

Barchester Towers

by

Anthony Trollope

Web-Books.Com

Barchester Towers

1. Who Will Be The New Bishop?	7
2. Hiram's Hospital According To Act Of Parliament.....	14
3. Dr And Mrs Proudie	19
4. The Bishop's Chaplain	24
5. A Morning Visit	29
6. War.....	36
7. The Dean And Chapter Take Counsel	45
8. The Ex-Warden Rejoices In His Probable Return To The Hospital	49
9. The Stanhope Family	55
10. Mrs Proudie's Reception--Commenced.....	64
11. Mrs Proudie's Reception--Concluded.....	72
12. Slope Versus Harding	84
13. The Rubbish Cart	90
14. The New Campaign.....	97
15. The Widow's Suitors.....	103
16. Baby Worship.....	112
17. Who Shall Be Cock Of The Walk?.....	121
18. The Widow's Persecution.....	127
19. Barchester By Moonlight	133
20. Mr Arabin.....	141
21. St Ewold's Parsonage	150
22. The Thornes Of Ullathorne	158

23. Mr Arabin Reads Himself In At St Ewold's.....	167
24. Mr Slope's Manages Matters Very Cleverly At Puddingdale	174
25. Fourteen Arguments In Favour Of Mr Quiverful's Claims	182
26. Mrs Proudie Takes A Fall	189
27. A Love Scene.....	197
28. Mrs Bold Is Entertained By Dr And Mrs Grantly At Plumstead	209
29. A Serious Interview	220
30. Another Love Scene.....	227
31. The Bishop's Library.....	237
32. A New Candidate For Ecclesiastical Honours	242
33. Mrs Proudie Victrix	253
34. Oxford--The Master And Tutor Of Lazarus.....	262
35. Miss Thorne's Fete Champetre	268
36. Ullathorne Sports--Act I	276
37. Meet Each Other At Ullathorne	285
38. The Bishop Sits Down To Breakfast, And The Dean Dies.....	294
39. The Lookalofts And The Greenacres.....	304
40. Ullathorne Sports--Act II.....	311
41. Mrs Bold Confides Her Sorrow To Her Friend Miss Stanhope	318
42. Ullathorne Sports--Act III	325
43. Mr Slope Encouraged By The Press	337
44. Mrs Bold At Home	348
45. The Stanhopes At Home	356
46. Mr Slope's Parting Interview With The Signora	365
47. The Dean Elect.....	372

48. Miss Thorne Shows Her Talent For Match-Making	380
49. The Beelzebub Colt.....	388
50. The Archdeacon Is Satisfied With The State Of Affairs	393
51. Mr Slope Bids Farewell To The Palace And Its Inhabitants.....	399
52. The New Dean	404
53. Conclusion	410

1. Who Will Be The New Bishop?	7
1. Hiram's Hospital According To Act Of Parliament.....	14
2. Dr And Mrs Proudie.....	19
3. The Bishop's Chaplain	24
5. A Morning Visit	29
6. War.....	36
7. The Dean And Chapter Take Counsel	45
8. The Ex-Warden Rejoices In His Probable Return To The Hospital	49
9. The Stanhope Family	55
10. Mrs Proudie's Reception--Commenced.....	64
11. Mrs Proudie's Reception--Concluded.....	72
12. Slope Versus Harding	84
13. The Rubbish Cart	90
14. The New Campaign.....	97

15. The Widow's Suitors.....	103
16. Baby Worship.....	112
17. Who Shall Be Cock Of The Walk?.....	121
18. The Widow's Persecution.....	127
19. Barchester By Moonlight.....	133
20. Mr Arabin.....	141
21. St Ewold's Parsonage.....	150
22. The Thornes Of Ullathorne.....	158
23. Mr Arabin Reads Himself In At St Ewold's.....	167
24. Mr Slope's Manages Matters Very Cleverly At Puddingdale.....	174
25. Fourteen Arguments In Favour Of Mr Quiverful's Claims.....	182
26. Mrs Proudie Takes A Fall.....	189
27. A Love Scene.....	197
28. Mrs Bold Is Entertained By Dr And Mrs Grantly At Plumstead.....	209
29. A Serious Interview.....	220
30. Another Love Scene.....	227
31. The Bishop's Library.....	237
32. A New Candidate For Ecclesiastical Honours.....	242
33. Mrs Proudie Victrix.....	253
34. Oxford--The Master And Tutor Of Lazarus.....	262
35. Miss Thorne's Fete Champetre.....	268
36. Ullathorne Sports--Act I.....	276
37. Meet Each Other At Ullathorne.....	285
38. The Bishop Sits Down To Breakfast, And The Dean Dies.....	294
39. The Lookalofts And The Greenacres.....	304

