

## The Peddler (c.1627)

Thomas Randolph

### Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 11600, ff. 4r–9v

4r

The Pedler./

Generous gentlemen such is my affection to Phebus and the 19 Muses that for the benefit of this royall Vniuersity I haue straddled over three of the terestriall globes w[i]th my geometricall trampling and for your sakes whom I know to be the deuine bratts of Helicon the learned sillie foles of Mounsiour Pegasus, therefore I chardge you by the seauen deadly sciences w[hi]ch you studdy more then the liberall sins that your ha ha haas may be the recompense of my ridiculous endeauors, I haue been longe tyme in travaile but if your laughter giue my Embrion Iests safe deliuerance I dare maintayne it in the throat of all Europe, Iechonta rising from his naked bed was not a better midwife: but I see you haue a greate desire to see of what profession I am. first therefore heare of what I am not: I am noe Loyer for I hope you see noe buckram honesty about me, and I swear by these sweet lipps, my breath stincks not of any stale actions: I am noe souldier for heauen knowes my heels are wiser then my hands and by the whipe of Mars and Bellona I could neuer endure the smell of salt peter since the last gunpowder treason the voyse of mandrakes is more sweeter musicke then those maximers of warr the terrible cannons. I am noe Townsman vnles there be rutting in Cambridge for you see my head w[i]thout his hornes: I am noe Alderman for I speake true english. I am noe Iustice of pease for I sweare by the honour of a mittimus the venerable bench neuer kist my honourable buttocks: I am noe Alchumist for although I be poore yet I haue not broke my braynes against the philosophers stone: I am noe lord yet methinks I should be one for I haue noe lands: I am noe knight yet I haue empty pockets as the proudest of them all. I am noe landlord but to

the tenits

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the tenits at will: I am noe Inns of Court gent: for I haue not been throughly stewed at the temple though I haue been half codled at Cambridge I am no Parliament Burges for I cannot endure to talke of loane money and subsidyes: I am noe knight of the shire for I haue not seene the fleete marshallsea nor the councell table: now you doe expect that I should say I am a scholler but I thanke my stars I haue more witt then soe why I am not yet run mad I trowe I hope my better genial will defend me from that understanding beggery: fortune sheild me from the thread bare blacke it lookes like a peice of Belzibubs livery. a scholler why? I doe not meane my braynes should drop through my nose: but I am a generous deuout, understanding, royall, magnificent, illustrious and thrice worthy Pedler: but whats a Pedler? why what art thow? and yet for the satisfaction of him whom I most respect my honorable S[i]r I will define him. a Pedler is an *indiuiduum vagum* of the *primum mobile* of all Tradsmen a walkinge burse, a moveable exchange a Socraticall cittizen of the vast vniuerse or a peripatericall Iournyman, that like an other Atlas carryes his heauenly burden upon his shoulders.

I am a Pedler & a Iest my ware  
This brayne S[ain]t Bartholomew or Starbidge fare  
I will sell all for laughter thats my gaines  
Such chapmen wilbe laught at for there paynes  
Come buy my witt w[hi]ch I haue hither brought  
For witt is neuer good till it be bought  
Let me not beare all backe come buy the while  
If laughter be deare take for a smile

