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The Warden

Anthony Trollope · *1855 · original English text*

Mr. Harding is warden of Hiram's Hospital, a gentle precentor whose modest income from an old charity becomes a public scandal. Trollope's 1855 novel is the first of the Barsetshire books: a quiet conscience under the pressure of reform, newspapers, and a son-in-law who means to fight.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

What should a good man do when a legal right no longer feels like a just one, and can he lay the office down without laying his soul down with it?

"not warden now, only precentor."

Mr. Harding · The close, when he is still sometimes called Warden

The sinecure is old, the bedesmen are few, and a young reformer, John Bold, attacks the warden's income—even as he loves the warden's daughter. The Times, a lawsuit, and Archdeacon Grantly's warlike loyalty close around a man who would rather be right than victorious. This is Trollope's original English, PG #619. The archdeacon is "Dr Grantly" without a period after Dr. The close is exact: he is not warden now, only precentor. A short, grave comedy of conscience, excellent for a wide older band. Barchester Towers follows; this book ends here.

KEY CHARACTERS

Mr. Harding
The warden whose conscience is the plot, later only precentor.

John Bold
The young reformer who loves Eleanor and attacks the hospital's income.

Eleanor Harding
The daughter caught between father and suitor.

Dr Grantly
The archdeacon, warlike in his father-in-law's defense. This text prints Dr without a period.

ONLY PRECENTOR

> *"not warden now, only precentor."*
> **Mr. Harding** · The close

Grades 11–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01
Hiram's Hospital
THE OPENING

An old charity, twelve bedesmen, and a gentle warden who loves his cello and his quiet work. The arrangement has grown uneven with time.

- The hospital is a moral problem, not only a picturesque almshouse.
- Mr. Harding's goodness is real before it is tested.
- The income will be the public fact; the conscience will be the private one.

02
Bold, and a Newspaper
THE ATTACK

John Bold, reformer and suitor, takes up the bedesmen's cause. The press will not be as gentle as the warden.

- Bold is not a villain; the book is more interesting than that.
- Eleanor is caught between her father and the man she loves.
- The Jupiter (the great newspaper) is a force, not a backdrop.

03
Dr Grantly's War
THE ARCHDEACON

The warden's son-in-law would fight the case as a churchman and a lawyer. Mr. Harding is not made for that fight.

- This English prints 'Dr Grantly' without a period after Dr.
- The archdeacon's loyalty is blustering and sincere.
- A legal victory would not settle the warden's mind.

04
A Conscience in London
THE MIDDLE AND THE DECISION

Lawyers, a journey, and a man who will not keep what he cannot honestly defend. The resignation is the book's true action.

- The decision costs money, ease, and a title he has worn kindly.
- Trollope lets reform and reverence both have a case.
- Do not turn the close into a simple defeat or a simple triumph.

05
Only Precentor
THE CLOSE

The old name sticks; he always says, when so addressed, that he is not warden now, only precentor.

- The line is exact, including the two offices.
- The book is complete in this file; Barchester Towers is a later story.
- A short novel of conscience, church, and the press, for a wide older band.

> *"not warden now, only precentor."*
> **Mr. Harding** · The close

Conscience | Reform and Charity | The Press | A Quiet Office | A Costly Resignation

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 11–12

1. The hosted text is Anthony Trollope's original English (Project Gutenberg #619). The archdeacon is "Dr Grantly" (no period after Dr). The close is exact: "not warden now, only precentor."
2. This is the first Barsetshire novel, complete in this file. Barchester Towers follows as a separate book (also in this wave). Keep the plots distinct.
3. A short comedy of conscience and clerical income, for a wide older band.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English text, Project Gutenberg #619, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/the-warden/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.