

# Two Dyaloges (c. 1549) eBook

## Two Dyaloges (c. 1549) by Desiderius Erasmus

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[Transcriber's note: The original text has no page numbers. Page breaks have been marked with double lines || like this. Three apparent typographic errors were corrected and are listed at the end of this text. All other spelling and punctuation are as in the original.]

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

[C]Two dyaloges  
wrytten in laten  
by the famous clerke. D. Eras-  
mus of Roterodame/ one called  
Polyphemus or the gospeller/  
the other dysposyng of thynges  
and names/ translated  
in to Englyshe by  
Edmonde  
Becke.  
And prynted at Cantorbury  
in saynt Paules paryshe  
by John Mychell.  
[+]

\* \* \* \* \*

The preface to the Reader.

Lucius Anneus Seneca amonge many other pratie saienges (gentle reder) hathe this also, whiche in my iudgement is as trew as it is wittie. Rogado cogit qui rogat superior. And in effecte is thus moch to say, yf a manes superior or his better desyre any thige, he might aswell comade it by authoritie as ones to desyre it. A gentleman a nere cosyn of myne, but moch nerer in fryndshyp, eftesones dyd instant and moue me to translate these two dyaloges folowyng, to whose getlenes I am so moch obliged, indetted and bounde, that he myght well haue comaunded me to this and more paynes: to whome I do not onely owe seruyce, but my selfe also. And in accoplysshynge of his most honest request (partly by cause I wolde not the moost inhumane fawte of Ingratitude shuld wor|| they be imputed to me, & that I might in this thyng also (accordynge to my bounden dutie) gratifie my frende) I haue hassard my selfe in these daungerous dayes, where



many are so capcyous, some prone and redy to malygne & depraue, and fewe whose eares are not so festidious, tendre, and redy to please, that in very tryfles & thynges of small importaunce, yet exacte dylygence and exquisite iudgement is loked for and requyred, of them whiche at this present wyll attempte to translate any boke be it that the matter be neuer so base. But what diligence I have employed in the translacio hereof I referre it to the iudgement of the lerned sort, whiche coferynge my translacion with the laten dyaloges, I dowte not wyl condone and pardone my boldnesse, in that that I chalenge the semblable lybertie whiche the translatoours of this tyme iustlie chalenge. For some heretofore submytting them selfe to seruytude, haue lytle || respecte to the obseruacio of the thyng which in translacyo is of all other most necessary and requisite, that is to saye, to rendre the sence & the very meanyng of the author, not so relygyouslie addicte to translate worde for worde, for so the sence of the author is oftentimes corrupted & depraued, and neyther



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the grace of the one tonge nor yet of the other is truely observed or aptlie expressed. The lerned knoweth that euery tonge hathe his peculyer proprietie, phrase, maner of locucion, enargies and vehemecie, which so aptlie in any other tog can not be expressed. Yf I shal perceyue this my symple doinge to be thankfully taken, and in good parte accepted, it shall encorage me hereafter to attempte the translacio of some bokes dysposing of matters bothe delectable, frutefull, & expedient to be knowen, by the grace of God, who gyuynge me quyetnes of mynde, lybertie, and abylytie, shall not desyste to communicat the frute of my ||spare howers, to such as are not lerned in the laten tonge: to whome I dedycat the fyrste frutes of this my symple translacyon.

\* \* \* \* \*

A declaracion of the names.

Poliphemus sygnifieth, valyant or noble, and in an other sygnificacion, talcatyfe or clybbe of tong. The name of a Gyant called Cyclops, ha-uyng but one eye in his forhed, of a huge stature and a myghtie personage. And is aplied here to sygnifie a great freke or a lubber, as this Poliphemus was, whiche beyng a man of warre or a courtyer, had a newe testament in his hande, and loked buselie for some sentence or text of scrypture and that Cannius his companyo espyed and sayd to hi as followeth.

\* \* \* \* \*

[C]The parsons names are Cannius and Poliphemus.

Cannius. what hunt Polipheme for here? Poliphemus. Aske ye what I hunt for here, and yet ye se me haue neyther dogges, dart, Jauelyn, nor huntyng staffe. Cannius. Paraduerture ye hunt after some praty nymphe of the couert. Poliphemus. By my trouth and well coniectured, be holde what a goodly pursenet, or a hay I haue here in my hande. Cannius. Benedicite, what a straunge syght is this, me thinke I se Bachus in a lyons skin, Poliphemus with a boke in his hande. This is a dogge in a doblet, a sowe with a sadle, of all that euer I se it is a non decet. Poliphe. I haue not onely



paynted and garnyshed my boke with saffron, but also I haue lymmed it withe Sinople, asaphetida, redleed, vermilo, and byse. Can. It is a warlyke boke, for it is furnished with knottes, tassils ||plates, claspes, and brasen bullyons. Poliphe. Take the boke in your hand and loke within it. Canni. I se it wery well. Truly it is a praty boke, but me thynkes ye haue not yet trymmed it sufficiently for all your cost ye have bestowed upon it. Poliphe. Why what lackes it? Canni. Thou shuldest haue set thyne armes upon it. Poliphemus. what armes I beseche the? Canius. Mary the heed of Silenus, an olde iolthed drunkard totynge out of a hoggshed or a tunne, but in good earnest,