A draper

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A Draper I of linsey woolsey iests  
You are my Chapmen now as once my ghuests  
My trade is ieasting or quiblet speaking  
Strainge trade you'l say for tis set vp w[i]th breaking  
My shop & fayre both at your com[m]and  
For lawfull english laughter paid in hand  
Now I will trust nomore it were in vaine  
To breake & make a Craddock of my braine  
Half haue not paid me yet first there is one  
Owes me a quart of wine for his declamation  
Anothers mornings draught is yet vnpaid  
For 4 epistles at the election made  
Nor dare I crosse him that doth owe for yet  
Three Iles of iests to lyne's priorum witt  
But heere's a courtier hath so long a bill  
Ile' fright him to behould it, yet I will  
Resight the summes: It[e]m he owes me first  
For an Imprimis but what greiues me worst  
A dainty Epigram on his spaniels taylor  
Cost me an howre besides 5 pots of ale  
It[m] an Anagram on his M[aste]rs name  
It[m] his speech wherew[i]th he courts his dame  
Besides 3 iests & a new tale or two  
Which got his honor a dinner & supper too  
And an old blubbering howling elegye  
Vppon his M[asters] dog sad Exequie  
Nor can I yet the tyme directly gather  
When I was payd for an Epitaph on his father  
Besides he neuer yet gaue me content  
For the new coyning his last compliment  
Should I speak all be't spoke vnto his prayse  
The totall some is what he thinkes or sayes  
I will not let you run so much o'th score  
Poore ducklane brayne trust me ile trust no more  
Shall we iest all for nought haue ye all conscience lost

Or doe you thinke our sacke did nothing cost.

Well then

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Well then it must be done as I haue sayd  
I needs must bee with present money payd  
I am a free man for by this small rime  
The fellowes know I haue serued out my tyme  
Yet if you please to grase my poore aduentures  
I am bound more to you then ten Indentures

But a pox of Skeltons fury ile open my shopp in honest prooes & first gent ile show you half a doozen of incomperable poynts I would giue you the definshion of a poynte but that you haue it at your fingers endes & yet for your better understanding i'le giue you something. a poynt is noebody a com[m]on terme & extreame freind of goodman longitude whose center & circumference ioyne in one diametricall opposition to your regulaterall dublets & equicuerall breches but to speake to the poynt though not to the purpose.

[*Left margin:1*] The first poynt is a poynt of honesty but it is almost worne out & has neuer been in request since truncke hose & codpises went out of fashion tis made of simplicity ribbon tayd w[i]th plaine dealing & if there be any knaues among you as I hope you are not all fooles fayth by this poynt of honesty & the best use you can put it to is to tye the band of affection but I feare this poynt will finde noe chapmen some of you had rather sell then w[i]th Demosthenes buy witt at so deer a rate: o I could wish that the breeches of all bowcers stewards procters taskers & receauors were trust w[i]th this poynt of honesty but some will not be tyed to it but hist Tom tis daingerous untrussing tymes.

[*Left margin:2*] The next is a poynt of knauery but I thinke you haue enough of this already yet because I am loath to keepe myne any longer who giues most shall haue it & the Diuell doe him good w[i]th it: this poynt was cut out of a villinous shipskin parchment in a brokers shopp tag'd w[i]th the gould of a ringe which the pillery robd him of when it borrowd his eares if you doe but fasten this on the doublet of a young heire it will make him grow so corpulent in the midle that ther wilbe nothing but wast: this poynt of knauery has been a man in his dayes & the best of the p[ar]ish fourteen of them goe to our bakers dozen the

definshion

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definshion may be this: a poynt of knauery is an occult quality tide in a riding knot the better to play fast & loose. he was borne in Buckram & has run through all the offices in the citty & now standes to be president in bridewell where I must leaue him hoping to see him trust at Tyburne./

[*Left margin:3*] Amongst al my poynts a poynte of ignorance is the uery alderman of the dozen this is the richest poynte in my shopp & it is neuer out of fashion at the Inns of Court if you buy his poynt of ignorance ye are fooles for ye shall haue it in spight of your teeth./

[*Left margin:4*] The next is a poynt of good manners which hath been lost in the uniuersity amongst a croud of clownes because it was only in fashion on this side Trent this poynt is almost found agayne in our Colledge & I thanke heauen for it begins to be tagd w[i]th

lattine it has been much defil'd but I hope to see it washt away cleane with the sope of good gouuernement this poynte to giue some incklinge on't begins from due obseruance of fresh men to sofisters & there it endes with a sede maioribus./

[*Left margin:5*] The next is a poynte of false doctrine snatcht from the codpeece of a long winded puritan, the breath of Armenius witt rotts him tag him with a peice of Apochripha & he breakes a sunder trus him to the surplis & his breeches will fall downe presently with the uery though{t} of the whore of Babilon he hates amity & church gouuernement soe farr that you cannot tye a true loue knott on him cut of his tags & he will make excellent strings for a Geneuah bible I would haue this poynt anathematiz'd from the religious hose in this company tis made of daingerous stubberne leather tagd at on ende w[i]th selfe conceight at the other w[i]th willfull opinion: this poynt is fitt for noe seruice but Lucifers cockeatrices: but why talke I soe long of this poynte tis pittie it tis not silenst.

