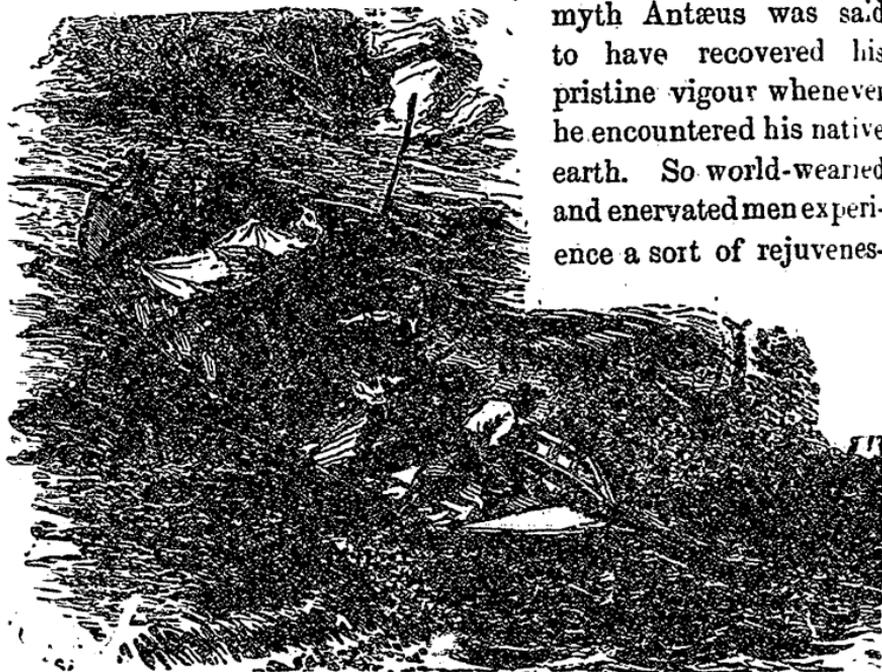


the easy-going *nonchalance* of rural life in the western highlands of the Old Dominion. The slow ox or mule-cart creaks along its winding way with a deliberation that forbids all thought of excitement or worry. The occasional passage of a railway train seems an almost discordant incident in the quiet of the scene. But the air of repose which invests the grass-grown precincts of the railway station neutralizes the effect of the infrequent rush and scream of the trains. The all-pervading calm and quiet is an admirable sedative to nerve and brain, jaded and exhausted by the keen competitions of active business life. In classic

myth Antæus was said to have recovered his pristine vigour whenever he encountered his native earth. So world-wearied and enervated men experience a sort of rejuvenes-



RUNNING NEW RIVER RAPIDS.

cence when brought into contact with the great heart of nature, and from her calm maternal founts their spirits drink repose. This is, we think, the chief charm of mountain travel. The sublime eternal peace of the great mountains of God rebukes our restless changefulness. By communing with their silent solitude our spirits are chastened and subdued, life's fevered pulse beats more calmly, and our individual littleness, amid the vastness of creation, suggests thoughts of lowliness and self-depreciation.

A striking characteristic of this mountain region of Virginia is the swiftness of its river currents and the dangerous navigation of its waters. The skill, however, with which the negro