

ravine, of whose marvels we had heard much, we left the mules rolling on the ground and our packers getting the camp into shape, and struck through the forest in the direction of the roar. Unprepared for anything so vast, we emerged from the last fringe of the woods, and stood on the brink of the great chasm silent with amazement.

The Grand Cañon of the Yellowstone is a ravine from 1000 to 1500 feet deep. Where its shelving sides meet at the bottom there is little more than room for the river to flow between them, but it widens irregularly upwards. It has been excavated out of a series of volcanic rocks by the flow of the river itself. The waterfalls, of which there are here two, have crept backward, gradually eating their way out of the lavas and leaving below them the ravine of the Grand Cañon. The weather has acted on the sides of the gorge, scarping some parts into precipitous crags, and scooping others back, so that each side presents a series of projecting bastions and semi-circular sloping recesses. The dark forests of pine that fill the valley above sweep down to the very brink of the gorge on both sides. Such is the general plan of the place; but it is hardly possible to convey in words a picture of the impressive grandeur of the scene.

We spent a long day sketching and wandering by the side of the cañon. Scrambling to the edge of one of the bastions and looking down, we could see the river far below dwarfed to a mere silver thread. From this abyss the crags and slopes towered up in endless variety of form, and with the weirdest mingling of colours. Much of the rock, especially of the more crumbling slopes, was of a pale sulphur yellow. Through this groundwork harder masses of dull scarlet, merging into purple and crimson, rose into craggy knobs and pinnacles, or shot up in sheer vertical