**HERCULES**

 **by Arthur Gordon**

Hercules lies near the railway line,

 In a siding, quietly at rest,

 Gathering its’ mighty strength,

 For tomorrow to give its’ best.

 Daily it carries a heavy load,

 Down the well worn railway track

 Taking passengers from Paignton to Kingswear,

 Via the banks of the river Dart, and then back.

 Hercules is a triumph of engineering,

 It has enormous mechanical powers,

 Fuelled by water and coal,

 Over man and beast it towers.

 The footman on the footplate supplies coal,

 Into the boiler it rapidly burns,

 The driver and footman work tirelessly,

 To shovel coal they each take turns.

Working at the footplate,

 The team daily toil,

 To supply fuel and water for the engine,

 In the intense heat, grime and oil.

 Hercules is admired by many,

 A testament to Victorian skill,

 For train enthusiasts and visitors,

 It provides all with a thrill.

 As it works up a head of steam,

 To depart the railway station,

 Passengers click their cameras,

 And give it a standing ovation.

 Passengers who board the Victorian carriages,

 Then gaze out the windows of the train,

 At the gently flowing river Dart,

 And the passing fields of ripening grain.

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