[*Left margin:6*] If you like my poynts why doe you not buy them if you looke for a more full poynt I can furnish you with a period I haue a parenthesis to but I loue them soe well that I greiue at this ignorance of my infancy when my

saucy.

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saucy toes durst soe audaciously play at spurne poynte./

Who will not pittie poynts when ech man sees  
To begg them they are fallen vpon there knees  
Though if I begg pittie doe not thinke I fear  
Sensuring Criticque whelps no poynt Mousier  
If you hate poynts & such like merry speeches  
May you want poynts to trusse vp your owne breeches  
And from the close stole neuer may you moue  
That hating poynts do clasps & keepers loue  
But if my poynts haue here at all offended  
I'le tell you meanes how all may be amended.

The next is a looking glass, but il'e put it vp againe for I dare not be so bould as to show some of your fates in it yet I will because it has strange operations in it: if a crackt chambermaide dresse her selfe in this looking glasse shee shall dreame the next night of kissing her lord & for making her lady a shee cuckold shall marry the Chaplaine for the next liuing shall fall. if a state court lady looke on this reflection she shall see her old face through her new complexion: a Vserer cannot see his conscience in it nor a scriuener his eares: if a Townes=man peepe into it his Acteons furniture is noe longer invisible: corrupt takers of bribes may reade the prize of their conscience in it: some fellowes cannot see the face of a scholler in it, if one of our iewell nosd, carbuncled rubyes rich bonifaces doe venture the dainger of seeing there owne faces in it the poore Basilisks will kill themselues w[i]th reflection: I could haue wisht this looking glass at the Island of Ree for in this various obliques & seuerall reuerberations of the visible species they might haue seene how many beaes had been best for the uictualing of the fort at S[ain]t Martins: if a blinde man see

his face./

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his face in it he may recouer his sight: but I finde noe pleasure in the contemplation of it. I see & finde my selfe inclining to see daingerous a disease that I feare I cannot liue heere aboute 4 yeares more howsoever I hope after my decease we shall drinke the parting blow./

If any one this looking glass disgrace  
It is because he dare not see his face  
What I am now I will not see some say  
T'was the whores argument when she threw it away.

But now considering what a philosophicall vacuum is in most of our Cambridge noddles I haue heere to sell a souerainge box of Cerebrum which by Lullius Alchymie was extracted from the quintessence of Aristotles Pericranium sod in the sincipat of Demosthenes the fyer being blowed by the blast of a long winded Ciceronian sentence, the whole complexion being boyld from a pottle to a pinte in the pipkin of Senecha, we owe the first inuention of it to S[i]r Iohn Mandeuill, the perfection of it to Iohn of Odcumb who fetch it from the gray headed Alpes in the Hobsons wagon of experience. I sweare as p[er]sons vsed) by this my coxcomb the Magazin of im[m]ortall roguery but for this box of braynes you had not laught to day? buy this box of braynes & the tenor of the will shall be in socage? when as now it is but fee simple these braynes haue admirable uertues and uery strainge operations 4 dropps of them into the eare of a Lawyer will make him able to wright false lattine 3 graynes will fill the capitall of a vniuersitye gander the terestriall head of a high constable wilbe content w[i]th halfe a dram 3 scruples & a quarter will fitt the head of a Bandbury brother./

Come buy my braynes you ignorant guls  
And furnish heere your empty sculs  
Pay your laughter as is fitt  
To the learned Pedler of witt./

Quickly come.

