

excuse to run on ahead of you. He will exclaim, with as much energy as his plaintive voice can command: —

“Oh, Lordy! them plegged dogs is done run the ole dominicker hen off’n the nest.”

Whereupon he will start to running and pretend to go to the horse lot. But it is all a pretense, for when you come in sight of the house you will see three or four, maybe a half-dozen, white-headed children on the fence watching for you, and if you have said a kind word to the boy who volunteered to be your guide, Mrs. Pruett herself will be standing on the porch, the right arm stretched across her ample bosom, so that the hand may serve as a rest for the elbow of the left arm, which is bent so that the reed stem of her beloved pipe may be held on a level with her good-humored mouth. You will have time to notice, as your horse ascends the incline that leads to the big gate, that the house is a very comfortable one for the mountains, neatly weather-boarded and compactly built, with four rooms and a “shed,” which serves as a dining-room and a kitchen. Two boxwood plants stand sentinel inside the gate, and are, perhaps, the largest you have ever seen.