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wherof dothe your boke dyspose or intreate? dothe it teache the art and crafte to drynke a duetaunt? Poli. Take hede in goddes name what ye say lest ye bolt out a blasphemie before ye be ware. Canius. why bydde ye me take hede what I saye? is there any holy matter in the boke? Poli. what ma it is the gospell boke, I trow there is nothyng can be more holye. Cannius. God for thy grace what hathe Poliphemus to do with the gospell? ||Poli. Nay why do ye not aske what a chrysten man hathe to do with christe? Cannius. I can not tell but me thynkes a rousty byll or a halbard wold become such a great lubber or a slouyn as thou arte a great deale better, for yf it were my chauce to mete such one and knewe him not upon seeborde, and he loked so lyke a knaue and a ruffya as thou dost I wolde take hym for a pirate or a rouer upon the see/ and if I met such one in the wood for an arrante thefe, and a man murderer. Poli. yea good syr but the gospell teache vs this same lesson, that we shuld not iudge any person by his loke or by his externall & outwarde apparaunce. For lyke wyse as many tymes vnder a graye freers coote a tyrannous mynde lyeth secretly hyd, eue so a polled heed, a crispe or a twyrled berde, a frowninge, a ferse, or a dogged loke, a cappe, or a hat with an oystrich fether, a soldyers cassocke, a payre of hoose all to cut and manglyd, may co|| uer an euangelycall mynde. Cannius. why not, mary God forbyd elles, yea & many tymes a symple shepe lyeth hyd in a wolfes skynne, and yf a man maye credite and beleue the fables of Aesope, an asse maye lye secretly unknowen by cause he is in a lyons skynne. Poliphe. Naye I knowe hym whiche bereth a shepe vpon his heed, and a sore in his brest, to whome I wold wysse with al my hart that he had as whyte and as faurable frendes as he hathe blacke eyes. And I wolde wisse also that he were as well guylt ouer and ouer as he hathe a colour mete to take guyltyng. Canni. Yf ye take hym to were a shepe vpon his heed, that weareth a cappe of woll, howe greuously than art thou lodyn, or what an excedyng heuy burde bearest thou then I praye the whiche bearest a hoole shepe and an ostryche to vpon thy heed? But what saye ye to hi doth not he more folyssly which beareth a byrd vpon his heed, and an asse in his || brest. Poliphemus. There ye nypped & taunted me in dede. Cannius. But I wolde saye this geere dyd wonderous wel yf this gospel boke dyd so adourne the with vertue as thou hast adourned lymmed, and gorgiously garnyssed it with many gay goodly glystryng ornamentes. Mary syr thou hast set it forth in his ryght colours in dede, wolde to god it might so adourne the with good codicios that thou myghtest ones lerne to be an honest man. Poli. There shall be no defaute in me, I tell you I wyll do my diligence. Can. Naye there is no doute of that, there shall be no more faute in you now I dare say then was wonte to be. Poli. Yea but (youre tarte tauntes, and youre churlysshe checkes, and raylynges set asyde) tell me I pray



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the this one thyng, do you thus disprays, condempne, or fynde faute with them whiche caryeth aboute with them the newe testament or the gospel boke? Canni. No by my fayth do I not good ||praty man. Poliphe. Call ye me but a praty one and I am hygher then you by ye length of a good asses heed. Can. I thynke not fully so moche yf the asse stretch forth his eares, but go to it skyllyis no matter of that, let it passe, he that bare Christ vpon his backe was called Christofer, and thou whiche bearest the gospell boke aboute with the shall for Poliphemus be called the gospeller or the gospell bearer. Polip. Do not you counte it an holy thyng to cary aboute with a man the newe testament? Cani. why no syr by my trouthe do I not, except thou graunte the very asses to be holy to. Poli. How can an asse be holy? Cannius. For one asse alone is able to beare thre hundreth suche bokes, and I thynke suche a great lubber as thou art were stronge inoughe to beare as great a burden, and yf thou had a hansom packesadle sette vpon thy backe. Poliphe. And yet for all your iestyng it is not agaynst good reason to saye ||that ye asse was holy which bore christ. Cannius. I do not enuye you man for this holynes for I had as lefe you had that holynes as I, and yf it please you to take it I wyll geue you an holy & a religious relyke of the selfe same asse whiche christ rode vpon, and whan ye haue it ye may kysse it lycke it and cull it as ofte as ye lyst. Poli. Mary syr I thanke you, ye can not gyue me a more thanckefull gyfte nor do me a greater pleasure, for that asse withouten any tayle was made as holye as any asse could be by the touchyng of christes body. Cannius. Undouted they touched christes body also whiche stroke and buffeted christ. Poliphe. yea but tell me this one thyng I praye the in good earnest. Is it not a great sygne of holynes in a man to cary aboute the gospel boke or the newe testament? Cannius. It is a token of holynes in dede if it be done without hypocrysie, I meane if it be done without dissimulacion/ and for ||that end, intent & purpose, that it shuld be done for. Poliphe. What the deuyll & a morten tellest thou a man of warre of hypocrysie, away with hypocrysie to the monkes and the freers. Cannius. Yea but bycause ye saye so, tell me fyrste I praye you what ye call hypocrysie. Po. When a man pretendis another thyng outwardly then he meanis secretly in his mynde. Cannius. But what dothe the bearyng aboute of the newe testament sygnifie. Dothe it not betoken that thy lyfe shulde be conformable to the gospell which thou carryest aboute with the. Poli. I thynke well it dothe. Cannius. Wel then when thy lyfe is not conformable to the boke, is not that playne hypocrysie. Poliph. Tell me the what you call the trewe carieng of the gospell boke aboute with a man. Cani. Some men beare it aboute with them in theyr hades (as the gray freers were wonte to beare the rule of saynt Fraunces) and so the porters of Londo, Asses ||&



