

who hold Federal offices in the Territories are unfit for their positions, but that a very large percentage of them are utterly unworthy is an undoubted fact. We sometimes have competent, good men appointed to office, but too often the Territories are looked upon as a political Botany Bay, to which men are sent as governor, secretary or judges, who are unfit and incompetent for the positions, and who in their own homes could secure no office of honor or profit from the people who knew them, but who were recommended for territorial appointment in order to billet them upon some unfortunate and long-suffering people.

When the Territories are new and feeble they need wise, prudent, and energetic management of their affairs, in order to develop their resources and invite and attract attention to them. Then it is that they need the nurture and care of officers who are identified with them in interest, whose hopes and aspirations are bound up in the progress and prosperity of people and Territory, for when communities become great, powerful, and prosperous they run along, even if badly ruled and managed, with a certain degree of order and regularity.

Mr. Speaker, the great country west of the Missouri River is but beginning to be known and developed; it is and must ever remain the great mineral-producing section of the country. If we are to have a resumption of specie payments in this country it must come from our production of the precious metals exceeding our export to pay the interest upon our bonded indebtedness in foreign hands, or it must come from the contraction of the volume of currency. In any event the production of gold and silver should be encouraged by every means. I believe that the mineral production of the Rocky Mountain region will increase year by year; scarcely a week passes but some new and valuable mine is discovered. As a mere economic question emigration to these sections of country and development of their resources should be encouraged by every means in the power of the government. Population and capital are kept out of the Territories by the present system of government. We believe that a change in the system of the government of the Territories would add very largely to their prosperity and that it is therefore a question which appeals not only to what is right and just under our form of government, but also to the self-interest of the Republic.

During the century we have amended the constitution until all men are entitled to equal privileges by the fundamental law of the land. Slavery of the colored man has been abolished; and to-day, having passed the centennial day of the nation, it has within its borders no serf or slave, no person or community deprived of the inestimable right of liberty and local self-government, except it be the people of the Territories of the United States. How auspicious the time for giving to every citizen of the Union residing in the Territories the great privilege of liberty and local self-government, and making this government in fact what it is in theory, a government where the people as of right shall select their officers and rulers.

The people of the Territories are not strong enough or powerful enough to compel an acknowledgment of their right to self-government, but they ask it of the American Congress as a right, trusting to the justice of members to see that the great principle that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed" shall not be made a living lie in this Republic by the arbitrary and unrepresentative government imposed upon the people of the Territories.

Mr. Speaker, there was a time when great political contests, now happily impossible, caused the Territories to be the field of the thought and study of the statesman; but now that they are deprived of political importance and power, they are being neglected, and their great resources and possibilities scarcely realized even if thought of. But here is a field worthy the thought and care of the statesman; the better government of large communities of American citizens, an increase of liberty and rights to half a million of people, with increase of happiness, progress and prosperity.

The Territories are all capable of great development. Nothing, in

my judgment, would do so much for their development and to induce labor and capital to emigrate to them as to give the people a government of their own, to open the avenues of political preferment to the citizens of the Territories, giving the people a government of their own choice, responsible directly to them for any dereliction of duty or abuse of power, and bringing the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into harmonious action for the advancement and prosperity of the Territories. Take for example the Territory of Wyoming, rich in all the elements and resources necessary to make a great and powerful commonwealth; with an area of coal-beds estimated to embrace 30,000 square miles, with coal mines in operation at various points, one mine, near Evanston, in the western portion of the Territory, being in a vein of coal twenty-seven feet in thickness, with deposits of sulphur as rich as any in the world; with its copper and inexhaustible supplies of iron of all kinds; with its mines of gold and silver, and its great undeveloped mineral region of the Big Horn, Powder River, Tongue, Rosebud, &c., believed by all who have any knowledge of it to be by far the richest mineral region on the continent; with its great forests of pine; with its agricultural resources; with its great grazing plains, almost boundless in extent, where cattle fatten all the year round without shelter or feeding in the winter; with its great Yellowstone National Park, containing the greatest natural wonders of the world; with the great line of railroad running through the entire length of the Territory from its eastern to its western border; with its healthy and salubrious climate; why should it not be what nature has intended it to be, the Pennsylvania of the trans-Missouri country? And is it not to the interest of the entire country to develop such resources and encourage the emigration necessary therefor? And would it not be the part of wisdom to aid by all proper means the people who are engaged in making its resources pay tribute to American enterprise and industry.

Give Wyoming a government of and by its own citizens, and its development and prosperity will be greater than can be hoped for under the present system, and in one-half the time it would take under the present mode of government it would be ready to take place in the ranks of the great mineral, manufacturing, and grazing States.

I have endeavored to call attention to the misgovernment of the Territories, but can only allude to it in a general way and not so much in detail as would be desirable. There is a demand and hope in all the Territories for a better method for the selection of officials than that now existing.

