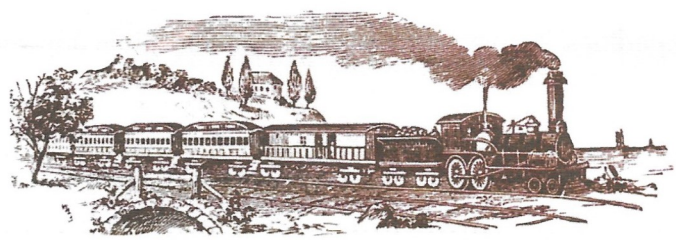
From a Railway Carriage

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh in 1850. When he wrote this poem in the 1880s, steam trains were a very popular form of transport. They enabled people to travel long distances at much greater speeds than ever before. This poem describes a journey on a steam train.

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill, and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone for ever!

Robert Louis Stevenson