

ABANDON BILTMORE BECAUSE THERE WAS NO WATER TO DRINK

George Vanderbilt's Reason for Leaving His Great Estate.

Left the \$10,000,000 Place in Disgust at a Series of Disasters.

Farming, Forestry, Milling, Landscape Gardening, Dairy and Stables All Were Unsuccessful.

By Cholly Knickerbocker.

EVER since George Vanderbilt sailed away for India to shoot the tiger in his native jungle and to do such other things as shall eclipse the record of Nimrod, the fine world has been wondering what drove the young millionaire to what it is pleased to consider an extraordinary proceeding. Some go even so far as to call it a freak.

The fine world is vastly interested in George Vanderbilt. The fine world is always interested in a man with money and excellent social connections. It is doubly interested in George Vanderbilt because he is a bachelor and the social connections that he may make by marriage, furnish food for speculation.

It is safe to say that no other man in America holds the attention of match-making manna so closely as this youngest of the grandsons of "The Old Commodore." Where George is, what he does, whom he sees, are matters of moment to our city from its centre to its fringe.

George is the capital prize in the matrimonial lottery, and the Four Hundred is even on the qui vive to know who will win him.

This is why there were many "ohs" and "ahs" when it was announced that he was going off to brave the diseases and pursue the wild beasts of far away India.

Why does he do it? Whatever made him risk his preciosa life in such a foolish and unnecessary enterprise? Why didn't he marry and stay at home? Was not his mammoth game preserve in North Carolina good enough for him? Why should he travel around the earth to shoot elephants when deer were at his door? Wherefore has he developed this sudden and unexpected taste to slay rare animals in strange lands?

Drum to the Four Hundred. We are the questions that one hears on every side. The Four Hundred can't understand George at all. Tigers and elephants were never in his line. He preferred his pen to his gun, and his library was more attractive to him than all the jungles of the earth. Why, then, did he give up all that he loved best, take out a million dollar policy on his life, and go off to certain discomfort and possible death?

The answer is simple, but startling. It is because he spent ten million dollars on Biltmore, his North Carolina estate, and then couldn't get a drink of water when he wanted it!

To thoroughly appreciate this remarkable statement it is necessary to go into the hitherto unwritten history of Biltmore.

Most society folk, who fluctuate between New York in Winter and Newport in Summer, with a run across the herring pond in the off season, have only a fogged idea of Biltmore. They know that it is located somewhere in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and that George Vanderbilt is reputed to have spent a fortune on it, but there their knowledge ends. The general impression is that the creation of Biltmore was even more of a freak than this running away to India after big game.

They are wont to regard it as we do the construction of a mansion by G. Oliver Lachin on Echo Island, in New Rochelle harbor, or the building of a house by one of the Cagouls on the highest point of the Highlands of the Hudson—the desire to do something that nobody else had done or would do.

But such people as these have never seen Biltmore. They have never stood on the ramparts at Biltmore House and watched the sun come up over the peaks of the Blue Ridge Mountains until it seemed to set the whole dome of the sky on fire. They have never at evening studied the wonderful changes in the atmosphere as the sun sinks, brilliantly coloring every cloud to a bright copper hue, which changes gradually through every warm shade, red and pink and green, until at last only the gray of night is left.

