

If we must indeed hold that the agency of the unseen world never sensibly mingles with that of the seen and the tangible,

“To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,”

we may at least deem it not very improbable that such a vision should have been conjured up by the dreaming fancy of an unhappy libertine, ill at ease in his conscience, sensible of sinking health, much addicted to superstitious fears, and who, shortly before, had been led, through a sudden and alarming indisposition, to think of death. Nor does it seem a thing beyond the bounds of credibility or coincidence, that in the course of the three following days, when prostrated by his ill-concealed terrors, he should have experienced a second and severer attack of the illness from which, only a few weeks previous, he had with difficulty recovered.\*

\* Certain it is, — and the circumstance is a curious one, — there were no firmer believers in the truth of the story than Lyttelton's own nearer relatives. It was his uncle, a man of strong sense, to whom Johnson referred as his authority, and on whose direct evidence he built so much; and we are told by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, that the Lady Dowager Lyttelton, — the younger Lord's stepmother, whom, however, the knight represents as “a woman of a very lively imagination,” — was equally a believer. “I have frequently seen, at her house in Portugal Street, Grosvenor Square,” says Sir Nathaniel, “a painting which she herself executed in 1780, expressly to commemorate the event. It hung in a conspicuous part of her drawing-room. There the dove appears at the window; while a female figure, habited in white, stands at the bed-foot, announcing to Lord Lyttelton his dissolution. Every part of the picture was faithfully designed after the description given her by his Lordship's valet, to whom his master related all the circumstances.” “About four years after, in the year 1783,” adds the knight, “when dining at Pit Place, I had the curiosity to visit Lord Lyttelton's bed-chamber, where the casement-window at which, as his Lordship asserted, the dove appeared to flutter, was pointed out to me.” The reader will perhaps remember that Byron refers to the apparition of the bird as a precedent for the passage in the “Bride of Abydos” in which he introduces the spirit of Selim as pouring out its