I hope and trust that the Forty-fourth, the "Centennial" Congress will signalize its history by guaranteeing to the people of the Territories the right of home-rule and local self-government. If it shall do so it will do more to advance the happiness, progress, and prosperity of our people than could be effected by any other legislation in their behalf and will commend itself to the gratitude and goodwill of the people it has benefited and enfranchised. And the celebration of the "centennial" will be associated in their minds not alone as a festival year to commemorate the escape from the thralldom of a colonial form of government of the original thirteen States and the laying of the foundations of this the greatest and grandest Republic of the world, but it will also be to them a year glorious in that it has abolished the colonial system under which they live and restored to them all the rights of American citizens, making them indeed feel that this is a Government where all enjoy equal rights, and where, even in the Territories, the people shall hereafter possess the inestimable right to choose the officials who shall rule over them and administer their laws.—*Congressional Record*.

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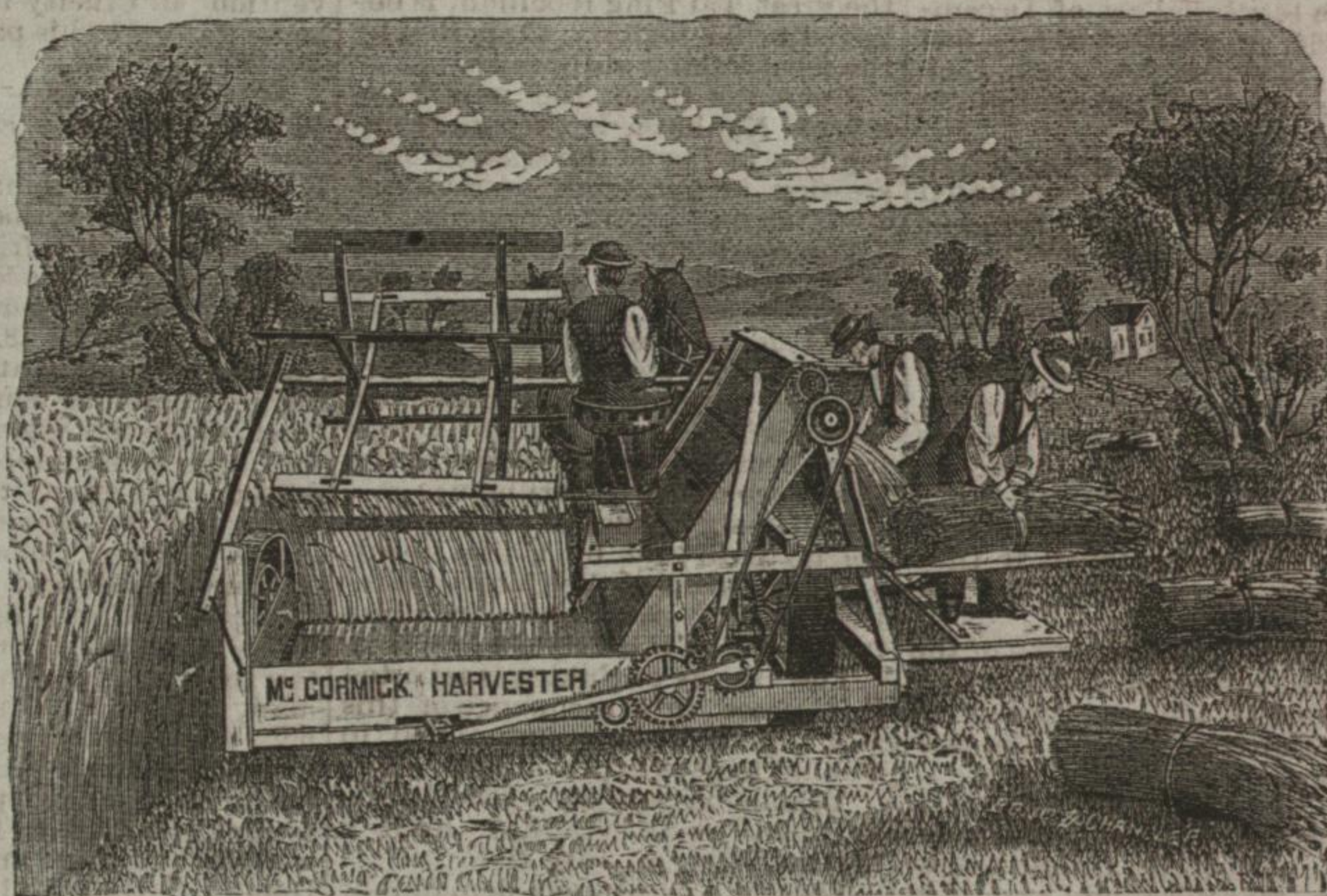
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