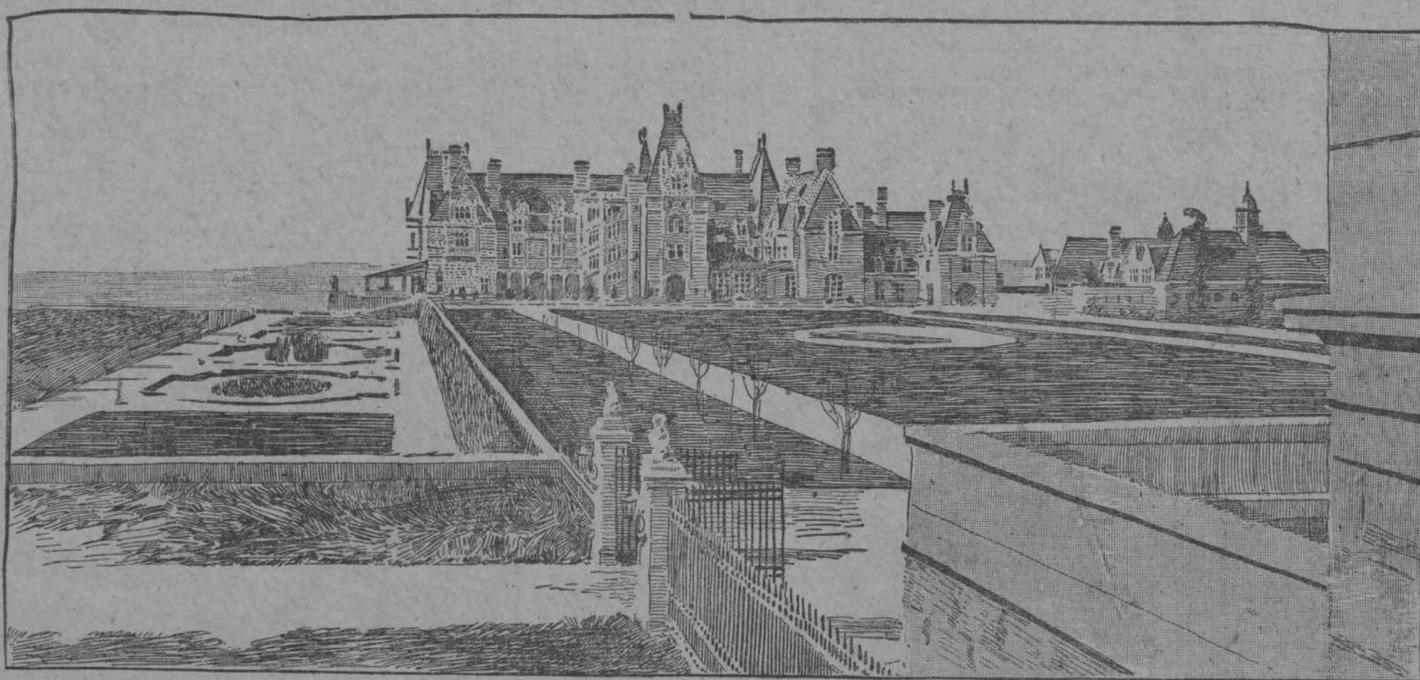
Planned by Mountain Scenery.

It was these beauties of the North Carolina mountains that first attracted the attention of George Vanderbilt. It is related that the first time he came to Asheville, which is the pretty little town nearest to his estate, it was raining, and he was so disgusted with the general appearance of things that he ordered his special car to be ready to take him away the following morning.

Fortunately for Asheville and the future of Biltmore, the weather cleared during the night, and the next morning George Vanderbilt, rising early, was treated to the sight of one of those glorious sunrises which I have referred to. He contemplated the order with regard to his car and concluded to stay the day out at least.

Standing on the piazza of the Battery Park Hotel, he looked away to the north and saw the peak of the Roan Mountain, in Tennessee, a distance of sixty miles. Southward was the grim outline of Caesar's Head, a mountain in South Carolina, fifty miles away. To the west, dim in the blue haze which gives to this range of mountains its name, was the Georgia line, ninety miles away. To the east, standing bare and bleak, and reflecting from its summit the sun's rays, that fell upon its snows, was Mount Mitchell, the highest peak east of the Rocky Mountains.

George Vanderbilt was charmed with this



BILTMORE HOUSE, THE \$2,000,000 MANSION IN THE BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS, ABANDONED BY GEORGE VANDERBILT.

The bachelor millionaire found that he could not get a glass of water in the great place, that the foundations were sinking and the precious marbles cracking and falling down. All the experiments he made upon the gigantic estate proved entirely unsatisfactory, and finally, acting upon the advice of the shrewdest of his brothers-in-law, he has abandoned the plan of building up an unrivalled country place, and has gone to India to go tiger hunting. Help upon the estate has been cut down, work upon the extensions and improvements stopped, and the fancy cattle and thoroughbred horses are for sale at almost any price.

view, as is every one else that sees it. The plateau upon which Asheville stands lies in the shallow cup of the mountains as the bottom lies in a saucer. To the beauties of the mountain scenery was added a climate that seemed to tingle with health. The more young Vanderbilt studied the situation the more he became pleased with it. He sent word to the railroad to sidetrack his special car until further orders, which were not given for six weeks afterward.

In the meantime he rode and drove through all the mountains of the neighborhood. One day, when he had ridden to the top of a mountain and had stood for a long time, delighted with the view, the idea came to him that this would be a splendid place in which to establish a grand estate that would in its proportions and equipment rival any of the great baronial possessions of the Old World. He conceived the scheme of building there, in the heart of those smoky peaks, a castle such as America had not known before. He selected a site already occupied by a Southern millionaire and offered to purchase it, but the Southerner would not sell.

