

couples. They came stumbling down the bluff to wash in the river, and of all the pitiful sights I ever saw, they presented one of the worst; of all the straining and racking and exhaustion that ever hard labor gave to men, they exhibited the utmost. They were but half awakened, and they moved so painfully and stiffly that I imagined I could hear their bones creak. I have seen spavined work-horses turned out to die that moved precisely as these men did. It was shocking to see them hobble over the rough ground; it was pitiful to watch them as they attempted to straighten their stiffened bodies after they had been bent double over the water. They gained erectness by slow jolts, as if their joints were of iron that had rusted. Of course they soon regained whatever elasticity nature had left them, and were themselves for the day—an active, muscular force of men. But that early morning sight of them was not such a spectacle as a right-minded man enjoys seeing his fellows take part in.

THE END