

# *Three Men and a Maid*

## CHAPTER I

### THE TROUBLING OF THE WATERS

"**A**FTER your experience of the pomp and glitter of life in the outer world, I wonder that you should be content to come back to Hudston," said Philip Warren.

"After your experience of the humdrum life of Hudston, I am equally surprised that you should be content to remain in it," retorted Marjorie Neyland.

"But you are a woman, to whom, being a woman, fashion and society are breath and heart's blood. You are, to say the least, out of place here, and in an inn."

"And you, if you were half the man you look, would refuse to pass the great days of youth poring over musty volumes, at a vicarage."

"I do nothing of the sort. One has unoccupied hours, of course, which certain of my acquaintances employ more robustly, but there is no man in Hudston who pursues sport with greater zest than myself. Do you believe I should be master of the Ure Valley Otter Hounds if I were the mere book-worm you think me?"

"I see," said Marjorie, pretending to be much impressed. "How stupid of me!"

"But why 'stupid'? That word surely does not apply, since you have not lived long enough in Hudston."