Fixed a Mountain Over.
Then George decided to make a site for himself better than any in the neighborhood. He bought a tract of land on which was a high mountain. Nature had not intended this mountain for a building such as Vanderbilt contemplated, and so George set about to correct the errors of the Creator. He simply cut off the top of the mountain, and with that part which was cut off, he built an addition to the part that was left, making the site on which Biltmore House now stands.

And before we go any further, it is just as well to understand that in speaking of this wonderful Vanderbilt possession a distinction is made between Biltmore and Biltmore House. Biltmore is the whole estate. Biltmore House is the castle. It is well to remember this among the friends of Mr. Vanderbilt and the aristocracy of Asheville, which is pretty well limited to the Vanderbilt following. To speak of Biltmore House simply as Biltmore is to be guilty of a decided faux pas.

The fact that George Vanderbilt had undertaken to alter the Blue Ridge Mountains to suit his purpose in erecting a mansion at once called to him the attention of the whole of Western North Carolina. A man that could move mountains must be a person of importance, the natives agreed.

There was something else about George, however, that proved more attractive than this potentiality. It was the fact that he didn't seem to care what anything cost. Now, a man of that description anywhere is always a mark for people who have things to sell. He was a special mark in North Carolina. The first tract of land that George Vanderbilt bought there was known as the old Patton plantation. The year before this property came into Mr. Vanderbilt's possession, it was offered in the open market for \$20,000. He paid \$87,500 in cash for it.

Just as soon as the terms of this sale became known, everybody in Buncombe County, which is the rather remarkable name of the county in which Biltmore is, wanted to sell George Vanderbilt real estate. He accommodated many of them. He bought farm after farm adjoining his property at prices that made the farmers hilarious with joy.

Thousands of Acres of Forest.
But this sort of acquisition was not rapid enough for George. He wanted something big and he wanted it quick. The highest point in his immediate neighborhood was the peak of Mount Pisgah. As there was nothing too high for George he bought Pisgah. In order to get the peak, he took with him what was known as the Pisgah forest tract. It was real estate belonging to the Cameron family, and numbered 107,000 acres. The Camerons had paid 35 cents an acre for it, George paid \$150 an acre. But this was only a bagatelle to what the ultimate cost proved to be. He had surveys made, established new lines, marked new boundaries, and altogether made improvements until the final cost to him was something like \$20 an acre.

At this time he seems to have had some little touch of that spirit of hunting that has led him away to India. He established a great game preserve on Mount Pisgah, and there built a hunting lodge at the cost of \$25,000. He stocked the preserve with deer and bear, and game birds, and fish at a cost corresponding to the rest of it. George ever killed anything on the

Pisgah preserve, nobody in Asheville ever heard of it. It is known that he went a few times to the lodge, but it is not recorded that his stock of game was lessened by his own gun.

Of the exterior of Biltmore House I shall not go into any lengthy description. Neither in its architectural design, which is renaissance, nor in its coloring, which suggests a chateau russe, is it particularly attractive. The thing that caught my fancy most of all the exterior objects was the rampe d'oeuvres. Through this remarkable structure runs a stream of limpid water that finds its exit through the mouths of the half dozen gigantic iron representations of diamond back terrapin. Spouting and ever rushes away in a little stream and over artificial cascades into an artificial lake.

On the posts at Biltmore House are many figures of mythological creatures, half women and half lions, that were imported by George Vanderbilt from Rome for the decorative purpose that they serve. To the average visitor, that is a person who has a permit to drive through the Biltmore estate, the rampe d'oeuvres and the lion ladies are the only objects at Biltmore House that may be closely inspected. No stranger is permitted to come within a hundred yards of the house itself.

This was not always so. In the beginning George Vanderbilt very generously permitted the general public to wander about and study his house closely from the outside. But that spirit of vandalism which makes itself apparent in the conduct of most tourists appeared here in such an aggravated form that the house, the statuary and all other objects that could be clipped with hammers were attacked and defaced until it became necessary for the preservation of his property to forbid any one not Mr. Vanderbilt's own guest to come within reaching distance of his perishable property.