40. Ullathorne Sports--Act II	311
41. Mrs Bold Confides Her Sorrow To Her Friend Miss Stanhope	318
42. Ullathorne Sports--Act III	325
43. Mr Slope Encouraged By The Press	337
44. Mrs Bold At Home	348
45. The Stanhopes At Home	356
46. Mr Slope's Parting Interview With The Signora	365
47. The Dean Elect.....	372
48. Miss Thorne Shows Her Talent For Match-Making	380
49. The Beelzebub Colt.....	388
50. The Archdeacon Is Satisfied With The State Of Affairs	393
51. Mr Slope Bids Farewell To The Palace And Its Inhabitants.....	399
52. The New Dean	404
53. Conclusion	410

1. Who Will Be The New Bishop?

In the latter days of July in the year 185-, a most important question was for ten days hourly asked in the cathedral city of Barchester, and answered every hour in various ways--Who was to be the new Bishop?

The death of old Dr Grantly, who had for many years filled the chair with meek authority, took place exactly as the ministry of Lord - was going to give place to that Lord -. The illness of the good old man was long and lingering, and it became at last a matter of intense interest to those concerned whether the new appointment should be made by a conservative or liberal government.

Bishop Grantly died as he had lived, peaceably, slowly, without pain and without excitement. The breath ebbed from him almost imperceptibly, and for a month before his death, it was a question whether he was alive or dead.

A trying time was this for the archdeacon, for whom was designed the reversion of his father's see by those who then had the giving away of episcopal thrones. I would not be understood to say that the prime minister had in so many words promised the bishopric to Dr Grantly. He was too discreet a man for that. There is a proverb with reference to the killing of cats, and those who know anything either of high or low government places, will be well aware that a promise may be made without positive words, and that an expectant may be put into the highest state of encouragement, though the great man on whose breath he hangs may have done no more than whisper that 'Mr So-and-so is certainly a rising man.'

Such a whisper had been made, and was known by those who heard it to signify that the cures of the diocese of Barchester should not be taken out of the hands of the archdeacon. The then prime minister was all in all at Oxford, and had lately passed a night at the house of the master of Lazarus. Now the master of Lazarus--which is, by the bye, in many respects the most comfortable, as well as the richest college at Oxford,--was the archdeacon's most intimate friend and most trusted counsellor. On the occasion of the prime minister's visit, Dr Grantly was of course present, and the meeting was very gracious. On the following morning Dr Gwynne, the master, told the archdeacon that in his opinion the matter was settled.

At this time the bishop was quite on his last legs; but the ministry was also tottering. Dr Grantly returned from Oxford happy and elated, to resume his place in the palace, and to continue to perform for the father the last duties of a son; which, to give him his due, he performed with more tender care than was to be expected from his usual somewhat worldly manners.

A month since the physicians had named four weeks as the outside period during which breath could be supported within the body of the dying man. At the end of the month the physicians wondered, and named another fortnight. The old man lived on wine alone, but at the end of the fortnight he still lived; and the tidings of the fall of the ministry became more frequent. Sir Lamda Mewnew and Sir Omicron Pie, the two great London doctors, now came down for the fifth time, and declared, shaking their learned heads, that another week of life was impossible; and as they sat down to lunch in the episcopal dining-room, whispered to the archdeacon their own private knowledge that the ministry must fall within five days. The son returned to his father's room, and after administering with his own hands the sustaining modicum of madeira, sat down by the bedside to calculate his chances.

The ministry were to be out within five days: his father was to be dead within--No, he rejected that view of the subject. The ministry were to be out, and the diocese might probably be vacant at the same period. There was much doubt as to the names of the men who were to succeed to power, and a week must elapse before a Cabinet was formed. Would not vacancies be filled by the out-going men during that week? Dr Grantly had a kind of idea that such would be the case, but did not know; and then he wondered at his own ignorance of such a question.

He tried to keep his mind away from the subject, but he could not. The race was so very close, and the stakes were so very high. He then looked at the dying man's impassive, placid face. There was no sign there of death or disease; it was something thinner than of yore, somewhat grayer, and the deep lines of age more marked; but, as far as he could judge, life might yet hang there for weeks to come. Sir Lamda Mewnew and Sir Omicron Pie had thrice been wrong, and might yet be wrong thrice again. The old bishop slept during twenty of the twenty-four hours, but during the short periods of his waking moments, he knew both his son and his dear friend Mr Harding, the archdeacon's father-in-law, and would thank them tenderly for their care and love. Now he lay sleeping like a baby, resting easily on his back, his mouth just open, and his few gray hairs straggling from beneath his cap; his breath was perfectly noiseless, and his thin, wan hand, which lay above the coverlid, never moved. Nothing could be easier than the old man's passage from this world to the next.

