



In the Western West

A Sketch of Capilano Canyon

By ETHEL CODY STODDARD



"REMEMBER that to-morrow will be Capilano day, and that everyone must please be up in good time, or be left at home," announced our hostess at the close of a particularly busy day.

Her words were sufficient to get us all out of bed right early the next morning, and so round out a party of sightseers, many of whom had seen the Capilano Canyon before but who were as eager to see it again as were the newcomers to obtain their first view.

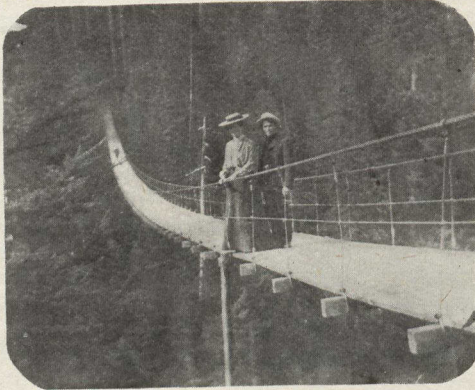
Every inhabited place or district in the known world has its special beauty spot, and attention is usually directed to it in some manner. In Canada's far West there is a vast variety of specialties, and descriptions of many of the greater ones have been placed before the world's readers; but the country being young, there are many wonderful places that have not yet stepped prominently into the limelight of public view. One of the most delightful and at the same time most magnificent of these places is the Capilano Canyon, named after a prominent tribe of coast Indians, and situated about six miles from Vancouver, in the lower portion of the coast range mountains. The world traveller sees much wonderful scenery, but undoubtedly beholds nothing that surpasses this canyon for rare beauty.

Down among the ocean-liners busy discharging freight from all countries of the world or loading merchandise for those same countries, we found the modest ferry by which we crossed the salty depths of Burrard Inlet (which at this particular passage is two and a half miles wide but which on account of the clear, rare atmosphere looks to be one-quarter that distance) and edged alongside brisk, ambitious and fast growing little North Vancouver which digs its heels in the high-tide mark and stretches up one of the mountains that lie directly behind it.

We made a merry party as with our lungs filled with strictly fresh salted air and tipped off with undiluted sunshine, we clambered aboard one of the waiting tram cars and felt we were really off for Capilano. At the end of the car line a motor-car waited and after being comfortably seated we were almost immediately taken out of ourselves by our surroundings.

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IN front and to the right were the eternal snow-capped mountains, their heavily timbered green skirts spread out in a glory that was softened by the distance. To the left was Burrard Inlet, which is the third finest harbor of the world, and whose restless waters are being ever swirled this way and that by the rushing tide as it tears in through the narrows which are situated between Stanley Park (a park of several thousand naturally wooded acres, the only one of the kind in the world) and the southernmost



SUSPENSION BRIDGE, CAPILANO CANYON.

slope of the mountains. These narrows are the deepest and narrowest stretch of navigable salt water in the world.

On the south side of the Inlet the city of Vancouver lay snug and prosperous, carrying out the well-laid plans for holding Western Canada up before other countries as something to be reckoned with in the general world scheme. The world-famous Stanley Park, its giant trees standing motionless in their own shadows, acts as a stately sentinel at the city's gateway. Out beyond it, English Bay tossed and fretted while still farther out the Gulf of Georgia gleamed blue and silver.

About the time that all this fascinating panorama had been duly admired the well-kept roadway turned sharply toward the right and led through an avenue of ferns that were higher than our heads as we drove along. Ever up and on it led till we seemed to be almost driving into the mountain's shadows, while those mighty monarchs appeared to be retreating in dignified silence.

A detour from the main road brought into view a rather famous suspension bridge. This is but a foot bridge, is three hundred feet long and hangs two hundred and fifty feet above the madly rushing Capilano River below. It was built by an enterprising Englishman who now lives in his far-away home, and through his agent collects toll from visitors for the privilege of crossing this airy structure that at this particular point joins the walls of Capilano Canyon.

While on the bridge one is verily suspended 'mid water and clouds, and on account of its frail structure a feeling is produced that is decidedly unique. As the chasm below is quite visible through the cracks in the floor, it all combines to make a thrilling experience.

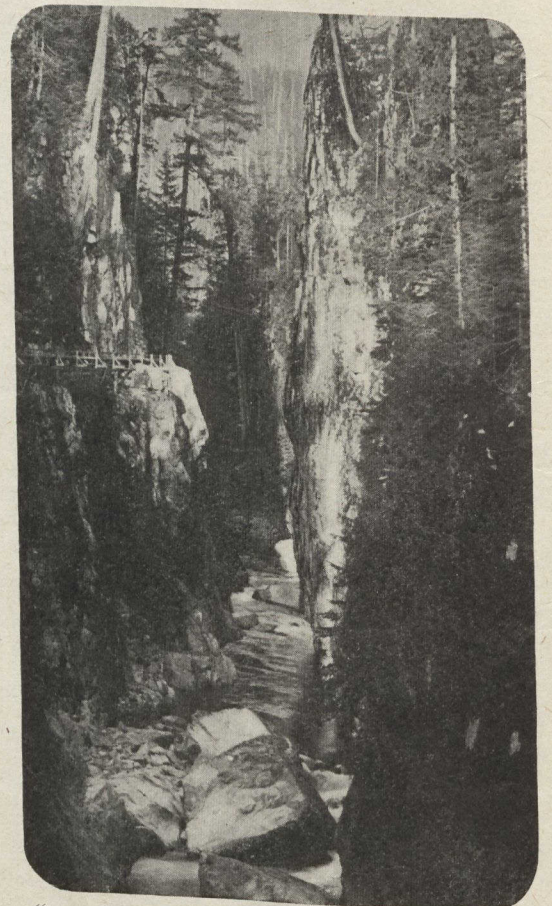
To right and left from the bridge the canyon stretches to two beautiful curves where it slips out of sight. The rock walls with exquisite colorings rise sheer, while their tree-children fairly beg a foothold from their crevices. Behind them the mountains peer over each other's shoulders

