgh and Oxford (Pembroke College), he became Dean of Durham and later of Rochester. This was later held against him by the irrepressible Baillie, the Boswell of Westminster: “We have been much mistaken with that man; we esteemed

³² G. D. Henderson, “Scotland and the Synod of Dort” (*Nederland Archief Voor Kerkgeschiednis*, XX, iv, p. 6).

³³ J.H., p. 72; cf. F. Calder, *Memoirs of Episcopi* (1835), p. 365.

³⁴ J.H., pp. 179-81.

³⁵ M. W. Dewar, “The Synod of Dort, the Westminster Assembly and the French Reformed Church” (*Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*, 1967).

³⁶ J.H., p. 178.

³⁷ S. Butler, *Hudibras*, line 191; cf. A. P. Stanley, *Lectures on the Ch. of Scotland* (1872), p. 144.

him ever a Dordracenist, and opposed to Canterbury in that cause; but now we see he has made the King in his Manifesto print as much for the Arminians as the heart of Canterbury could wish."³⁸ By that time (1638) "Arminianism" had lost its original Dutch meaning of Liberal Calvinism, and was applied to anyone who leaned towards Episcopacy and Royalism. Similarly "Puritan" or "Calvinist" had come to mean anyone who opposed Charles I and Laud, however "moderate" his Churchmanship.

Balcanqual arrived just before the Christmas holidays and Goad (*vice* Hall) on January 19. The latter's personality did not make itself felt as much as that of the other Britons. But there is little evidence to support the suggestion that he "turned Arminian" at Dort.³⁹ He certainly "divided" for High Calvinism with the Bishop and Balcanqual. His failure to obtain substantial preferment on his return home may be due to his association with the "Unwanted Archbishop" Abbot, whose Chaplain he was.

His "Disputation" is described by its eighteenth-century editor as "the only remain that I know of that learned Divine, whose name is prefixed to it. This our Reverend Author was one of the most eminent (six) Divines at the Synod of Dort, when the subject matter of the ensuing Disputation, and matters of the like nature, amongst the controverted points, were in dispute . . . whether our Author was then of that judgment, which he declares in this Disputation, I am not certain. However, if his after thoughts which commonly are the best, inclined him to the Truth, and swayed his belief, we have reason to bless the God of Truth for the discovery" (p. 359).

Since this "Disputation" was not rediscovered till a century after Dort, and was not written till some twenty years before its publication in 1661, it need not prove that Goad "turned Arminian at Dort", though possibly in the generation *after* it, when the whole picture of English church life was changing. It can hardly be advanced as evidence for his lack of promotion under either James I or Charles

³⁸ R. Baillie, *Letters and Journals* (1842), p. 41.

³⁹ The *D.N.B.* statement that Goad "went over to the Arminians" seems to be based on J. S. Brewer's extension of a footnote in his (1845) edition of Fuller's *Church History* (vol. V, p. 475). It reads: "Like Hales of Eton . . . Dr. Goad shortly after abandoned the High Calvinist party and went over to the other side. These effects may be attributed not only to a more careful discussion on the subject, but also to . . . Episcopius . . . See a treatise by Dr. Goad . . . entitled 'A Disputation, partly Theological, partly Meta-physical, concerning the Necessity and Contingency of Events in the World in respect of God's Eternal Decrees written above twenty years since', and published in 1661". It was reprinted in "A collection of tracts concerning predestination and providence and the other points depending on them" at Cambridge in 1719. Goad's is a short piece, but it must be the source for Brewer's and the *D.N.B.*'s allegation of 'Arminianism'.

I, although it is curious that his name was omitted from the official Dort signature of the British College, but this was a Dutch scribal error. Fuller, in fact, cites his return to Abbot's Chaplaincy as a preferment. During these weeks the suppliant Remonstrants were brow-beaten by "Mr. Bogermannus," who shouted them down with his "*satis! sufficit!*" and "*Ite, dimittimini!*"⁴⁰ The moderates, Davenant and Ward, who yet stood well with the Counter-Remonstrants, were often engaged to confute the arguments of the Remonstrants. Of the other *Exteri* the Palatines, under Scultetus, and the Genevans, under Trenchin and Diodati, were the most rigidly Predestinarian. The Bremeners, especially Martinius, and the Hessians were even more moderate than the Britons, whose doctrine was the moderate but undoubted Calvinism of the Thirty-Nine Articles. But the British College seems to have been recognized as a *tertium quid* in the Reformed *diaspora*, neither wholly of the one or the other. One of the problems from which the Dean's departure saved him was a stormy interview with Giovanni Diodati, uncle of Milton's friend and translator of the Italian Bible.⁴² A private session was also held in the Bishop's rooms to try to bring together the "universalist" Martinius and the High Calvinist Gomar. They almost came to

apostolick blows and knocks
To prove their doctrine orthodox.

