

VERSA VICEY.

A Novel with a moral for Mothers. By the author of "Vice Versa," a lesson for Fathers.

VOL. I.—THE DABUDA STONE.

"Thank goodness this is the last day of vacation!" said Miss Versa's mamma, as she superintended the packing of her eldest daughter's valise. "I am sure you've had idleness enough this summer, with all the expense your papa and I are at for your education. I shall write to request Miss Backboard to keep you more to your lessons and to give fewer holidays." Miss Backboard was the Lady Superior of the Archbishop Cranmer Academy for young ladies in the good city of Toronto, and quite strict enough in her ideas of discipline not to need admonition on that score from any parent or guardian. So Miss Versa thought, but as the subject of pocket money was about to be discussed, so she with some difficulty suppressed an inclination to pout, and waited her mamma's next speech in dutiful silence. "As to pocket money, Versa," said her mother, "you are really better without more than is necessary." Versa remembered that the elder lady had lately bought a twenty dollar bonnet and a sealskin jacket of unknowable cost. "There's the church collections, mamma," said Versa, "all the other girls give five cents, and I don't like to feel mean." "Church collections," said her mother, "I think the collections are the only ceremony which all the churches agree in retaining, but there are two dollars and a very liberal allowance for a girl of sixteen!" Poor Versa thought with a sigh of the many pleasures of Toronto that were beyond the reach of impecunious young ladies. She took the two dollars and placed them carefully in her portmonnaie, which was on the table. "Why, what's that you have rolled up in paper?" asked her mamma, as she took from Versa's purse a small fragment of dark polished stone which might be agate or blood stone. "Oh this is a fragment of the famous Dabuda Stone which poor Uncle Tommy left here when he was last on a visit; it is only a little bit of the original stone, mamma, but I thought it might bring me good fortune somehow." "Let me look at it," said her mother. The good lady took the stone in her hand and held it as she went on talking to her daughter. She was ignorant of the peculiar property of the stone by which, if a person holding the stone in hand expressed a wish to change appearance and dress with another person of the same sex, an immediate transformation was effected. "You school girls don't know how fortunate you are," she said, "why a school girl is happier than she will ever be in her life again. I only wish I could change places with you and be a girl of sixteen again!" Which thoughtless wish had no sooner been uttered than the soul of Mrs. Vicey passed into the body, the boots, the bodice and the garments of her daughter Versa, including a pair of pink hose not unfrequently darned, a short skirted grey dress of the kind appropriate to sweet sixteen, in whose pocket was a bit of slate pencil, some caramels wrapped in silver paper, the two dollars just given for pocket money, a dime and a two cent piece. With delight Versa saw the charm had worked, and resolved to give her mamma some experience of the delights of school-girl life.

VOL. II.—AT MISS BACKBOARD'S SCHOOL.

Mrs. Vicey was a widow of certain income and uncertain age; she was not an unkind mother, but like many selfish ladies took her own way through life without troubling herself about the wants of her children, of whom Versa, as being the eldest, was chosen to experience the benefit of boarding-school life. It was part of the charm of the