and smile blandly upon this beautiful nature-creation. Below, the river rushes and roars the while creating a thousand sounds which the canyon walls catch and toss on and on in mighty echoes.

When we had crossed the bridge we found a flume with swiftly running water tucked into the canyon wall. A footwalk of one, sometimes two boards placed close beside the flume invited pedestrians of steady nerves to investigate the beauties ahead. A large milling company constructed seven miles of this flume, which is V-shaped and three feet wide at the top; then realizing that nothing larger than shingle-bolts could successfully round the almost right-angles of the canyon walls, sold it to a Japanese company.

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ONE may walk beside the entire length of the flume and find every foot of it interesting. The glacier-fed waters, still icy and full of frost even in August, coo softly as they nose swiftly



"THE FLUME DIGS INTO THE ROCK WALLS."

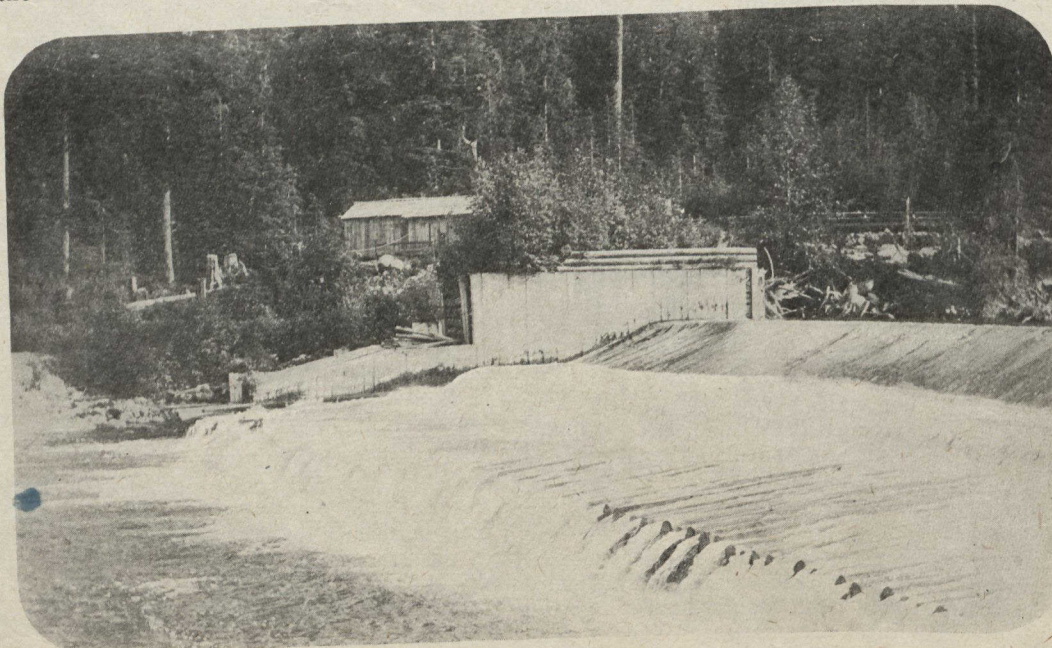
down the flume, while above them are the trees, tall, stately and softly green, their shadows dancing gaily on the waters below. Up, up thousands of feet to the left climbs the mountain, while far, far below in an almost perpendicular direction the turbulent waters of the river hurry on to the sea.

As one walks along the feet are brushed by the tree-tops, their straight trunks seeming to stretch down, down—almost too far down for comfortable thought. One feels like a fly teetering along the edge of nothing, because a false step would undoubtedly result in a broken something, while a departure into another world would be quite possible.

Straight away and around sharp corners, the flume walk led us until for a long distance it dug into the rock walls, and we gazed awesomely into the canyon which was filled with the roar of water, to hundreds of feet below. Then the glance went up to the heights above, and forward and back to where beyond the canyon walls rose white-bonneted mountains with fleecy clouds around their shoulders; then reverted below to where the river tumbled and rushed, dashed itself into a white fury, dipped into quiet eddies and occasionally went back to revisit restless whirlpools.

From this point, which is two miles above

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CAPILANO DAM—SIX MILES NORTH OF NORTH VANCOUVER.