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horses may beare it as well as they. And there be some other that carry the gospel in theyr mouthes onlie, and such haue no other talke but al of christ and his gospell, and that is a very poynt of a pharysey. And some other carrye it in theyr myndes. But in myne opynion he beares the gospell boke as he shuld do whiche bothe beares it in his hande, comenes of it with his mouth whan occasyon of edyfyenge of his neyghboure whan conuenient oportunitie is mynystred to him, and also beares it in his mynde and thynkes vpon it withe his harte. Poli. Yea thou art a mery felow, where shall a man fynde suche blacke swanes? Cannius. In euery cathedrall church, where there be any deacons, for they beare the gospel boke i theyr hade, they syng the gospell aloude, somtyme in a lofte that the people may heare the, although they do not vnderstand it, and theyr myndes are vpo it when they syng it. Polphe. And yet for all your ||sayenge all suche deacons are no saynttes that beare the gospell so in theyr myndes. Cannius. But lest ye play the subtile and capcious sophistryar with me I wyll tell you this one thyng before. No man can beare the gospell in his mynde but he must nedes loue it from the bothum of his harte, no man loueth it inwardly and from the bothu of his harte but he must nedes declare and expresse the gospell in his luyinge, outwarde maners, & behauour. Poli. I can not skylle of youre subtile reasonynges, ye are to fyne for me. Can. The I wyll commune with you after a grosser maner, and more playnly. yf thou dyddest beare a tankard of good Reynyshe wyne vpon thy shulders onelye, what other thyng were it to the then a burden. Poliphe. It were none other thyng truly, it is no great pleasure so beare wyne. Cannius. What and yf thou dranke asmoche as thou coudest well holde in thy mouthe, after the manner of ||a gargarisme & spyt it out agayne. Po. That wolde do me no good at all, but take me not with suche a faute I trow, for the wyne is very bad and if I do so. Canni. But what and yf thou drynke thy skynne full as thou art wont to do, whe thou comest where good wyne is. Poliphe. Mary there is nothyng more godly or heuynly. Cannius. It warmes you at the stomacke, it setteth your body in a heate, it makes you loke with a ruddy face, and setteth your hart vpon a mery pynne. Poliphe. That is suerly so as ye saye in dede. Canni. The gospell is suche a lyke thyng of all this worlde, for after that it hathe ones persed & entered in the veynes of the mynd it altereth, transposeth, and cleane changeth vpsodowne the whole state of ma, and chaungeth hym cleane as it were into a nother man. Polip. Ah ha, nowe I wot wherabout ye be, belyke ye thike that I lyue not accordyng to the gospell or as a good gospeller shulde do. ||Cannius. There is no man can dyssolue this questio better then thy selfe. Poli. Call ye it dissoluyng? Naye and yf a thyng come to dyssoluyng gyue me a good sharpe axe in my hande and I trow I shall



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dyssolue it well inoughe. Canni. What woldest thou do, I praye the, and yf a man shulde say to thy teth thou lyst falsely, or elles call the by thy ryght name knaue in englysshe. Poli. What wolde I do quod he, that is a question in dede, mary he shulde feele the wayghte of a payre of churlyshe fystes I warrant the. Canni. And what and yf a man gaue you a good cuffe vpon the eare that shulde waye a pounce? Poliphe. It were a well geuen blowe that wolde aduauntage hym. xx. by my trouthe and he escaped so he myght say he rose vpon his ryght syde, but it were maruayle & I cut not of his head harde by his shulders. Canni. Yea but good felowe thy gospell boke teacheth the to geue gentle answers, and fayre wordes ||agayne for fowle, and to hym that geueth the a blowe vpon the ryght cheke to holde forth the lyfte. Poliphe. I do remembre I haue red suche a thinge in my boke, but ye must pardone me for I had quyte forgotten it. Can. Well go to, what saye ye to prayer I suppose ye praye very ofte. Poli. That is euyn as very a touche of a pharesey as any can be. Cannius. I graunt it is no lesse the a poynte of a pharesey to praye longe and faynedly vnder a colour or pretece of holynes, that is to saye when a man prayeth not fro the bothum of his hart but with the lypes only and from the tethe outward, and that in opyn places where great resort of people is, bycause they wold be sene. But thy gospel boke teacheth the to praye contynually, but so that thy prayer come from the bothu of the hart. Poli. Yea but yet for all my sayenge I praye sumtyme. Can. When I beseche the when ye art a slepe? Poli. When it cometh in to my mynde, ones ||or twyse may chauce in a weke. Can. what prayer sayst thou? Poliphe. The lordes prayer, the Pater noster. Canni. Howe many tymes ouer? Poli. Onis, & I trowe it is often inoughe, for the gospell forbyddeth often repetyng of one thyng. Canni. Can ye saye your pater noster through to an ende & haue youre mynde runnyng vpon nothyng elles in all that whyle? Poli. By my trouthe and ye wyll beleue me I neuer yet assayed nor proued whether I coulde do it or no. But is it not sufficient to saye it with my mouthe? Can. I can not tell whether it be or no. But I am sure god here vs not excepte we praye from the bothum of our harte. But tell me another thyng I wyll aske the. Doest thou not fast very often? Poli. No neuer in all my lyfe tyme and yf it were not for lacke of meate. Can. And yet thy boke allowes and commendes hyghly bothe fastyng and prayer. Polip. So coulde I alowe them but that my belly can ||not well affare nor a way with fastyng. Cannius. Yea but Paule sayth they are not the seruautes of Iesus Christe whiche serue theyr belly & make it theyr god. Do you eate fleshe euery day? Po. No neuer when I haue none to eate, but I neuer refuse it when it is set before me, and I neuer aske question not for coscience but for my belly sake. Can. Yea but these stronge sturdy sydes of suche a chuffe



