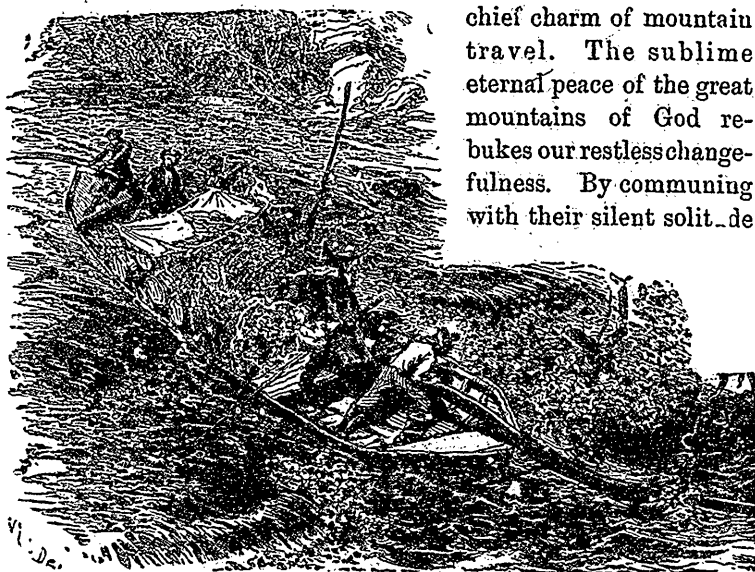


all thought of excitement or worry. The occasional passage of a railway train seems an almost discordant incident in the quiet of the scene. But the air of repose which invests the grass-grown precincts of the railway station neutralizes the effect of the infrequent rush and scream of the trains. The all-pervading calm and quiet is an admirable sedative to jaded and exhausted nerve and brain.

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



RUNNING NEW RIVER RAPIDS.

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 boatmen will steer their fragile market boats, by means of strong sweeps at bow and stern, down the arrowy rapids, can be paralleled only by the consummate canoe-craft of our own Canadian Indians.

An important business of the country is the rafting of timber from the vast forests of the interior to the great lumber marts of the East. The raftsmen are a bold, adventurous set of fellows, whose feats of balancing, as they shoot down a rapid on a log