A VINDICATION OF THE LIMERICK

With apologies to Caroline Wells

In an article in a magazine of a year or so ago, a writer showed conclusively to any thinking mind that the limerick was not only good poetry but the *best* poetical mode of expression. It is the object of this article to prove that it is the briefest and best method of expressing any thought.

Let us consider, for instance, the same limerick that this writer used for her argument.

There was a young lady from Niger,
Who smiled as she rode on a tiger,
They came back from the ride
With the lady inside,
And the smile on the face of the tiger.

Suppose some of our learned professors at Armour should try to express this same sentiment. How would Prof. Rochlitz of the Chemical Department attack it? From all previous experiences it would be something like this:

"We have given in contact a young lady and a tiger. From the nature of the two bodies, we might expect the reaction to take place immediately. But it does not. Instead, the maiden smiles and the tiger gallops. But in Niger the sun is very warm and the tiger perspires freely. Also, as the maiden finds herself far away from her home and friends, she becomes dissolved in tears. Having now both substances in solution, there are tiger ions and maiden ions present and the direct addition product is formed. The equation may be simply written thus: $M+T=FULL\ MEAL$. It is this result which probably causes the smile on the face of the tiger."

"Free-boady" MacFarland might (?) give it in the following manner:

"We have given the problem of the lady riding on the tiger. It is claimed that the lady is smiling. It is quite reasonable that the tiger should not smile— he is doing the work. It would be interesting to find the cause of the tiger eating the lady. Let us figure the bending moment on the tiger's back. We may consider the maiden as a concentrated load applied at the center.

"Let M be mass of maiden
"1 the length of tiger
From symmetry, $R_1=R_2$ & Sigmer $Y=O$, $R_1=M_2$
∴ $Mom=M\frac{1}{4}$ is a maximum.

"If the tiger is 10 feet long, which might be assumed, and the maiden weighs 200 pounds (which is quite the style in Niger, I am told),

therefore, $M_{max} = \dfrac{200 \times 10 \times 12}{4} = 6000$ in. lbs

"After the tiger has run some distance, this load might possibly seem excessive. He throws the maiden off, and as she looks 'good to him,' eats her. I should say, from the conditions, this causes the 2000 pounds to become practically uniformly distributed at 20 pounds per foot of tiger.

$$M_{max} = \frac{M1}{8} = \frac{200 \times 10 \times 12}{8} = 3000 \text{ in. lbs.}$$

"I hardly like to commit myself on that point, but this change is evidently quite sufficient to justify the tiger in smiling."

After a careful consideration of the above, it is quite clear that anyone would prefer a simple limerick to any such efforts. Would it not be advisable to have Dr. Colledge give our gentle Freshmen a "Short Course in Limericks"?