On another occasion when Bishop Carleton tried to mediate, he was abruptly pulled up by Gomar, who insisted that the Synod was governed by "reason", not "authority".⁴² This was interpreted by a Puritan historian to mean that he had no precedence at Dort except as "a baron of the English Parliament."⁴³ But the synod seems to have felt that some apology was called for from "that old tuffs man" who had "silenced" the Bishop. But none was forthcoming, though he avoided him for some days. In spite of their undoubtedly privileged position, the Britons behaved with a singular lack of arrogance in a gathering overwhelmingly "foreign" and "Nonconformist" by their insular standards. Apart from this one brush between the Bishop and Gomar, the Dutch seem to have accused them only of citing the least heretical writings of the Remonstrants. Unlike Diodati, who preached weekly in Italian to a congregation of eight, they do not appear to have lapsed from their Latinity either.

In an intolerant age, when official Anglicanism at home was second to none in its fury against Recusants and Sectaries, the

⁴⁰ G.B., p. 70.

⁴¹ J.H., p. 84.

⁴² J.H., *op. cit.*, pp. 112, 117 (*non auctoritate sed ratione*).

⁴³ D. Neal, iii, p. 96.

British Delegation abroad was marked by a sincere endeavour to find peaceful solutions rather than polemics. Refusing to condemn the Pope as “the Antichrist”, but possibly as “an Antichrist”,⁴⁴ they also refused to deny the name of “Reformed” to the Lutherans.⁴⁵ As for the matter of universal or limited redemption, Davenant and Ward were in favour of the former, while the other three followed Abbot’s advice.⁴⁶ When the *Confessio Belgica*, “le drapeau de l’Eglise Réformée Néerlandaise toute entière”, came up for debate, the British made a dignified disclaimer for themselves against the “Dutch conceit” of “a parity of Ministers”.⁴⁷ Dr. Carleton saw no incongruity in sitting as a Bishop among Presbyterians, but did not regard it as in his Mandate to vote for Presbyterian church government. He even claimed that the Dutch regarded Episcopacy as a possible antidote to their own “unhappy divisions”.⁴⁸

With the Remonstrants long since (January 21) silenced by Bogermann’s “powdering speech”, forbidden either to leave the country or enter the Synod, the last four months were occupied with endless disputations. After Easter the Canons of Dort, drawn up against the Remonstrants’ “Five Points”, took their place beside the *Belgica* and the Heidelberg Catechism as palladia of Dutch orthodoxy. They set the standard for High Calvinism, at home and abroad, for many generations, finding their place in the *Harmony of Protestant Confessions*. While joining in the Condemnation of Remonstrant “error”, the British and the Hessians led the other *Exteri* in refusing to condemn their persons as nationals of another country.⁴⁹ Only the Genevans and Emdeners refused to concur in this abstention. On the eve of Ascension Day the whole Synod joined in a Service of Thanksgiving in the Groote Kerk in which thanks were given for their “High Mightinesses”, “Grave” Maurice as he was called in England, King James, and the other “Godly Princes” and Commonwealths which had sent Delegates to Dort. Feasting and other jollifications, somewhat out of harmony with English Puritanism, followed.⁵⁰ The five Britons found their way home, after spending a short holiday in the Dutch cities, which entertained them well, except for Leyden, the city of Arminius.⁵¹ Like Joseph Hall they had all received medals and chains, as well as a more generous table and travel allowance, i.e. £200 sterling (for travel) plus £10 (for daily expenses), than the other foreigners.

44 G.B., p. 284.

45 G.B., p. 282.

46 G.B., p. 217.

47 G. Carleton, *Examination of the late Appeal* (1626), pp. 111-12.

48 G.C., p. 29.

49 G.B., p. 281.

50 G.B., pp. 300-307.

51 T.F., *Ch. Hist.*, p. 314.

To the honour of their Church and King they were not present at the public execution of Oldenbarnevelt, hitherto held in "protective custody" in the castle of Loevestein. The simultaneous triumph of a reactionary clericalism and a militant patriotism evoked from Diodati the grim joke that "the Canons of Dort had shot off the Advocate's head".⁵²

With Louise de Tëlligny (née Coligny) died the last hope of Uitenbogaert (1620). Episcopius, Grotius, and the rest found refuge in France, and ironically, in the Spanish Netherlands. Eventually returning to the United Provinces, they have stayed in their homeland as a Remonstrant "Brotherhood", now affiliated with the International Congregational Council.