But by no means easy were the emotions of him who sat there watching. He knew it must be now or never. He was already over fifty, and there was little chance that his friends who were now leaving office would soon return to it. No probable British prime minister but he who was now in, he who was so soon to be out, would think of making a bishop of Dr Grantly. Thus he thought long and sadly, in deep silence, and then gazed at that still living face, and then at last dared to ask himself whether he really longed for his father's death.

The effort was a salutary one, and the question was answered in a moment. The proud, wishful, worldly man, sank on his knees by the bedside, and taking the bishop's hand within his own, prayed eagerly that his sins might be forgiven him.

His face was still buried in the clothes when the door of the bed-room opened noiselessly, and Mr Harding entered with a velvet step. Mr Harding's attendance at that bedside had been nearly as constant as that of the archdeacon, and his ingress and egress was as much a matter of course as that of his son-in-law. He was standing close beside the archdeacon before he was perceived, and would have also knelt in prayer had he not feared that his doing so might have caused some sudden start, and have disturbed the dying man. Dr Grantly, however, instantly perceived him, and rose from his knees. As he did so Mr Harding took both his hands, and pressed them warmly. There was more fellowship between them at that moment than there had ever been before, and it so happened that after circumstances greatly preserved the feeling. As they stood there pressing each other's hands, the tears rolled freely down their cheeks.

'God bless you, my dears,'--said the bishop with feeble voice as he woke--'God bless you--may God bless you both, my dear children:' and so he died.

There was no loud rattle in the throat, no dreadful struggle, no palpable sign of death; but the lower jaw fell a little from its place, and the eyes, which had been so constantly closed in sleep, now remained fixed and open. Neither Mr Harding nor Dr Grantly knew that life was gone, though both suspected it.

'I believe it's all over,' said Mr Harding, still pressing the other's hands. 'I think--nay, I hope it is.'

'I will ring the bell,' said the other, speaking all but in a whisper. 'Mrs Phillips should be here.'

Mrs Phillips, the nurse, was soon in the room, and immediately, with practised hand, closed those staring eyes.

'It's all over, Mrs Phillips?' asked Mr Harding.

'My lord's no more,' said Mrs Phillips, turning round and curtseying with a solemn face; 'His lordship's gone more like a sleeping baby than any that I ever saw.'

'It's a great relief, archdeacon,' said Mr Harding, 'A great relief--dear good, excellent old man. Oh that our last moments may be as innocent and peaceful as his!'

'Surely,' said Mrs Phillips. 'The Lord be praised for all his mercies; but, for a meek, mild, gentle-spoken Christian, his lordship was--' and Mrs Phillips, with unaffected but easy grief, put up her white apron to her flowing eyes.

'You cannot but rejoice that it is over,' said Mr Harding, still counselling his friend. The archdeacon's mind, however, had already travelled from the death chamber to the closet of the prime minister. He had brought himself to pray for his father's life, but now that that life was done, to dally with the fact of the bishop's death--useless to lose perhaps everything for the pretence of a foolish sentiment.

But how was he to act while his father-in-law stood there holding his hand? How, without appearing unfeeling, was he to forget his father in the bishop--to overlook what he had lost, and think only of what he might possibly gain?

'No; I suppose not,' said he, at last, in answer to Mr Harding. 'We have all expected it for so long.'

Mr Harding took him by the arm and led him from the room. 'We will see him again tomorrow morning,' said he; 'We had better leave the room now to the woman.' And so they went downstairs.

It was already evening and nearly dark. It was most important that the prime minister should know that night that the diocese was vacant. Everything might depend on it; and so, in answer to Mr Harding's further consolation, the archdeacon suggested that a telegraph message should be immediately sent off to London. Mr Harding who had really been somewhat surprised to find Dr Grantly, as he thought, so much affected, was rather taken aback; but he made no objection. He knew that the archdeacon had some hope of succeeding to his father's place, though he by no means knew how highly raised that hope had been.

'Yes,' said Dr Grantly, collecting himself and shaking off his weakness, 'We must send a message at once; we don't know what might be the consequences of delay. Will you do it?'

'! Oh yes; certainly: I'll do it, only I don't know exactly what it is you want.'

Dr Grantly sat down before a writing table, and taking pen and ink, wrote on a slip of paper as follows:-

By Electric Telegraph,
For the Earl of -, Downing Street, or elsewhere.
'The Bishop of Barchester is dead.'
Message sent by the Rev. Septimus Harding.

'There,' said he. 'Just take that to the telegraph office at the railway station, and give it as it is; they'll probably make you copy it on to one of their own slips; that's all you'll have to do: then you'll have to pay them half-a-crown.' And the archdeacon put his hand in his pocket and pulled out the necessary sum.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