The \$2,000,000 Castle.
It required seven years to build Biltmore House, and the cost of the structure is estimated at \$2,000,000. The interior of the house is far more interesting than the exterior. It has about ninety rooms in all. Of the most of these it is not necessary to go into any description. The features that interested me most were the library and the bath. The latter is of solid Italian marble, and is round in shape like a baptismal font. It is so large that Ned Bullock, Prescott Lawrence, and Charles Westchester Bates could disport themselves there at one and the same time with all the freedom and joy of seals at play.

The library is in height half that of the house, while the length is the breadth of the house—full fifty feet. It is finished in Circassian walnut, imported for the purpose from the shores of the Red Sea. In one end is an immense fireplace, over which a stair runs to the second tier of book shelves. The ceiling is made of a tapestry brought from an old European palace. The shelves are filled with rare books. One of these is a copy of the first edition of Bunyon's "Pilgrim Progress." I mention this particular book because it illustrates the religious tendency of the master of Biltmore.

Leading from the library is George Vanderbilt's "den," which is finished like the larger room in the same Circassian walnut from the shores of the Red Sea. The door connecting the two apartments is carved so as to represent the life-size figure of a man lifting his finger to his lips, the signal for silence. It is in these two apartments that George Vanderbilt takes his greatest joy of Biltmore House. Once there, he forgets about the Pisgah preserve, and it is for this reason that the world in which he moves was so astonished at his determination to go to India.

Another room that invites study is known as the tapestry room, one side of which is hung with fine old portieres and the walls of which are devoted to family portraits. Among these is an excellent picture of himself and a splendid portrait of his mother.

The latter occupies the place of honor and illustrates in that occupation the devotion of George Vanderbilt to one who, through his life and till she died, was more to him than all else.

The pictures, the tapestries on cloth of gold, the antique portieres and the other decorations of this room make it exquisite in its effect.

The Grand Banquet Room.
Adjoining the library is the grand banquet room of Biltmore House. It is ninety

feet long, forty feet wide, and the height of the house itself. In one end of this magnificent chamber is an organ loft, from which it was expected by the master of Biltmore would pour forth the music to which he is devoted, and which he has always loved so well. On the walls of this banquet hall are the flags of the thirteen original States of the Union. In the end opposite the organ loft is a grand fireplace, or rather three fireplaces in one, with a great marble slab topping the three, and bearing a superbly carved hunting scene cut in the stone.

On the wonderful stone spiral staircase that is self supporting, of the grand billiard room and the swimming pool in the basement, and a dozen other things of interest of the interior of this remarkable house. I shall not speak at length for lack of space. There is one feature, however, the great Winter garden, that should not be omitted. Here the sunlight falls sharply in the Winter time, and the presence of plants gives a suggestion of Summer. Into it every hall leads. It is the grand central ending of all the corridors in Biltmore House.

Interesting as the interior of Biltmore House is, and great as is the mansion when one is in it, the estate itself so far dominates the house that when one contemplates it as a whole the house sinks into insignificance. From the gates of Biltmore on the east, in a straight line across the mountains to Hominy Valley in the west, is a distance of thirty-five miles. George Vanderbilt owns it all. What the average width of his possessions is I do not know, but the total number of acres in the estate is one hundred and twenty thousand. No other man that I know owns any such property.

But it is not in the mere extent of real estate that Biltmore is most wonderful. It is in the effort which George Vanderbilt has made there to improve the work of the Creator. In the first place, he stripped vast areas of his property of all the undergrowth and shrubbery. And when he had made bare these mountains he began to take the shrubs from other mountains and replant them. For six years this sort of thing has been going on, under the direction of a forester imported from Germany for the purpose, and by an army of men that do nothing else, and that are distinguished in their occupation by a sort of green livery which they always wear. The number of trees and shrubs thus transplanted is almost beyond estimate. There are millions of them. Old worn and barren fields have been reclaimed and now bristle with young pine, spruce and fir trees. As one drives through this wonderful estate he encounters masses of honeysuckle, redolent with perfume in the Springtime, and now in Winter time living red and yellow on the ground, like a beautiful carpet. Vast tangles of wild roses run along the roadsides and climb up the hills, while ferns and ivy are on every hand, and rhododendrons abound in jungles among the pines and mountain oaks.

All the Flora of the World.
In addition to those transplantings, which have been made on a scale that is almost incredible, there are thousands of other plants that only a professional botanist would know the names of. It is said that there is not a specimen of flora in the world that is not represented at Biltmore, either on the estate or in the greenhouses. And, by the way, these greenhouses themselves are as fine as any in this country.