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and a lobbyng loby as thou arte wolde be fed well inoughe with haye and barke of trees. Poliphe. Yea but chryste sayd, that which entereth in at the mouthe defyleth not the man. Canni. That is to be vnderstand thus yf it be measurably taken, and without the offendinge of our christian brother. But Paule the disciple of chryst had rather peryshe & sterue with hunger then onys to offende his weyke brothren with his eatynge, and he exhorteth vs to followe his example that in all thynges we maye please all men. Poli. What tel ||ye me of Paule, Paule is Paule and I am I. Cannius. Do you gladly helpe to releue the poore and the indygent with your goodes? Poli. Howe can I helpe them whiche haue nothyng to gyue them, and scant inoughe for my selfe. Cannius. ye myght spare somthyng to helpe the with yf thou woldest playe the good husband in lyuynge more warely, in moderatyng thy superfluous expenses, and in fallyng to thy worke lustely. Poliphemus. Nay then I were a fole in dede, a penyworth of ease is euer worth a peny, and nowe I haue found so moch pleasure in ease that I can not fall to no labour. Canni. Do you kepe the commaundementes of god? Polip. Nowe ye appose me, kepe the comaundementes quod he, that is a payne in dede. Cannius. Art thou sorry for thy synnes and thyne offences, doest thou earnestly repent the for the. Poliphemus. Christ hath payed the raunsome of synne and satisfied for it alreedy. Cannius. Howe ||prouest thou then that thou louest the gospell and fauoris the word of god as thou bearest men in hande thou doest. Poliphemus. I wyl tell you that by & by, and I dare saye you wyl confesse no lesse your selfe then that I am an earnest fauorer of the worde then I haue told you ye tale. There was a certayne gray frere of the order of saynt Fraunces with vs whiche neuer ceased to bable and rayle agaynste the newe testament of Erasmus, I chaused to talke with the getylman pryuatly where no man was present but he and I, and after I had communed awhyle with hym I caught my frere by the polled pate with my left hande and with my right hade I drew out my daggar and I pomelled the knaue frere welfauardly aboute his skonce that I made his face as swollen and as puffed as a puddynge. Cannius. what a tale is this that thou tellest me. Poliphemus. How say you is not this a good and a sufficient proue that I fa||uer the gospell. I gaue hym absolucion afore he departed out of my handes with this newe testament thryse layde vpon his pate as harde as I myght dryue yt I made thre bunches in his heed as bygge as thre egges in the name of the father, the sone, & the holy goost. Can. Now by my trouth this was well done & lyke a ryght gospeller of these dayes. Truly this is as they saye to dyffende the gospell with the gospell. Poliphe. I met another graye frere of the same curryshe couent, that knaue neuer had done in raylynge agaynst Erasmus, so sone as I had espyed hym I was styrrred and moued with the brenninge zeale of the



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gospell that in thretenyng of him I made hym knele downe vpon his knees and crye Erasmus mercie and desyred me to forgyue hym, I may saye to you it was hyghe tyme for hym to fall downe vpon his marybones, and yf he had not done it by and by I had my hal||barde vp redy to haue gyuen hym betwyxt the necke and the heade, I loked as grymme as modie Mars when he is in furyous fume, it is trewe that I tell you, for there was inoughe sawe the frere and me yf I wolde make a lye. Cannius. I maruayle the frere was not out of his wyt. But to retourne to oure purpose agayne, dost thou lyue chastly? Poliphemus. Peradventure I maye do here after when I am more stryken in age. But shall I confesse the trouthe to the? Canni. I am no preest man, therefore yf thou wylt be shryuen thou must seke a preest to whome thou maye be lawfully confessed. Poliphe. I am wont styl to cofesse my selfe to god, but I wyl confesse thus moche to the at this tyme I am not yet become a perfyte gospeller or an euangelical man, for I am but yet as it were one of ye comune people, ye knowe wel perde we gospellers haue .iiii. gospels wrytten by the .iiii. euange||lystes, & suche gospellers as I am hunt busely, and chefely for .iiii. thynges that we may haue. Unde. to prouyde dayntie fare for the bellie, that nothyng be lackynge to that parte of the body whiche nature hath placed vnder the belly, ye wote what I meane, and to obtayne and procure suche liuinge that we may lyue welthely and at pleasure without carke & care. And fynally that we maye do what we lyst without checke or controlment, yf we gospellers lacke none of all these thynges we crye and syng for ioye, amonge our ful cuppes lo we tryumphe and are wonderfull frolycke, we syng and make as mery as cup and can, and saye the gospell is a lyue agayne Chryst rayneth. Cannius. This is a lyfe for an Epycure or a god belly and for no euangelicall persone that professeth the gospell. Poli. I denye not but that it is so as ye saye, but ye knowe well that god is omnipotent and can do al thynges, he can turne vs ||whe his wyll is sodenly in to other maner of men. Cannius. So can he transforme you in to hogges and swyne, the whiche maye soner be done I iudge the to chaunge you into good men for ye are halfe swynyshe & hoggyshe alredy, your lyuyng is so beastlie. Poliphe. Holde thy peas ma wolde to god there were no men that dyd more hurt in the world then swyne, bullockes, asses, and camelles. A ma may se many men now adayes more crueller then lyons, more rauenyng the wolues, more lecherous then sparous, and that byte worse then mad dogges, more noysom the snakes, vepers and adders. Cannius. But nowe good Polipheme remembre and loke vpon thy selfe for it is hyghe tyme for the to laye a syde thy beastly lyuyng, and to be tourned from a brute and a sauage beast in to a man. Poliphemus. I thanke you good neyghbour Cannius for by saynt Mary I thynke your counsaile is good/for the prophetes of this ||tyme sayth the worlde is almost at an end, and