Dabuda Stone that the person affected by it did not perceive the change in personal appearance. Mrs. Vicey felt that some strange change had come over her, but by no means realized what had occurred. She left the room to give some orders to the servant. "Fetch a cab to take Versa to the railway," she said, "and tell the cook that I expect some friends to dinner at six." The servant looked at Mrs. Vicey, whom she took for her daughter Versa, with amused pity, they thought the girl was crazy. Just at that moment, Miss Backboard appeared, solemn and stately in black velvet bonnet and crape mantle, funereal, yet gorgeous. Versa, in the semblance of her mother, came eagerly forward. "I am so glad you have come," she said, "so that I can send Versa back to school under your care. She is a little inclined to be self-willed, and I shall be glad if you exert your strictest discipline." Mrs. Vicey was too much astonished at this to make any remark. "If so," said Miss Backboard, "there had better be no delay, and as I see a cab at the door, we had best start at once. Come Versa. Mrs. Vicey, resolving to explain what had taken place to her friend Mrs. Backboard followed her into the cab; in fact it would not have been easy to resist, for the good school mistress had an iron will joined with the muscle of a well preserved amazon of fifty. Mrs. Vicey made several efforts to explain what she considered an absurd mistake, but Miss Backboard who considered her pupil's manner objectionably free, ordered her to be silent for the remainder of the journey, adding that as a punishment for her impertinence, she was to write out the verb *punio* twenty times after school next day. At the railway station were several girls of ages from twelve to seventeen, also pupils of Miss Backboard, and on their way to school. Mrs. Vicey was greeted by all there with rapture, and asked many questions about cake, pocket-money, and a supposed flirtation with a bank clerk in Toronto. This Mrs. Vicey indignantly repudiated, to the astonishment of her companions, who said that Versa who used to be such a first-rate girl before last vacation had lamentably changed for the worse, got quite stuck-up notions, and was too proud to recognize her best friend. During the journey there was no escape, and Miss Backboard was far too dignified to give any opportunity for explanation. And so Mrs. Vicey had ample experience of school life, and was cut by some of the girls and teased by others. Her long want of practice in music brought her frequent rebukes and punishment. Indeed she quite changed her opinion of that lady, whom she grew to consider a most objectionable person. Meantime Versa astonished the servants and delighted her little brothers and sisters by instituting an entirely new department in family arrangements connected with diet. A large quantity of candies were consumed, cakes to no end and multitudinous jam-pots graced the table; a general holiday was proclaimed, and things were rapidly going into a state of anarchy and demoralization. At last a letter from her mamma induced Versa to visit Toronto, and by aid of their Bahuda Stone to retransform the pair to their original likeness. By mutual agreement Versa was never again stinted in pocket-money, and became once more a favorite with her preceptress and herschoolfellows. And her mamma learned by a somewhat painful experience the motherly duty of sympathy with school girl troubles. The Bahuda Stone, Mrs. Vicey took care to have ground to powder and thrown into Lake Ontario.

C. P. M.

Write me a letter from home. But if you haven't time to write a letter send a note—bank note preferred.

A NEW OPERA.

"The Pot boils merrily in Manitoba."
—Ottawa Free Press.

On observing the above joyous sentence of our Ottawa contemporary denoting as it does, the evident satisfaction of the writer at the prospective ructions attendant "Manitoba Rights," the possibility of a sanguinary revolution and the subsequent annexation of that Province to the territories of Uncle Sam, the master mind of GRIP at once grasped the idea that the situation affords an excellent and original theme for the Grand Opera. Sparing no expense MR. GRIP has secured the valuable services of *Signor Steama Pennuth* to write the music and arrange the score of an Opera to be called "Il Terra Deserta," replete with thrilling situations and truthfully depicting the blood-thirsty characteristics of the nomadic and turbulent race now inhabiting that until lately almost unknown region. The libretto has been written, and stage settings and scenery arranged by one of the most talented of MR. GRIP's theatrical poetical staff. Subjoined is a Barcarole, Scene 1. Act 2, of the Opera.

BARCAROLE.

Solo, Tenor.

Merrily, merrily boils the pot!
Poke up the "chips" and keep it red hot
As over the rolling prairie we go,
See that the fire is kept in a glow.

Chorus of Injuns.

Ca, wan, a, shin. Shaganos Skenta wa boo!
Bring out the *Chewings* and shut out *ber-joo!*
We'll bury our *pograns* and *Thoma-hawks* draw
For we're all jolly Injuns of Man-ito-baw!

Solo, Basso.

Merrily, merrily boils the pot!
We'll never be satisfied till we have got
A line of our own, and can take our own car,
In spite of the Syndicate C.P.R.

Chorus of Speculators, Landgrabbers, Auctioneers, etc.

Murrah for the jolly red Auctioneer's flag.
We'll haul down the dirty Dominion rag!
And as for the Union, we don't care a cent,
And we'll all go over to Uncle Sam.



THE GROWTH OF REGINA.

Mr. Nicholas Flood Davin, one of the leading citizens, has been showing the visitor over the rising capital of Assiniboia. They have just finished a careful count of the houses. "Now, sir," says the sprightly Nicholas, "we will have to begin all over again, as several buildings have gone up since we counted! Talk about places, me boy, there's no place like Regina!"