Mr. Vanderbilt's collection of palms is probably the finest in the world. He has one palm for which he paid the sum of \$20,000. The rest of his collection shows the same spirit of liberality or, rather, disregard of cost.

One peculiarity of the Blue Ridge Mountains is that there are no lakes in them. George Vanderbilt recognized the error of nature in constructing a mountain range without lakes, and he has remedied it to the extent that he has built two magnificent artificial lakes near Biltmore House. For many miles he owns both sides of the French Broad River, which flows through his estate, and it is said quite seriously in Asheville that it is Mr. Vanderbilt's purpose to dam up this stream and thereby make an immense inland sea among the peaks of the Blue Ridge, which shall be so great that his brothers, Cornelius and Willie K. and Fred can float their magnificent ocean yachts on its waters. Now that Mr. Vanderbilt has gone away to India, however, the people of Western North Carolina are not so certain that he will carry this enterprise to successful completion.

Winding through the valleys and over the mountains of Biltmore are the finest macadamized roads to be found in this country. They were laid out by Frederick Law Olmstead, the landscape architect of Central Park, and they traverse the finest park in the United States. It was Mr. Vanderbilt's intention to build fifty miles of these roads. He has already built thirty miles and the work is still going on.

The religious temperament of George Vanderbilt is illustrated by the erection of a church at Biltmore station on the Southern Railroad and on his own property. Here are a rectory and the offices of his estate. It was his purpose with the nucleus of his church and rectory, which are admirable in design and equipment, to build a modern village to be known as Biltmore. The reason that he has not done this will appear later.

All Kinds of Farming.
Another interesting characteristic of this many-sided young man is shown in the elaborate preparations that he has made for all kinds of farming. He has a chicken farm, a dairy farm, a truck farm, a nursery farm, and just the plain, old, common farm on his estate. Some idea of the way in which George farms may be gained from the fact that he has accepted plans for a 100,000 chicken house. Recently, at a fair at Raleigh, N. C., George took nearly all the prizes for cattle and vegetables and he felt very proud of the result. He raises the best tomatoes, asparagus, celery, radishes and cucumbers to be found in Buncombe County, and he sells them at a price that represents about one-fifth the cost of raising them. For instance: Fresh cucumbers grown at Biltmore are now selling in Asheville at \$1 a dozen. They probably cost him \$5 a dozen to grow them.

Forestry has always been a fad with George Vanderbilt. He has travelled all over the world hunting for odd trees to be planted at Biltmore. He established a school of forestry of his magnificent estate, and paid young men from \$40 to \$60 a month, with board and lodging free, to come here and study.

George also went into the sawmill business. When he was building Biltmore House and making other improvements, such as the erection of countless small structures for the use of the workmen employed by him, some seven hundred in number, he bought lumber from the local sawmill. It is said that the whole of Western North Carolina was trying to pull the Vanderbilt log, took a clutch at it themselves. Strange as it may seem in view of the prices he paid for other things, George thought that these lumber people were trying to gouge him. Thereupon he bought the whole sawmill outfit, floated his own logs down his own river and went in for making everything necessary for the wooden part of a house. He also made all his own tiles and brick, except those that were used in the swimming pool, which were porcelain coated and imported from Leeds, England.

A Stable Full of Thoroughbreds.
The same lavish expenditure was shown in his stables, which are almost palaces and which were filled with the finest thoroughbreds that could be bought in Kentucky and Tennessee. George took special pride in naming his horses himself, and here occurred probably the oddest circumstance in equine nomenclature. He called one of his horses Hall Caine and named all the rest of them after the title or the characters of Caine's novels. George's literary bent made itself manifest even in his stable.

The dairy farm was equipped on the same generous plan. He bought one herd of Jersey cattle that cost him \$60,000. He considered \$4,000 for a single bull as nothing. George sells milk and butter in the Asheville market, but if the Asheville people were to pay anything like what the product costs him they would not have butter and milk often than once a year.

George also took a lively interest in the colored people of Buncombe County. He built them a place of worship in Asheville of his own denomination, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and erected an institute for young men of that race. Incidentally he raised the rate of wages, which was not as agreeable to the people of Western North Carolina as some other things that he did.

Adjoining Biltmore was a mountain known locally as Busbee. George did not care

for Busbee. It wasn't nearly as high as Pisgah, and there was nothing about it that was in any way distinctive from the mountains that he already owned. One day, however, he learned that on the top of Busbee was a spring of very fine water, such as may be found not infrequently in these mountains. But this particular spring was so clear and so limpid and so sweet that George coveted its waters. He wanted the spring, and so he bought the mountain.

