

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTHACHE
by Robert Burns



My curse upon your venom'd stang,
That shoots my tortur'd gums alang,
An thro my lug gies monie a twang,
Wi gnawing vengeance,
Tearing my nerves wi bitter pang,
Like racking engines!

A' down my beard the slavers trickle
I throw the wee stools o'er the mickle,
While round the fire the giglets keckle,
To see me loup,
An raving mad,
I wish a heckle
Were i' their doup!

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or colic squeezes,
Our neebors sympathise to ease us,
Wi pitying moan;
But thee - thou hell o a' diseases -
They mock our groan!

Of a' the numerous human dools,
Ill-hairsts, daft bargains, cutty stools,
Or worthy frien's laid i' the mools,
Sad sight to see!
The tricks o knaves, or fash o fools,
Thou bear'st the gree!

Whare'er that place be priests ca' Hell,
Where a' the tones o misery yell,
An ranked plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw,
Thou, Toothache, surely bear'st the bell,
Amang them a'!

O thou grim mischief-making chiel,
That gars the notes o discord squeel,
Till human kind aft dance a reel
In gore, a shoe-thick,
Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal
A townmond's toothache!

NOTES

stang = sting

lugs = ears

twang = twinge

slavers = saliva

keckle = cackle

loup = dance

heckle = heckling comb

neebors = neighbours

dools = woes

hairsts = harvests

dools = woes

mools = crumbling earth

fash = annoyance

bear'st the gree = takes the prize

raw = row

chiel = fellow

gars = makes

Gie = give

faes = foes

townmond's = twelve months