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we shall haue domes daye (as they call it) shortly. Cannius. We haue therefore more nede to prepare our selues in a redines agaynst that day, and that with as moche spede as maye be possible. Poliphemus. as for my part I loke and wayte styll euery day for the myghty hande and power of christ. Cannius. Take hede therefore that thou, when christ shall laye his myghty hande vpon the be as tendre as waxe, that accordynge to his eternall wyll he maye frayme & fashyon the with his hande. But wherby I praye the dothe these prophetes coniecture & gather that the worlde is almost at an ende. Poliphe. Bycause men (they saye) do the selfe same thinge nowe adayes that they dyd, and were wont to do which were luyng in the worlde a lytle whyle before the deluge or Noyes floode. They make solempne feastes, they banket, they quaaffe, they booll, they bybbe, they ryot men mary, ||wome are maryed, they go a catterwallynge and horehuntinge, they bye, they sell, they lend to vserie, and borowe vpon vserie, they builde, kiges keepe warre one agaynst another, preestes studie howe they maye get many benefyces and promocios to make them selfe riche and increase theyr worldly substaunce, the diuynes make insolible sillogismus and vnperfyte argumetes, they gather conclusyons, monkes and freers rune, at rouers ouer all the world, the comyn people are in a mase or a hurle burle redy to make insurrections, and to conclude breuelie there lackes no euyll miserie nor myschefe, neyther hoger, thyrst felonie, robberie, warre, pestilence, sedicio, derth, and great scarsytye and lacke of all good thynges. And howe say you do not all these thynges argue and sufficientlie proue that the worlde is almost at an ende? Cannius. Yea but tell me I praye the of all thes hoole hepe of euyls and miseris whiche greueth the ||moste? Poliphemus. Whiche thynkes thou, tell me thy fansie and coniecture? Cannius. That the Deuyll (god saue vs) maye daunce in thy purse for euer a crosse that thou hast to kepe hi for the. Poliphe. I pray god I dye and yf thou haue not hyt the nayle vpon the head. Now as chaunceth I come newly from a knotte of good companye where we haue dronke harde euery man for his parte, & I am not behynde with myne, and therefore my wytte is not halfe so freshe as it wyll be, I wyll dyspute of the gospell with the whan I am sobre. Canni. When shal I se the sobre? Poli. When I shall be sobre. Cannius. Whe wyll that be? Poliph. When thou shalt se me, in the meane season god be with you gentle Cannius and well mot you do. Cannius. And I wyshe to you a gayne for my parte that thou ware in dede as valiaunt or pusaunt a felowe as thy name soundeth. Poliphe. And bycause ye shall lose nothyng at my ||hande with wyshynge I pray god that Cannius maye neuer lacke a good can or a stoope of wine or bere, wherof he had his name.

FINIS

\* \* \* \* \*

[C]The dialoge of thynges  
and names.



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A declaracion of the names.

Beatus, is he whiche hathe abun-  
dance of al thinges that is good,  
and is parfyte in all thynges commen-  
dable or prayseworthy or to be desyred  
of a good man. Somtyme it is ta-  
ken for fortunate, ryche, or  
noble. Bonifacius, fayre,  
full of fauor or well  
fauored.

[+]

\* \* \* \* \*

[C]The parsons names are Beatus and Bonifacius.

*Beatus.* God saue you mayster Boniface. *Bonifacius.* God saue you & god saue you  
agayne getle *Beatus.* But I wold god bothe we were such, and so in very dede as we be  
called by name, that is to say thou riche & I fayre. *Beatus.* Why do you thynke it  
nothyng worth at al to haue a goodly glorious name. *Bonifacius.* Truely me thynke it is  
of no valure or lytle good worthe, onles a man haue the thyng itselfe whiche is  
sygnified by the name. *Beatus.* Yea you maye well thynke your pleasure, but I am  
assured that the most part of all mortall men be of another mynde. *Bonifa.* It may wel be  
I do not denye that they are mortal, but suerly I do not byleue that they are me, which  
are so beastly mynded. *Bea.* Yes good syr and they be men to laye ||your lyfe, onlesse  
ye thynke camels and asses do walke about vnder the fygure and forme of men. *Boni.*  
Mary I can soner beleue that then that they be men whiche esteme and passe more  
vpon the name, then the thyng. *Bea.* I graunte in certayne kyndes of thinges moost  
men had rather haue the thyng then the name, but in many thynges it is otherwyse and  
cleane cotrary. *Bo.* I can not well tell what ye meane by that. *Bea.* And yet the example  
of this matter is apparant or sufficiently declared in vs two. Thou arte called Bonifacius  
and thou hast in dede the thyng wherby thou bearest thy name. Yet if there were no  
other remedy but eyther thou must lacke the one or the other, whether had you rather  
haue a fowle and deformed face or elles for Boniface be called Maleface or horner?  
*Boni.* Beleue me I had rather be called fowle Thersites then haue a monstrous or a  
deformyed face, whether I haue a good face or no ||I can not tell. *Bea.* And euen so had  
I for yf I were ryche and there were no remedy but that I must eyther forgoo my  
rychesse, or my name I had rather be called Irus whiche was a poore beggers name  
then lacke my ryches. *Boni.* I agree to you for asmoch as ye speake the trouthe, and as  
you thynke. *Bea.* Iudge all them to be of the same mynde that I am of whiche are indued  
with helthe or other commodities and qualities appartaynyng to the body. *Boni.* That is  
very trewe. *Bea.* Yea but I praye the cosyder and marke howe many men we se whiche  
had rather haue the name of a lerned and a holy man, then to be well lerned, vertuous,