He constructed a reservoir, put up the most elaborate pumping machinery and laid five miles of pipe, reaching from Mount Busbee to Biltmore House. What the cost was may be better imagined than told. When everything was done, George thought he would be extremely happy. He had already everything that he could think of or that any of his liege lords could think of, and now he was going to have Mount Busbee in Biltmore House. He did have it for a while and then he didn't, but when he didn't bring me to the end of my story and furnishes the immediate cause for his going to India.

Foundations Sank and Marble Cracked.
Therefore I will let that rest for a moment, and go back to last Summer, when George went to Europe and took with him his cousin McNamee, who is the attorney and general manager of the Biltmore estate. While they were off in the forests of Norway and Sweden looking for new trees for Biltmore part of the foundation of Biltmore House sank until the walls sagged, and the fine marbles used in decorating were cracked. The man left in charge of Biltmore House became alarmed and sent to New York for the contractor who erected the house to come on and see what was the matter. The latter responded promptly and made some remedial improvement. But it is still a question as to whether it will be temporary or permanent. This was a sad blow to George. It began to look as though everything were going wrong at Biltmore.

Whether it was for the purpose of consultation or merely for the purpose of a social visit I am not prepared to assert, but the fact is that about two months ago Mr. Hamilton McKay Twombly, the most astute of Vanderbilt brothers-in-law, took a run down to Biltmore. He looked at the sunken foundation and the cracked marbles. He looked at the dairy farm with its costly equipment and its inconsequential product. He looked at the truck farm and figured on the price of cucumbers in the Asheville market and the cost of raising them. He investigated the Forestry School. He visited the sawmill and looked over the great piles of lumber that were heaped about the place, unsold and unsalable. In short, he took a careful inventory of the whole place.

Now Mr. Twombly isn't a bit theoretical. He is always practical and he has no use for anything that doesn't pay its way. Mr. Twombly has tried fancy farming himself. It was in New Jersey and was very much easier than the same thing in Buncombe County, North Carolina, but it didn't pay, and Mr. Twombly very promptly sold out and quit the game.

When he had examined the condition at Biltmore and had seen that the experiment did not pay and never would pay, that it did lose and would always lose, he advised George Vanderbilt to give it up. George didn't like the advice. He still loved his dream of a baronial estate in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. He had made a paradise of a desert and he wished to enjoy the fruit of his work. He didn't care for the money that it cost him. He was rich and could stand it. He sent his brother-in-law back to New York. He stood in the door of Biltmore House and looked out a glimpse of the Swannanoa River gliding smoothly to its junction with the French Broad, while on every hand were his dear trees and shrubs and plants, and so he turned and went back content to remain at Biltmore even if it didn't pay.

No Water to Drink.
But as he was consoling himself with the fact that he had what he wished for, even if it did cost him more than other men, he became thirsty, and called for a servant to bring him a glass of water—water from the Busbee spring. The servant went, but returned with an empty glass. The master of Biltmore demanded to know why his order had not been obeyed. The servant replied that something had happened to

the water pipes or to the machinery, and that no water could be had.

Then George Vanderbilt stopped. The sunken foundation, the cracked marbles, the idle saw mill, the unproductive dairy farm, the expensive Forestry School, the unprofitable truck farm, and all the failures that his brother-in-law Twombly had pointed out came rushing in on him. He could have stood all these, but he could not stand this climax. He had spent ten million dollars on Biltmore, and he could not get a drink of water!

Can you wonder that he decided to go to India?

Half the help at Biltmore has been discharged. The old village is a standstill. The hundred thousand dollar chicken house is unbuild. The game preserve is unstocked. The prize cattle are for sale for half their cost. The thoroughbred horses may be had at a bargain. Buncombe County is in mourning and the people of Western North Carolina feel as though they were smitten by a calamity.

The master of Biltmore is on his way to India, which by all accounts is a rather dry country, but which he probably thinks is more moist than Biltmore House was on the occasion when he wanted a drink of water and couldn't get it. The hope of Biltmore is that George Vanderbilt's thirst may not be sated in India, and that he will come again to his own. In that event, Asheville and the whole of Buncombe County, N. C., will combine to see that the Busbee mountain water works do not again get out of order.

MONTE CARLO'S MILLIONS.
Last Season's Revenue from the "Fools of the World" Amounted to Just \$7,700,000.

