

crest. While we waited, the hail and snow came fast, and so, without further delay, we began the slow descent of the other side, leading and pulling our shivering horses down the tedious talus slopes.

Soon we reached the warmer air of Bear creek basin, a spacious amphitheatre near the timber-line, from which a well-marked trail took us into Bear creek cañon, a narrow gorge, lined by the most astounding precipices and picturesque to a degree that was astonishing even after two weeks of mountain scenery. The andesite-breccia, in nearly level layers, forms cliffs that sweep from an eerie height of a thousand feet, and more, down into the hidden bed of a torrent. The sheeted structure, due to parallelism of nearly vertical fractures, is noticeable, and the sympathetic structure of the veins is apparent even at a distance, for their outcrops are clearly visible, ribbing the rock faces with broken lines of quartz.

We passed the Yellow Jacket and the Grizzly Bear mines, huddled under the beetling brows of breccia cliffs, where, here and there, a cluster of courageous pines clung hungrily for life, or a solitary cabin looked calmly over the abyss, or faint trails in unexpected tracery of line wound in and out of dark ravines with the veritable unconscious air of gentlemen without visible means of support.

Our progress, over a trail which was a narrow, albeit quite safe, ledge between rock and torrent, was necessarily, with horses, a slow business. At length, after hours of a continuous descent, which seemed