

Henry V

by William Shakespeare

Act 4, sc. 3 (line 98 - Verse)

King Henry V

I pray thee, bear my former answer back:

Bid them achieve me and then sell my bones.

Good God! why should they mock poor fellows thus?

The man that once did sell the lion's skin

While the beast lived, was killed with hunting him.

A many of our bodies shall no doubt

Find native graves; upon the which, I trust,

Shall witness live in brass of this day's work:

And those that leave their valiant bones in France,

Dying like men, though buried in your dunghills,

They shall be famed; for there the sun shall greet them,

And draw their honours reeking up to heaven;

Leaving their earthly parts to choke your clime,

The smell whereof shall breed a plague in France.

Mark then abounding valour in our English,

That being dead, like to the bullet's grazing,

Break out into a second course of mischief,

Killing in relapse of mortality.

Let me speak proudly: tell the constable

We are but warriors for the working-day;

Our gayness and our gilt are all besmirch'd

With rainy marching in the painful field;

There's not a piece of feather in our host--

Good argument, I hope, we will not fly--
And time hath worn us into slovenry:
But, by the mass, our hearts are in the trim;
And my poor soldiers tell me, yet ere night
They'll be in fresher robes, or they will pluck
The gay new coats o'er the French soldiers' heads
And turn them out of service. If they do this,--
As, if God please, they shall,--my ransom then
Will soon be levied. Herald, save thou thy labour;
Come thou no more for ransom, gentle herald:
They shall have none, I swear, but these my joints;
Which if they have as I will leave 'em them,
Shall yield them little, tell the constable.