Monaco, Dec. 25.—The alleged attempt of the Prince of Monaco to "break" the Casino Company has led to the publication of a pamphlet by a group of singleholders full of interesting reading. While everybody is aware that the Casino contributed largely to his revenues, few people knew that, besides the subsidy of the Prince, the establishment keeps up the Judges, police, lighting, water, post office, clergy and charitable institutions.

Last season's expenditure of the principality, apart from the maintenance of the Casino, which was \$4,170,000, amounted to \$950,000, of which sum the Prince had \$250,000, the courts, police, etc., \$100,000, clergy and schools \$45,000, charities \$30,000, prizes for sports \$55,000, and the post office and losses \$10,000. The dividends on shares absorbed \$2,800,000, making a total revenue of \$7,700,000, which the "fools of the world" left at the Monte Carlo gambling tables, an interesting item is "Press Subventions," \$125,000.

Humbert Takes New Yorker's Book.
Rome, Dec. 25.—King Humbert has received in audience Mr. Remsen Whitehouse, of New York, and accepted a book on Prince Amadeo, the deceased brother of His Majesty.

Not a Glass to Be Had in a \$2,000,000 House.

Water Works a Failure and the Foundations Sunk in the Ground.

Took Brother-in-Law Twombly's Advice, and Fled to Hunt in India.

the water pipes or to the machinery, and that no water could be had.

Then George Vanderbilt stopped. The sunken foundation, the cracked marbles, the idle saw mill, the unproductive dairy farm, the expensive Forestry School, the unprofitable truck farm, and all the failures that his brother-in-law Twombly had pointed out came rushing in on him. He could have stood all these, but he could not stand this climax. He had spent ten million dollars on Biltmore, and he could not get a drink of water!

Can you wonder that he decided to go to India?

Half the help at Biltmore has been discharged. The old village is a standstill. The hundred thousand dollar chicken house is unbuild. The game preserve is unstocked. The prize cattle are for sale for half their cost. The thoroughbred horses may be had at a bargain. Buncombe County is in mourning and the people of Western North Carolina feel as though they were smitten by a calamity.

The master of Biltmore is on his way to India, which by all accounts is a rather dry country, but which he probably thinks is more moist than Biltmore House was on the occasion when he wanted a drink of water and couldn't get it. The hope of Biltmore is that George Vanderbilt's thirst may not be sated in India, and that he will come again to his own. In that event, Asheville and the whole of Buncombe County, N. C., will combine to see that the Busbee mountain water works do not again get out of order.

MONTE CARLO'S MILLIONS.
Last Season's Revenue from the "Fools of the World" Amounted to Just \$7,700,000.

Monaco, Dec. 25.—The alleged attempt of the Prince of Monaco to "break" the Casino Company has led to the publication of a pamphlet by a group of singleholders full of interesting reading. While everybody is aware that the Casino contributed largely to his revenues, few people knew that, besides the subsidy of the Prince, the establishment keeps up the Judges, police, lighting, water, post office, clergy and charitable institutions.

Last season's expenditure of the principality, apart from the maintenance of the Casino, which was \$4,170,000, amounted to \$950,000, of which sum the Prince had \$250,000, the courts, police, etc., \$100,000, clergy and schools \$45,000, charities \$30,000, prizes for sports \$55,000, and the post office and losses \$10,000. The dividends on shares absorbed \$2,800,000, making a total revenue of \$7,700,000, which the "fools of the world" left at the Monte Carlo gambling tables, an interesting item is "Press Subventions," \$125,000.

Humbert Takes New Yorker's Book.
Rome, Dec. 25.—King Humbert has received in audience Mr. Remsen Whitehouse, of New York, and accepted a book on Prince Amadeo, the deceased brother of His Majesty.

Whether it was for the purpose of consultation or merely for the purpose of a social visit I am not prepared to assert, but the fact is that about two months ago Mr. Hamilton McKay Twombly, the most astute of Vanderbilt brothers-in-law, took a run down to Biltmore. He looked at the sunken foundation and the cracked marbles. He looked at the dairy farm with its costly equipment and its inconsequential product. He looked at the truck farm and figured on the price of cucumbers in the Asheville market and the cost of raising them. He investigated the Forestry School. He visited the sawmill and looked over the great piles of lumber that were heaped about the place, unsold and unsalable. In short, he took a careful inventory of the whole place.