& holy in dede. *Boni*. I knowe a good sorte of suche men for my part. *Bea*. Tell me thy fatasie I pray the do not suche men passe more vpon the name then



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the thinge? *Boni*. Methynke thy do. *Bea*. Yf we had a logician here whiche could well and clarkelie defyne what were a kynge, what a bysshoppe, ||what a magistrate, what a philosopher is, padueture we shuld find som amog these iolly felowes whiche had rather haue the name then the thyng. *Boni*. Surely & so thynke I. Yf he be a kinge whiche by lawe and equyte regardes more the commoditie of his people then his owne lucre/yf he be a bisshop which alwayes is careful for the lordes flocke comytted to his pastorall charge/yf he be a magistrate which frankelie and of good wyll dothe make prouysyon, and dothe all thinge for the comyn welthes sake/and yf he be a phylosopher whiche passynge not vpon the goodes of this worlde, only geueth hym selfe to attayn to a good mynde, and to leade a vertuous lyfe. *Bea*. Lo thus ye may perseyue what a nombre of semblable exaples ye may collecte & gether. *Boni*. Undouted a great sorte. *Bea*. But I pray the tel me wyll you saye that all these are no men. *Boni*. Nay I feare rather lest in so sayenge it shulde cost vs our lyues, and ||so myght we our selues shortelye be no men. *Bea*. Yf man be a resonable creature, howe ferre dyffers this from all good reason, that in comodities apertayning to the body (for so they deserue rather to be called then goodnes) and in outwarde gyftes whiche dame fortune geues and takes awaye at her pleasure, we had rather haue the thyng then the name, and in the true and only goodnes of the mynd we passe more vpon the name then the thyng. *Boni*. So god helpe me it is a corrupte and a preposterours iudgement, yf a man marke and consyder it wel. *Bea*. The selfe same reason is in contrarie thinges. *Boni*. I wolde gladly knowe what ye meane by that. *Bea*. We maye iudge lykewyse the same of the names of thynges to be eschued, and incommodites which was spoken of thynges to be diffyred and comodites. *Boni*. Nowe I haue considered the thynges well, it apereth to be euen so as ye saye in dede. \_\_Bea.\_\_ It shulde be ||more feared of a good prynce to be a tyraunt in dede then to haue the name of a tyraunt. And yf an euyll bysshop be a thefe and a robber, then we shulde not so greatly abhorre and hate the name as the thyng. *Boni*. Eyther so it is or so it shuld be. *Bea*. Nowe gather you of the rest as I haue done of the prynce & the bysshop. *Boni*. Me thynkes I vnderstande this gere wonderouse well. *Bea*. Do not all men hate the name of a fole or to be called a moome, a sotte, or an asse? *Boni*. Yeas as moche as they do any one thyng. *Bea*. And how saye you were not he a starke fole that wold fishe with a golde bayte, that wolde preferre or esteme glasse better then precious stones, or whiche loues his horse or dogges better then his wyfe and his chylde? *Boni*. He were as wyse as waltoms calfe, or madder then iacke of Redyng. *Bea*. And be not they as wyse whiche not assygned, chosen, nor yet



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ones appoynted by the magistrates, but vpon ||theyr owne heed aduenture to runne to the warres for hoope of a lytle gayne, ieoperdyng theyr bodyes and daungeryng theyr soules? Or howe wyse be they which busie the selfe to get, gleyne, and reepe to gyther, goodes and ryches when they haue a mynde destitute and lackyng all goodness? Are not they also euen as wyse that go gorgyously apparylled, and buyldes goodly sumptuous houses, when theyr myndes are not regarded but neglect fylthye and with all kynde of vyce fowle corrupted? And how wyse are they whiche are carefull diligent and busie, about the helthe of theyr body neglectyng and not myndyng at all theyr soule, in daunger of so many deedly synnes? And fynally to conlude howe wyse be they whiche for a lytle shorte transytorye pleasure of this lyfe deserue euerlastyng tormentes and punyshementes? *Boni.* Euen reason forseth me to graunt that they are more then fratyke and folyshe. *Bea.* Yea ||but althoughe all the whole worlde be full of suche fooles, a man can scaselye fynde one whiche can abyde the name of a foole, and yet they deserue to be called so for asmoche as they hate not the thyng. *Boni.* Suerly it is euen so as ye seye. *Bea.* Ye knowe also howe the names of a lyar and a thefe are abhorred and hated of all men. *Boni.* They are spyteful and odious names, and abhorred of all men, and not withe out good cause why. *Bea.* I graunte that, but althoughe to commyt adulterie be a more wycked synne then thefte yet for al that some men reioyse and shewe them selfe glad of that name, whiche wolde be redy by and by to drawe theyr swerdes and fyghte withe a man that wolde or durst call them theues. *Boni.* It is true there are many wolde take it euyl as you saye in dede. *Bea.* And nowe it is commyn to that poynt that thoughe there are many vnthryftes and spedals whiche consume theyr substaunce at the ||wyne and vpon harlottes, and yet so wyllyng to continewe openly that all the worlde wonders at them, yet they wyl be offended and take peper in the noose yf a man shulde call them ruffyans or baudy knaues. *Boni.* Suche fellowes thynke they deserue prayse for the thyng, and yet for all that they can not abyde the name dewe to the thinge whiche they deserue. *Bea.* There is scarslye any name amonges vs more intollerable or worse can be abydden then to be called a lyar or a lyeng fellowe. *Boni.* I haue knowen some or this whiche haue kylled men for suche a spytefull worde as that is. *Bea.* Yea yea but wolde god suche hasty fellowes dyd as well abhorre the thinge and hate lienge as well as to be called lyers, was it neuer thy chauce to be dysceyued of any man whiche borowinge mony of the appoyntyng the a certayne daye to repaye the sayd money and so performyd not his appoyntment nor kept his day? ||\_Boni.\_ Yeas many tymes (god knoweth) and yet hath he sworne many a greuouse othe and that not one tyme but many tymes. *Bea.* Peraduenture



