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**The Works Of the late Right Honorable Henry St. John,
Lord Viscount Bolingbroke**

In Five Volumes, complete.

Bolingbroke, Henry St. John

London, 1754

The first vision of Camilick

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-60759](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-60759)

THE
FIRST VISION
OF

CAMILICK.

In Hoc Signo vinces.

HAVING as yet given the reader little besides grave discourses on public matters, and foreseeing that, during the session of parliament, I shall be obliged to continue daily in the same track, I am willing to take this one opportunity of presenting him with something, which has no relation at all to public affairs, but is of a nature purely amusing, and entirely void of reflection upon any person whatsoever.

My friend ALVAREZ (a man not unknown to many here, by his frequent journies to England) did some time since make me a present of a Persian manuscript, which he met with while he followed the fortunes of MERIWEIS. An exact translation of the first chapter has been made, at my request, by the learned Mr. SOLOMON NEGRI, and is as follows.

CAMILICK'S

CAMILICK'S VISION.

IN the name of God, ever merciful, and of HALY his prophet. I slept in the plains of Bagdad, and I dreamed a dream. I lifted my eyes, and I saw a vast field, pitched with the tents of the mighty, and the strong ones of the earth in array of battle. I observed the arms and ensigns of either host. In the banners of the one were pictured a crown and scepter; and upon the shields of the soldiers were engraven scourges, chains, iron maces, axes, and all kinds of instruments of violence. The standards of the other bore the crown and scepter also; but the devices on the shields were the balance, the olive wreath, the plough-share, and other emblematical figures of justice, peace, law, and liberty. Between these two armies I saw a king come forth, and sign a large roll of parchment; at which loud shouts of acclamation were heard from every quarter. The roll itself flew up into the air, and appeared over their heads, encompassed with rays of glory. I observed that where ever the second army moved, this glorious apparition attended them; or rather the army seemed only to move, as that guided or directed. Soon after, I saw both these hosts engaged, and the whole face of the land overspread with blood. I saw the king who had signed and broken that sacred charter, drink out of a golden cup, fall into convulsions, gasp and die.

I THEN saw another king take his place; who, in the most solemn manner, engaged to make the words contained in the roll the guide of his actions; but notwithstanding this, I saw both armies again encounter. I saw the king a prisoner. I saw his son relieve him, and I saw the chiefs of the other army put to death. Yet that victorious son himself bowed his head

to the parchment; which now appeared with fuller lustre than before. Several other battles ensued, with vast slaughter on both sides; during which the celestial volume was sometimes clouded over; but still again exerted its rays, and after every cloud appeared the brighter. I observed those heroes, who fought beneath it, tho' ever so unfortunate, not once to abate their courage, while they had the least glimpse of that heavenly apparition in their view; and even those, whom I saw overthrown, pierced with ghastly wounds, and panting in death, resigned their lives in smiles, and with eyes cast up to that glorious object. At last the long contention ceased. I beheld both armies unite and move together under the same influence. I saw one king twelve times bow down before the bright phaenomenon, which from thence forward spread a light over the whole land; and, descending nearer to the earth, the beams of it grew so warm as it approached, that the hearts of the inhabitants leaped for joy. The face of war was no more. The same fields, which had so long been the scene of death and desolation, were now covered with golden harvests. The hills were cloathed with sheep. The woods sung with gladness. Plenty laughed in the valleys. Industry, commerce, and liberty danced hand in hand through the cities.

WHILE I was delighting myself with this amiable prospect, the scene entirely changed. The fields and armies vanished; and I saw a large and magnificent hall, resembling the great divan or council of the nation. At the upper end of it, under a canopy, I beheld the sacred covenant, shining as the sun. The nobles of the land were there assembled. They prostrated themselves before it, and they sung an hymn. "Let the heart of the king be glad; for his people are happy! May the light of the covenant be a lanthorn to the feet of the judges; for by this shall they separate truth from falsehood. O innocence,

“ cence, rejoice! for by this light shalt thou walk in safety;
 “ nor shall the oppressor take hold on thee. O justice, be
 “ exceeding glad! for by this light all thy judgments shall
 “ be decreed with wisdom; nor shall any man say thou hast
 “ erred. Let the hearts of all the people be glad! for this
 “ have their grandfathers died; in this have their fathers re-
 “ joiced; and in this may their posterity rejoice evermore!”

THEN all the rulers took a solemn oath to preserve it invio-
 late and unchanged, and to sacrifice their lives and their for-
 tunes, rather than suffer themselves or their children to be de-
 prived of so invaluable a blessing.

AFTER this, I saw another and larger assembly come for-
 ward into the hall, and join the first. These paid the same
 adorations to the covenant; took the same oath; they sung
 the same hymn; and added a solemn form of imprecation to
 this effect. “ Let the words of the roll be for ever in our eyes,
 “ and graven on our hearts; and accursed be he who layeth
 “ hands on the same. Accursed be he, who shall remove this
 “ writing from the people; or who shall hide the law thereof
 “ from the king. Let that man be cut off from the earth.
 “ Let his riches be scattered as the dust. Let his wife be the
 “ wife of the people. Let not his first-born be ranked among
 “ the nobles. Let his palaces be destroyed. Let his gardens
 “ be as a desert, having no water. Let his horses and his
 “ horsemen be overthrown; and let his dog devour their car-
 “ cases.”---In the midst of these execrations entered a man,
 dressed in a plain habit, with a purse of gold in his hand.
 He threw himself forward into the room, in a bluff, ruffianly
 manner. A smile, or rather a sneer, sat on his countenance.
 His face was bronzed over with a glare of confidence. An
 arch malignity leered in his eye. Nothing was so extraordi-

nary as the effect of this person's appearance. They no sooner saw him, but they all turned their faces from the canopy, and fell prostrate before him. He trod over their backs, without any ceremony, and marched directly up to the throne. He opened his purse of gold, which he took out in handfuls, and scattered amongst the assembly. While the greater part were engaged in scrambling for these pieces, he seized, to my inexpressible surprize, without the least fear, upon the sacred parchment itself. He rumbled it rudely up, and crammed it into his pocket. Some of the people began to murmur. He threw more gold, and they were pacified. No sooner was the parchment taken away, but in an instant I saw half the august assembly in chains. Nothing was heard through the whole divan, but the noise of fetters, and clank of irons. I saw pontiffs in their ecclesiastical habits, and senators clad in ermine, linked together like the most ignominious slaves. Terror and amazement were impressed on every countenance, except on that of some few to whom the man continued dispersing his gold. This he did till his purse became empty. Then he dropt it; but then too, in the very same moment, he himself dropt with it to the ground. That, and the date of his power, at once expired. He sunk, and sunk for ever. The radiant volume again arose; again shone out, and re-assumed its place above the throne; the throne, which had been darkened all this time, was now filled with the effulgence of the glory which darted from it. Every chain dropped off in an instant. Every face regained its former cheerfulness. Heaven and earth resounded with liberty! liberty! and the **HEART OF THE KING WAS GLAD WITHIN HIM.**

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