

**MR.
GHIM'S DREAM**

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Mr. Ghim's dream by Various

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VARIOUS

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INTRODUCTION.



VIGOROUS youth, born replete with energy, courage, and will, grew up into sturdy manhood. Powerful in his physical strength, broad and far-reaching in his views, fervid and lofty in the purposes of his life, keen in his mental acumen, ingenious to the ablest degree, he gathered wealth and power without effort, and steadily gained each higher step of his ambition, tireless and strong. Suddenly there fell a thunderbolt upon him. It thrilled his frame with a bewildering jar, then passed forever as quickly as it came, leaving him scathless, whole, uninjured, but with livid face and congested heart, appalled, stricken in the

imagination with a profound sense of terror and despair and gloom, which years failed to remove.

Likewise a nation arose: possessing a sound constitution to begin with, enterprising in the vigor of its youth, developing grandly to maturity, inspired by its own matchless opportunity for expansion to singular greatness and usefulness—all its aspirations instantly quenched, its abounding energy thunderstruck and gone, years failing to restore it.

Historians yet to be born will point the finger of commiseration back to this unfortunate point, and exclaim: "Ah! if that people at that time had seen themselves as a whole! had realized their united strength! and used it! But they sank into idleness! lost, lost, lost all those years, rather than gain, accumulate, prosper!"

MR. GHIM'S DREAM.

CHAPTER I.



IT was in the autumn of 1877.
I had a dream. It must have been a dream. I thought I was living in a land of plenty, yet saw destitution around me in many homes. I was in a country blessed by nature above all other countries on the globe, yet thousands of persons were suffering for want of the necessaries of life. It seemed incredible. I looked more closely, to see if I was really among an enlightened people, or in a half-civilized region. I found I was not in famine-stricken India, but in this bright land of America, with a people sup-

posed to be enjoying the benefit of civilization and modern improvements; a country teeming with products, and furnishing the gold and silver of the world. Yet many persons were sorely in want. I thought of the universal prosperity that once existed here, though of course I was still dreaming. In this portion of my dream I imagined that only a few years ago this nation was enterprising; no nation extant had built so much labor-saving machinery. And now this vast enginery was in motion, and numberless human hands were idle. *More work* was the great want. Not less machinery, but more work. Work for this machinery and for these thousands of men supplanted by machinery. A gigantic enterprise was in order. No slight enlargement of the existing industries, but a colossal undertaking—an enterprise absorbing the labor of hundreds of thousands of men now yearning for work.

My mind was soon fixed upon a certain wonderful plan of my own for the removal of the whole great trouble. It was all a dream, but such an extraordinary dream I must relate it, though it may fill an entire volume.

I dreamed that away back in my youth I had conceived the building of a huge structure which the world needed, and all along through the years I had carefully considered the enterprise, until now the opportune period had come for its grand fulfillment. It was too great a project to be undertaken in times when labor and capital were busily employed, before the era of mighty and multitudinous labor-saving inventions; but every condition now was as favorable as possibly could be to the carrying out of this tremendous plan of mine.

It was a vast engineering work, so different from any ever attempted or thought of by mortal man, that civil engineers would stand aghast at the mere proposal of it.