Now Mr. Twombly isn't a bit theoretical. He is always practical and he has no use for anything that doesn't pay its way. Mr. Twombly has tried fancy farming himself. It was in New Jersey and was very much easier than the same thing in Buncombe County, North Carolina, but it didn't pay, and Mr. Twombly very promptly sold out and quit the game.

When he had examined the condition at Biltmore and had seen that the experiment did not pay and never would pay, that it did lose and would always lose, he advised George Vanderbilt to give it up. George didn't like the advice. He still loved his dream of a baronial estate in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. He had made a paradise of a desert and he wished to enjoy the fruit of his work. He didn't care for the money that it cost him. He was rich and could stand it. He sent his brother-in-law back to New York. He stood in the door of Biltmore House and looked out a glimpse of the Swannanoa River gliding smoothly to its junction with the French Broad, while on every hand were his dear trees and shrubs and plants, and so he turned and went back content to remain at Biltmore even if it didn't pay.

No Water to Drink.
But as he was consoling himself with the fact that he had what he wished for, even if it did cost him more than other men, he became thirsty, and called for a servant to bring him a glass of water—water from the Busbee spring. The servant went, but returned with an empty glass. The master of Biltmore demanded to know why his order had not been obeyed. The servant replied that something had happened to

the water pipes or to the machinery, and that no water could be had.

Then George Vanderbilt stopped. The sunken foundation, the cracked marbles, the idle saw mill, the unproductive dairy farm, the expensive Forestry School, the unprofitable truck farm, and all the failures that his brother-in-law Twombly had pointed out came rushing in on him. He could have stood all these, but he could not stand this climax. He had spent ten million dollars on Biltmore, and he could not get a drink of water!

Can you wonder that he decided to go to India?

Half the help at Biltmore has been discharged. The old village is a standstill. The hundred thousand dollar chicken house is unbuild. The game preserve is unstocked. The prize cattle are for sale for half their cost. The thoroughbred horses may be had at a bargain. Buncombe County is in mourning and the people of Western North Carolina feel as though they were smitten by a calamity.

The master of Biltmore is on his way to India, which by all accounts is a rather dry country, but which he probably thinks is more moist than Biltmore House was on the occasion when he wanted a drink of water and couldn't get it. The hope of Biltmore is that George Vanderbilt's thirst may not be sated in India, and that he will come again to his own. In that event, Asheville and the whole of Buncombe County, N. C., will combine to see that the Busbee mountain water works do not again get out of order.

MONTE CARLO'S MILLIONS.
Last Season's Revenue from the "Fools of the World" Amounted to Just \$7,700,000.

Monaco, Dec. 25.—The alleged attempt of the Prince of Monaco to "break" the Casino Company has led to the publication of a pamphlet by a group of singleholders full of interesting reading. While everybody is aware that the Casino contributed largely to his revenues, few people knew that, besides the subsidy of the Prince, the establishment keeps up the Judges, police, lighting, water, post office, clergy and charitable institutions.

Last season's expenditure of the principality, apart from the maintenance of the Casino, which was \$4,170,000, amounted to \$950,000, of which sum the Prince had \$250,000, the courts, police, etc., \$100,000, clergy and schools \$45,000, charities \$30,000, prizes for sports \$55,000, and the post office and losses \$10,000. The dividends on shares absorbed \$2,800,000, making a total revenue of \$7,700,000, which the "fools of the world" left at the Monte Carlo gambling tables, an interesting item is "Press Subventions," \$125,000.

Humbert Takes New Yorker's Book.
Rome, Dec. 25.—King Humbert has received in audience Mr. Remsen Whitehouse, of New York, and accepted a book on Prince Amadeo, the deceased brother of His Majesty.

Whether it was for the purpose of consultation or merely for the purpose of a social visit I am not prepared to assert, but the fact is that about two months ago Mr. Hamilton McKay Twombly, the most astute of Vanderbilt brothers-in-law, took a run down to Biltmore. He looked at the sunken foundation and the cracked marbles. He looked at the dairy farm with its costly equipment and its inconsequential product. He looked at the truck farm and figured on the price of cucumbers in the Asheville market and the cost of raising them. He investigated the Forestry School. He visited the sawmill and looked over the great piles of lumber that were heaped about the place, unsold and unsalable. In short, he took a careful inventory of the whole place.

Now Mr. Twombly isn't a bit theoretical. He is always practical and he has no use for anything that doesn't pay its way. Mr. Twombly has tried fancy farming himself. It was