

**MY LITTLE FARM**

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My little farm by Patrick D. Kenny

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**PATRICK D. KENNY**

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MY LITTLE FARM

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

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"ECONOMICS FOR IRISH-  
MEN"

"THE SORROWS OF  
IRELAND."

# MY LITTLE FARM

By "PAT", *pen name.*

*Patrick D. Kenny*  
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MAUNSEL & COMPANY, LTD.  
DUBLIN AND LONDON

1915

LOAN STACK



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TO HIS FRIEND  
WHO ONCE SAVED THE AUTHOR'S LIFE

## PREFACE

THIS is less a handbook in scientific agriculture than a headbook in profitable farming, but it is for both, and for the cultivation of character as essential to cropping. The profit is no longer possible without the science, but the science must either show the profit or remain under suspicion. The expert, working at the Government's expense, can do anything with a plot of half a rood, so long as he is not asked to balance the product against the cost, but the practical farmer wants to see the net profit on a working scale, and he is right, because the final measure of science in all industrial application is the economic value. No other standard can be safely admitted into industrial practice.

I have passed severe examinations, written successful books, edited too successful newspapers, lived the life of London, died the death of Ireland and come to life again, on the first day; but I have done no work, lived no life, and filled no place demanding of me so much breadth of knowledge, elasticity of judgment and variety of action as the conduct of a once wretched little farm in the West of Ireland. One must insist on the experience of the retrospect, because it is so commonly assumed that the farm may best be entrusted to the fool of the

family, while the brilliant brothers go off in ornamental occupations which require less than half the capacity of the capable farmer. It is clear that our first step landward is the industrial discipline of the agrarian mind, not merely for the farm, but also because of the character which could be developed by better farming to the advantage of all other pursuits and to the credit of the nation as a whole. The significance of this will be the plainer when we note that about three-fourths of the Irish population is always directly or indirectly agrarian. What, then, would be the use of writing about the agricultural industry without reference to the agrarian character? The necessity is not a pleasant one, and the official may not touch it at all, but if we are ever to move on, it must be touched by somebody. The alternative is State endowment of decay.

Hence the great failure of the official formula, at least in its chief purpose, which is the improvement of the peasant; the great waste of the Agriculture Department, though in itself admirable, and, I believe, the most generously endowed in the whole world, per unit of productive value. The Department may teach agriculture, but no industrial influence in existence among us is permitted to prepare the agrarian mind for the agricultural teaching. It is like a university condemned to accept its students from the primary school, and deprived even of the right to prepare them for matriculation. Its teachers, now well trained and the hardest workers that I know