

Henry VI Part 2 abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 7

Pleading

Situation: Richard Plantagenet, off in Ireland fighting the Irish on behalf of the English, orchestrates a rebellion in London, led by a Jack Cade. Cade's rebels capture Lord Say, an older man suffering from palsy. They torment him.

Bevis enters with Lord Say.

CADE: What canst thou answer to My Majesty for giving up of Normandy unto the Dauphin of France? Thou hast most traitorously corrupted the youth of the realm in erecting a grammar school. Thou hast caused printing to be used. Thou hast built a paper mill. It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a noun and a verb and such abominable words as no Christian ear can endure to hear.

SAY: What of that? You men of Kent----

DICK: What say you of Kent?

SAY: Nothing but this: good country, bad people.

CADE: Away with him.

SAY: Hear me but speak, and bear me where you will.

Say to Cade

In the Commentaries Caesar writ, Kent
Was termed the civil'st place his men were sent,
Where the country sweet, full of riches; where
The people liberal, active and wealthy,
Which makes me hope you men of Kent are fair.
I neither sold Maine nor lost Normandy.
I have always done justice with favors;
Gifts could never, but peoples' tears and pray'rs
Have moved me. My books helped clerks and won me
To the king. When did I choose not to bless
The king, the realm and you? Knowledge is the
Wing wherewith we fly to Heaven. Unless
You be possessed with the devil's spirit,
Harm not this one who served your benefit.

DICK: Why dost thou quiver, man?

SAY: The palsy, and not fear, provokes me.

CADE: Nay, he nods at us, as who should say, I'll be even with you. Take him away and behead him.