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he wolde haue ben so honest as to haue payed it and yf he had had wherwith. *Boni.* Naye that is not so for he was able inoughe, but as he thought it better neuer to paye his dettes. *Bea.* And what call you this in englyshe, is it not playne lyenge? *Boni.* Yes as playne as Dunstable way, there can not be a lowder lye then this is. *Bea.* Durste you be so bolde to pulle one of these good detters of yours by the sleue and saye thus to hym, why hast thou dysceyued me so many tymes and broken promyse with me, or to talke to hym in playne englyshe, why doest thou make me so many lyes? *Boni.* Why no syr by my trouthe durst I not, excepte I were mynded before to chauge halfe a dosen drye blowes with hym. *Bea.* Dothe not masons Brekelayers, Carpenters, Smylthes, Goldsmithes, Taylours, disceyue and disapoynt vs after the lyke maner daylye promysynge to do youre worke suche a daye and suche a daye without any fayle, or further delaye, and yet for all that they parforme not theyr promesse althoughe it stande the neuer somoche vpon hande, or that thou shuldest take neuer so moche profyte by it. *Boni.* This is a wonderous and strange vnshamefast knauerye of all that euer I hard of. But and ye speake of breakers of promyse then ye maye reken amongst them lawyers and attorneys at the lawe, which wyl not stycke to promyse or beare you in hande that they wyll be diligent and earnest in the furtherauce and spedie expedicion of your sute. *Bea.* Reken quod he, naye ye maye reken fyve hundreth mennes names besyde these of sundrye faculties and occupacions whiche wyll promyse more by an ynch of a candle then they wyll performe by a whole pounce. *Boni.* Why and ye call this lyenge all the worlde is full of suche lyenge. *Bea.* Ye se also lykewyse that no man can abyde to be called thefe, and yet all men do not abhorre the thyng so greatly. *Boni.* I wolde gladly haue you to declare your mynde in this more playnlye & at large. *Bea.* What difference is there betwene hym whiche stealeth thy money forthe of thy cofer, and hym whiche forswearth and falsely denyeth that whiche thou comytted to his custodie to be reserued and safely kept for thy vse only, or to suche tyme as thou arte mynded to call for it agayne. *Boni.* There is as they say neyther barrell better hearing, but that in my iudgement he is the falser knaue of the twayne whiche robbes a man that puttes his confidence and trust in hym. *Bea.* yea but howe fewe men are there nowe adayes luynghe whiche are contente to restore agayne that whiche they were put in truste to kepe, or yf they deluer it agayne it is so dymnysshed, gelded, nypped, and pynched, that it is not delyuered whollye, but some thinge cleues in theyr fyngers, that the prouerbe may haue place where the horse walloweth there lyeth some heares. *Boni.* I thynke but a fewe that dothe otherwyse. *Bea.* And yet for all that there is none of al these that ca abyde it ones to be called thefe,



