

Fairview

By J. W. Henson

There was out in the world a great plain that ran off to the west where the wrinkled surface of the earth had ceased to fold back upon itself to form mountains, valleys and hills. Tumbling down out of the mountains and running full across the fertile earth was a river of clear, cool water that made the plain green and lush.

Up along the river in the cool and shadow of the mountains, yet on the plain, was the large city of Fairview. Fairview was an ancient city. It was once known as Vanity Fair, but a certain pilgrim received such poor treatment at the hands of the citizens that he exposed their wickedness in his Progress Notes. The city fathers met and changed the name to Fairview.

By day there was idleness and leisure in Fairview because the fineness of the plain grew fruits and vegetables almost without labor. There was all manner of self-fulfillment and pleasure. At night the city was bright with lights and the game rooms were dim with intrigue. The effluvium of perfume was in the air and there was song, laughter and the dance. There were no churches in Fairview for the people were sophisticated and did not believe in myths.

As one followed the river upstream and high into the mountains there was a place where two hills ran in close to the river and here an agency built an earthen dam. Behind the dam were the impounded waters of Lake Placid.

Farms had grown up around Lake Placid with their holdings running right down to the water's edge. The village of Placidville thrived in this lovely setting. White church spires lifting above the trees pointed white fingers toward heaven and their reflections glistened in the still waters of the lake.

The agency that had built the dam told the residents of Placidville that it had served out its usefulness and would be taken down if rains and floods did not destroy it first. It had grown old as a garment. The agency said further that there were no plans to replace the dam and once it was gone the landowners could extend their farms right down to the river's edge. They were told that if heavy rains should fall and cause the waters of the lake to overflow the dam the flood would cut through the earth of the barrier like a knife, and send a wall of water 40 feet high into Fairview and end forever the voice of laughter and of song.

Many were the pleasant dreams of Placidville's people about the richness of the silt covered lake bottom that would soon be theirs. They went to church on Wednesday evening and on the Sabbath day. They sang and prayed for the outpouring of those heavy rains and for their new earth. Some were uncomfortable with these prayers, but they knew that each week their radio station, Voice of Placid, aired a warning to the residents below. There were few, very few who ever came up from Fairview to inspect the

condition of the dam and most of those returned with jests, laughter and sneers. Others in Placidville secretly believed that the people in Fairview had the deluge to them because of the wickedness of their lives. More were afraid to go down into Fairview to warn the people of the impending danger for fear of becoming polluted in so wicked a place.

In the evenings the Placidville families would gather on their front porches for family worship. They would rock and sing, "Rescue the Pershing" and have long prayers for those rains and for their new earth.

I do not wish that you take down your encyclopedia to look for Fairview; I do not wish that you opened your road atlas in search of Placidville. If you want to find them set a globe of the earth before you and grasp the globe with open hands. Where those warm palms rest, there is Fairview and where those long curving fingers point, there is Placidville.

When you kneel and pray, "Thy Kingdom come," remember that the glorification of Placidville was to the people of Fairview only ruin and damnation.