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Quickly cum & quickly buy  
Or ile shut vp my shopp & fooles ye shall dye  
If your coxcombs you would coddle  
Here buy braynes to fill your noddle  
Braynes for euery wreched fole  
Braynes for euery Iobberhole  
Who buyes my braynes learns quickly heere  
To make a problem in a yeare  
Shall vnderstand the predicable  
And predicamentall rabble  
Who buyes them not shall dye a foole  
An Exoterick in the schooles  
Who buyes them not shall ever passe  
For a great acromaticall asse  
Buy then this box who buyes not it  
Shall neuer surfitt on to much witt./

But leuying my braynes I come to a more profitable com[m]oditie for considering how dull half the witts of the Colledge be I thought it not the worst trafique to sell whetstones this

whetstone will set such an edge on your inuentions that it will make your rusty Iron braynes a puerer metall then your brasen faces: whet but the knife of your capacity on this whetstone and you may presume to dyne at the Muses ordinary or supp at the oracle of Apollo. if this be not true I sweare by my doxes peticoat that I will neuer hereafter presume of a better vocation then to liue & dye miserable factor of cunniskins. I haue also seuerall gloues of strainge qualities there is a payre of gloues for a loyer made of an entire loadstone that has the uertue to draw Gould into it: it twas perfum'd w[i]th the conscience of an Vserer & will keepe sent vntill rangling haue left Westm[inster] hall it is seamed w[i]th Indentures w[i]th the needle worke of morage,

and frindged.

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And frindged w[i]th a nouerint vniuersi, I would show them but it is against the statuts for a latitat was lately serued vpon them.

The next comodities are suerall nightrappes but they dare not come abroad by candle light. the first is lin'd w[i]th foxes furr, w[hi]ch I hope to sell to some of o[u]r Sophisters it has an admirable qualitie for curing the Grapulas, aboute the uertue of bitter almans or iuery nay the porridge pott is not comperable to it I haue another fitt for an Alderman w[hi]ch Acteon by will & testament bequeathed to the citty as a principall charter twas of diana's one making Albumazars catacousticon is but a chamberpot in comparison I could fitt all heades w[i]th nightcaps except your graue otherwise metaphisicall heads: marry they are transendent that they will not be comprehended in a nightcap.

I haue also seuerall ruffs first a ruff of pure holland for a dutch drunkard the second ruff of cobwebb lawne for the vniuersity statuts I haue a ruff for the colledge to but by this badge of o[u]r Colledge my reuerent lambskin our backbiters say that o[u]r Colledge ruff is out of stocke, I haue no more ruffs then one & thats a ruff of strong hempe for him that loues not Westminster./

But would you not bestow your money one such trifles why? I haue great wares will you buy any parsonages uicaridges, deaneries or prebendaries the price of one of his lordships crackt chambermaides another the reseruing of his worships tithes, or you may buy the knights horse thre hundred pownds to deere: who to make you

amends for

**8v**

amends for the bargaine will draw you one freely to a uickaridge: there be many more trickes but the right downe way is three yeares purchase you~~r~~ come bring in youre quoyne for liuings are maiores in pretio now, then in the dayes of doomes day bookes you must giue pr[e]sence for their presentations: there may be seuerall meanes for your institutions but this is the only way to induction that euer I knew: but I see you are not minded to medle with my honest leuiticall farmers therefore now expect the treasure of the world, the treasure of the earth digd from the mines of my more then Indian pouch, wipe your eyes that enuious cloudes of misty uapors may not bare your sight the happines of so rare and obiect,

Come from thy Pallace beautilous queene of Greece  
Sweet Hellen of the world rise as the morne

Clad in the smock of night that all the starrs  
May loose there eyes in blasing & heauen grow blinde  
Run weeping to the man that liues in the Moon  
To borrow his dog to lead the spheares a begging  
Rare Empresse of our sowles whose charcole flame  
Burnes the poore coulse foot of amazed harts  
Hew the dumb audience that thy beauty spyes  
And then amaze w[i]th greife laugh out your eyes./