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and yet forsothe they hate not the thing so greatly. *Boni.* That is as trewe as the gossell. *Bea.* Consyder me nowe and marke I beseche the howe the goodes of orphanes, pupylls, wardes, and fatherlesse chyldren be comunely ordered and vsed, how wylls and testaments be executed and performed, how legacyes and bequethes be comunely payde, Naye howe moche cleueth and hangeth fast in the fyngers of the executors or with them that mynyster and intermedle with the goodes of the testatours. *Boni.* Many tymes they retayne and kepe in theyr handes all togy||ther. *Bea.* Yea they loue to playe the thefe well inoughe, but they loue nothyng worse then to here of it. *Boni.* That is very trewe. *Bea.* Howe lytle dyffers he from a thefe whiche boroweth money of one and other and so runneth in dette, with this intent and purpose that yf he maye escape so or fynde suche a crafty colour or a subtyle shyft, he intendeth neuer to paye that he oweth. *Boni.* Paraduenture he maye be called warer or more craftier the a thefe is in dede but no poynt better, for it is hard chosyng of a better where there is neuer a good of them bothe. *Bea.* yea but althoughe there be in euery place a great nombre of such makeshyftes and slypper marchauntes yet the starkest knaue of the all can not abyde to be called thefe. *Boni.* God onely knoweth euery manes hart and mynd, and therefore they are called of vs men that are runne in dette or fer behynde the hande, but not theues for that soun||deth vnswetely and lyke a playne song note. *Bea.* What skyllys it howe they be called amoge men yf they be theues afore god. And where you say that god onely knoweth euery mannes hart and mynde, euen so euery man knoweth his owne mynde, whether in his wordes & doynge he entende fraude, couyn, dysceyte, and theftes or no. But what say ye by hym whiche when he oweth more then he is worthe, wyll not stycke to lashe prodygallye and set the cocke vpon the hoope, and yet yf he haue any money at all lefte to spende that a waye vnthryftely, and when he hathe played the parte of a knauyshe spendall in one cytie deludinge and disceyuyng his creditours, ronnes out of this countre and getteth hym to some other good towne, and there sekyng for straugers and newe acquayntauce whom he may lykewyse begyle, yea and playeth many suche lyke partes and shameful shyftes. I praye the tell me dothe not suche a ||greke declare euydentlye by his crafty dealyng and false demeanour, what mynde is he of? *Boni.* yes suerly as euydentlye as can be possible. But yet suche felowes are wonte to colour and cloke theyr doynge vnder a craftie pretence. *Bea.* With what I beseche the? *Boni.* They saye to owe moche and to dyuers persones is comunely vsed of great men, yea and of kynges also as well as of them, and therefore they that intende to be of that disposycyon wyll beare out to the harde hedge the porte of a gentyman and soo they wyll be taken and estemed for gentilmen of the commune



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people. *Bea.* A gentylman and why or to what entent and purpose a gentylman? *Boni.* It is a straunge thyng to be spoken howe moche they thynke it is mete for a gentylman or a horseman to take vpon hym. *Bea.* By what equitye, authoritie, or lawes. *Boni.* By none other but by the selfe same lawes that the Admiralles of the ||sees challenge a proprietie in all suche thynges as are cast vpon the shoore by wracke, althoughe the ryghte owner come forthe and challenge his owne goodes. And also by the same lawes that some other men saye all is theirs what soeuer is founde aboute a thefe or a robber whe he is take. *Boni.* Such lawes as these are the arrantest theues that are myght make them selues. *Bea.* yea and ye may be sure they wold gladly with al theyr harts i their bodies make suche lawes yf they coulde mayntayne them or were of power to se them executed, and they myght haue some thyng to laye for theyr excuse if they could proclayme opyn warre before they fell to robbyng. *Boni.* But who gaue that pryuylege rather to a horseman then to a foteman, or more to a gentylman the to a good yeman. *Bea.* The fauoure that is shewed to men of warre, for by suche shyftes and thus they practyse before to be good men of warre that they ||maye be more redy & hansom to spoyle theyr enemyes when they shall encounter with the. *Boni.* I thynke Pyrrhus dyd so exerceyse and breake his yonge souldyers to the warres. *Bea.* No not Pyrrhus but the Lacedemonians dyd. *Boni.* Mary syr hange vp suche practysers or soldyers and theyr practysyng to. But howe come they by the name of horsemen or gentylmen that they vsurpe suche a great prerogatyue? *Bea.* Some of them are gentylme borne and it cometh to them by auncestrie, some bye it by the meanes of maystrys money, and other some gette it by certayne shyftes. *Boni.* But maye euery man that wyl and lyst come by it by shyftes? *Bea.* Yea why not, euery man maye be a gentylman nowe adayes very well and yf theyr condicions and maners be accordyng. *Boni.* What maners or condicions must suche one haue I beseche the? *Bea.* Yf he be occupied aboute no goodnesse, yf he can ruffle it ||and swashe in his satens and his silkes and go gorgiously apparelled, yf he can rattle in his rynges vpon the fyngers endes, yf he can playe the ruffyan and the horemonger and kepe a gaye hoore gallantlye, yf he be neuer well at ease but when he is playenge at the dyse, yf he be able to matche as moche an vnthryfte as hym selfe with a newe payre of cardes, yf he spende his tyme lyke an epycure vpon bankettinge, sumptuous fare, and all kynde of pleasures, yf he talke of no rascalles nor beggars, but bragge, bost, face, brace, and crake of castelles, towers, and skyrmysshes, and yf all his talke be of the warres and bloody battels, and playe the parte of crackinge Thraso throughly, such gaye grekes, lusty brutes and ionkers may take vpon them to be at defyaunce withe whome they wyl and lyst, thoughte

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the gentyلمان haue neuer a fote of lande to lyue vpon. *Boni*. Call ye them horsmen.  
Mary syr suche horsemen are wel ||worthy to ryde vpo the gallowes, these are  
gentylmen of the lebet of all that euer I haue harde of. *Bea*. But yet there be not afewe  
suche in that parte of Germany called Nassen or Hessen.

FINIS

Traslated by Edmonde Becke  
And prynted at Cantorbury  
in saynt Paules parishe  
by John Mychell.  
[+]

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[Transcriber's note: The following typographical errors were corrected.

“soldyers cassocke, a payre of hoose all to cut and  
manglyd, may co||uer an euangelycall mynde.”

hoose was hoofe

“Poliphe. Naye I knowe hym whiche bereth a shepe  
vpon his heed, and a sore in his brest”

sore was fore

“orphanes, pupylls, wardes, and fatherlesse  
chyl dren be comunely ordered and vsed, how wylles”

comunely was comuueley ]