

occurrences to be of very old date. In 1598, Har-
rant de Holchitz de Polschitz was obliged to visit
Mounts Sinai and St. Catherine, accompanied only
by some Arabs, none of the monks daring to attend
him through fear of being molested or made prisoners
by the Bedouins.

In order to complete my pilgrimage, it was neces-
sary that I should ascend Mount Sinai. None of
the Monks were disposed to accompany me; they
lent me therefore one of their Arabian servants, a sort
of Helots among the Bedouins, to be my guide, as
well as to carry the provisions which were necessary
for this fatiguing journey. I fastened myself to the
rope, and the windlass being turned round, I was
gently deposited at the foot of the walls. The rope
was rapidly drawn up again to assure the poor monks
that they were perfectly isolated in the midst of
their hostile desert.

The window, which is the only entrance,—the
cord, which is the only communication with the ex-
ternal world,—give to the whole of this building a
grave and solemn appearance. When I was drawn
up by means of this machine, I felt the same im-
pression as if I heard the creak of the hinges of a
large door which closes on the visitor who enters
through curiosity a state prison. This peculiarity
appears to have existed from the time when the
monks were obliged to protect themselves from the
repeated hostilities of the surrounding Arabs. Har-
rant de Polschitz, in 1598, and M. Monconys, in
1647, entered the convent by the great gate: but the
superior of the Franciscans, in 1722, was hoisted
through the window. Sandy, who, in 1619, entered
by the iron door, speaks also of a window through
which alms were usually dispensed to the Arabs: it
is probable that, towards the end of the seventeenth
century, the latter had forced the gate, and from
that period the window before appropriated to alms
was used for the admission of strangers.

Mount Horeb forms a kind of breast from which
Sinai rises. The former alone is seen from the
valley, which accounts for the appearances of the
burning bush on that mountain, and not on Sinai.

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-
in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to
the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain
of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord
appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst
of a bush."

Our course towards the summit of Sinai lay
through a ravine to the south-west. The monks
had arranged a series of large slabs in tolerably reg-
ular order, which once formed a convenient stair-
case to the top of the mountain. The rains, how-
ever, have disturbed them, and, as no repairs had
been for a long time attended to, the stairs were in
many places in ruins. Just before reaching the foot
of Sinai, immediately after quitting Horeb, the tra-
veller sees a door built in the form of an arch; on
the key-stone of the arch a cross has been carved.
A tradition, preserved by the monks, and repeated by
many pilgrims, informs us, that a Jew, having been de-
sirous of ascending Mount Sinai, was stopped by an
iron crucifix, which prevented him from pursuing his
way; and that, to remove the enchantment, he had
baptized himself at the head of a stream which runs
into the ravine. An affecting custom used to
take place near this door: one of the monks of the
convent employed himself there at prayer, and heard
the confessions of the pilgrims, who, when thus
nearly at the end of their pilgrimage, were not in
the habit of accomplishing it until after they had ob-
tained absolution.

We passed another similar door before arriving at
a small level spot, whence we discovered the summit
of Mount Sinai, and the two edifices which surmount
it. The nearest building is the chapel of the con-

vent, the farther one is the mosque. In the distance
of the design is seen the chapel of Elias in ruins, and
in the fore-ground the fountain and the cypress,
which give some degree of animation to these rocks,
whose grandeur is entirely lost by being compassed
within so limited a space. The superior of the
Franciscans found two cypresses and three olive
trees in this place, but the cypress alone still sur-
vives.

We climbed with difficulty to the top of Sinai, rest-
ing at each cleft or salient part of the rock, to which
some traditions have been annexed by the inventive
faculty of the monks, who have communicated them
to the Arabs, always ready to listen to narratives of
this description. Arrived on the summit, I was sur-
prised by the briskness of the air. The eye sought
in vain to catch some prominent object amid the
chaos of rocks which were tumbled round the base,
and vanished in the distance in the form of raging
waves. Nevertheless, I distinguished the Red Sea,
the mountains of Africa, and some summits of moun-
tains which I easily recognised by their shapes: Schommar being distinguishable by its rounded
masses, Serhal by its shooting points, and Tih by its
immense prolongation.

I visited the ruins of the mosque and of the Chris-
tian church, both of which rebuke, on this grand
theatre of three religions that divide the world, the
indifference of mankind to the creeds which they
once professed with so much ardour.

Miscellaneous.

EXTRAORDINARY DELIVERANCE.

THE author of "Tremaine" seriously vouches for
the truth of the following remarkable narrative:—

At the memorable dinner at Mr. Andrews', which
I have just mentioned, his story naturally recalled
many others of the same kind; and one voluble gen-
tleman, who had a greater range than accuracy of
memory, asserted that Sir Evan Nepean, when un-
der-secretary of state, had been warned by a vision to
save the lives of three or four persons, who, but for
this appearance, would have been hanged through
Sir Evan's neglect.

You may well suppose we did not give much cre-
dence to this; but knowing Sir Evan very well, I
informed him of what he was charged with, and
begged him to tell me what the ghost said. "The gen-
tleman," said he, good humouredly, "romances not
a little; but what he alludes to is the most extraor-
dinary thing that ever happened to me."

He went on to tell me that one night, several years
before, he had the most unaccountable wakefulness
that could be imagined. He was in perfect health;
had dined early and moderately; had no care—no-
thing to brood over, and was perfectly self-possessed.
Still he could not sleep, and from eleven to two in the
morning, had never closed an eye. It was summer,
and twilight was far advanced; and to dissipate the
ennui of his wakefulness, he resolved to rise and
breathe the morning air in the Park. There he saw
nothing but sleepy sentinels, whom he rather envied.
He passed the home office several times, and at last,
without any particular object, resolved to let himself
in with his pass-key. The book of entries of the day
before lay open upon the table, and in sheer listless-
ness he began to read. The first thing appalled him:
"A reprieve to be sent to York for the coiners or-
dered for execution for the next day." It struck him
that he had no return to this order to send the re-
prieve; and he searched the minutes but could not
find it. In alarm he went to the house of the chief
clerk, who lived in Downing-street, knocked him up,