Heers now a rare comoditie how all your fingers itch at it who should be the first chapman  
this would be a dainty freind in a corner & was it not better to embrace these pritty shambles  
of beauty this arant arant poultry of perfection then to tumble your sopy landrases. is this  
like your dagtaild bedmakers? when a man shall lye w[i]th seacoll ashes & com[m]itt adultry  
w[i]th the uery dust of his one chamber? me thinkes that this peerlesse paragon of perfection  
should be better esteem'd on, & should sett a better edge one your appetite then all the eight  
penny cutlers in Cambridge: I am a man as you are & this naughty flesh & blood will neuer  
leauie tempting. yet I protest by the sweet sowle of this incomperable {shoow} that I neuer  
had any acquaintance w[i]th any {moliacklinge}

or peg larkins

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or Peg larkings but only this: this is the subiect of my Muse, thee I adorne withall costly  
epigrams, & such curious encomions as may deserue im[m]ortality in the chamber pott of  
Helicon, & thus my furor Porticus doth acoste her when my appetite desires to kisse the cap  
of her lippes or drinke my mornings draught of her embraces./

Fare Madam thou whose euey thinge  
Deserues the clostole of a kinge  
Whose head is faire as any bone  
White & smooth as pumistone.  
Whose naturall baldnes scornes to weare  
The needles exscrement of haire  
Whose foreheads streakes our hearts comand  
The most delightfull in this land  
While from those dainty glowormes eyes  
Cupid shoots plum pudding pyes  
A cream pott of white Nectar flowes  
From thy fayre & comely nose  
Faire dainty lippes so smooth so meeke  
And truly alabaster cheeke  
Pure safron teeth happy the meat  
That such pritty milstones eate  
O lett me heare some silent song  
Tun'd by the iewestrump of thy tung  
Oh how that chin becomes thee well  
Where neuer saucy beard did dwell  
Thy corral necke doth statelier show  
Then Ios when she turned a cow

O let me or I neuer shall rest  
Sucke the blacke bottells of thy breast  
Or lay my head & rest me still  
On that dainty hog magog hill  
A curious & unfadomed wast  
As slender as the statelyst mast  
Thy fingers to breed my delight  
Each wart a naturall Margeret  
O pittie then my dismall mone  
Able to melt my heart of stone  
Thou knowest how I lament & houle  
Weepe, snort, condole, cry & scowle.

each night

9v

Each night soe great my passions bee  
I cannot wake for thought of thee  
Thy gowne can tell how well I lou'd  
Thy peticoat to pittie mou'd  
Then let the pedler mercy find  
To kiss thee once though twere behinde  
Sweet kiss, sweet lippes, delicious sence  
How great a Zephirus blowes from thence  
Blest peticoat more blest thy smock  
That daily kisseth thy buttock  
For now the prouerbe true I finde  
That the best is still behinde  
Sweet dainty sowle daigne but to giue  
This Pedler poore thy hanging sleue  
And in thy honor by this kisse  
Ile dayly were my pack in this  
And quickly soe breed thee more fame  
The quixsot the knight errantes name  
So farwell sweet daynge now to crought  
And oncce againe reblesse my pouch

Is it not pittie such ware should not be bought well I perceau the emptines in yo[u]r learned  
purses: but ile to the court & see what I can sell there & then carry the reliques to Roome./

Some freind must now p[er]force  
Make hast & fetch my boy  
To sadle my wooden horse  
For I meane to conquer Troy.

Finis / Th: R

### Other manuscript witnesses

- British Library, Additional MS 27406, ff. 121r–127v

- Edinburgh University Library, MS La. III. 493, ff. 49r–56v

### **Seventeenth-century print exemplars**

- Thomas Randolph, *Aristippus, or The iouiall philosopher ... To which is added, the conceited pedlar* (1630) [STC 20686], pp. 8–10

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<https://mpese.ac.uk/t/RandolphThePeddler1627.html>