

**GOOD FOR  
THE SOUL**

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Good for the Soul by Margaret Deland

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**MARGARET DELAND**

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THE SOUL**





"CHANGE IT? MY NAME?" SHE SAID

GOOD FOR  
THE SOUL

By  
*Margaret Deland*



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GOOD FOR THE SOUL



## Good for the Soul

### I

IT was about twelve or thirteen years before Dr. Lavendar was discovered to have outlived his usefulness that, one night, in the parsonage study, with only Mary, and his brother, Joey Lavendar, as witnesses, he married Peter Day. Peter, with a pretty girl on his arm, drifted in out of the windy and rainy darkness, with a license from the Mayor's office in Upper Chester, and a demand that Dr. Lavendar perform the marriage service. Both the man and the woman were strangers to him, and the little old minister looked at them sharply for a minute

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or two—he had misgivings, somehow. But the girl was old enough, and looked perfectly satisfied and intelligent, and the man's face was simple and honest—besides, the license was all right. So he asked one or two grave and kindly questions: "You 've thought this well over? You know what a solemn thing marriage is, my friends? You are well assured that you are acting soberly, discreetly, and in the fear of God?"

"Yes, sir," said Peter Day; and the girl, a pretty, sick-looking creature, opened her big brown eyes with a glimmer of interest in them, and said, also, "Yes, sir." So Dr. Lavendar did his duty, and found a surprisingly large fee in his hand, and went back to smoke his pipe and write at least a page on his great work, *The History of Precious Stones*.

That was the last he saw of the unknown bride and groom for many

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a long year. Once he heard of a new threshing-machine that was being tried at the Day farm, in the next county, and was interesting two or three farmers in his own parish; but he did not connect the rich and successful farmer of Grafton, a village near Upper Chester, with the man he had married that stormy June night. So, though his neighbors had found them interesting enough, Peter Day's affairs had never come to Dr. Lavendar's ears.

Peter had been commiserated for forty years. His farm was prosperous; it kept pace with all the new machinery, fertilizers were not despised, and there was no waste; the Day heifers had a name all through the State; and a thousand acres of haying-land meant a capital as reliable as government bonds. "I guess he's worth \$75,000 if he's worth a cent," his neighbors said;