In England the recently widowed King saw his "Theologues" from an upper window and facetiously welcomed them as his "good mourners". Presenting their reports and the compliments of the Synod, they dispersed to their various duties and preferments. The Bishop was promoted to Chichester, Davenant became Bishop of Salisbury, while Balcanqual was already Master of the Savoy.⁵³ Eventually Ward was appointed Lady Margaret Professor at Cambridge, and even Goad became Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation. In the final distribution of honours Hall, who had spent the least time at Dort, was appointed to two Bishoprics. But on none of the British College did the Puritan storm blow more fiercely than on the author of *No Peace with Rome*. An anachronistic survival of the Elizabethan age, Hall was an enigma to the *novi homines* of both Laudian Anglicanism and "Smectymnuan" Puritanism. Charged with "Arminianism" (1628), he wrote pathetically to Bishop Davenant: "My Lord, you know I had a place with you (though unworthy) in that famous Synod of Dort, where (however sickness bereaved me of the hours of a conclusive subscription) yet your Lordship heard me with equal vehemency to the rest, crying down the unreasonableness of that way, I am still the same man and shall live and die in the suffrage of that Reverend Synod, and do confidently avow that those other opposed doctrines cannot stand with the doctrine of the Church of England".⁵⁴ This passage is often reproduced in a garbled version.⁵⁵ It was one of the charges brought against Archbishop Laud that his Chaplain, a Mr. Tomline, had caused this passage to be suppressed in a later edition of Bishop Hall's *The Reconciler*.⁵⁶ Davenant replied: "as

⁵² G.B., p. 371.

⁵³ T.F., p. 316.

⁵⁴ J. Hall, *The Reconciler* (1629), pp. 74-5 (Davenant's Reply, pp. 84-5).

⁵⁵ e.g. Neal, p. 116.

⁵⁶ W. Laud, *History of his tryall and troubles*, p. 353 ("they say some passages against Arminianism were left out of two letters, one of Bishop Davenant's and the other of Bishop Hall's, sent to be printed").

for the aspersion of Arminianism, I can testify that in our joint employment at the Synod of Dort you were as far from it as myself. And I know that no man can embrace it in the Doctrine of Predestination and Grace, but he must first desert the Articles agreed upon by the Church of England". So the two veteran Calvinists corresponded, but they were already in a minority among the new Anglicans, and the new Puritans disowned them. Of the two survivors of Dort only Ward was summoned by the Long Parliament to the Westminster Assembly, and like Ussher, he refused to go. Of Hall, Fuller could later write: "Bishop of Exeter, then Bishop of Norwich, then Bishop of no place, surviving to see his sacred function buried before his eyes".⁵⁷ But then he was in prison (1643).

The new "Arminianism" would emerge after Westminster and the Commonwealth as Caroline "High Churchmanship", although that term was not in use till the turn of the century. When asked "What the Arminians held" Bishop George Morley "pleasantly answered that they held all the best Bishoprics and Deaneries in England".⁵⁸ But as long as they lived Bishop Hall and Dr. Mayer of Basel would compare Dort with "the heavenly city", and with "a most holy place".⁵⁹ Martinius of Bremen, with a longer stay there than Hall, used to say of Dort: "would to God I had never seen thee".⁶⁰ Something of his disillusionment entered England in the doggerel:

*Dordrechtii synodus, nodus,
Chorus aeger, integer,
Conventus ventus,
Sessio stramen, Amen.*⁶¹

But against this dismal picture of Dutch boorishness and intransigence may be set the British Delegation's eulogy by Davenant's nephew, Tom Fuller, himself a moderate Churchman in an immoderate age: "*In Carletonio praelucebat Episcopalis gravitas, in Davenantio subactum iudicium, in Wardo multa lectio, in Hallo expedita concinatio*".⁶²

*Helen's Bay Rectory,
Bangor, Co. Down*

⁵⁷ T.F., *Worthies* (1662), p. 13.

⁵⁸ *Life of Edw. Earl of Clarendon* (Oxford, 1761), i, p. 50.

⁵⁹ G.B., pp. 204, 230.

⁶⁰ G.B., p. 283.

⁶¹ D. Neal, ii, p. 117.:

"Dort's Knotty Synod,
Choir in ill condition,
Windbag assembly,
Heap of straw in session"

⁶² T.F., *Worthies* (1662), p. 304.