

APOLOGIA PRO VITA MEA
or
"The In-House Statistician"

(with apologies to W.S.Gilbert, author of the words of
the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas)

As in-house statistician I provide great erudition in
Most aspects of the Method Scientific;
In matters mathematical - and all things problematical -
My arguments are always just terrific!

Experiments and surveys are the meat of my existence -
I design them with the fewest of confoundings;
I get the data, sniff them over, find the boo-boos, cross things out,
And harmonise, interpret and expound things.

I randomise and replicate, and principles enunciate
For maximising what we gain from blocking;
Of treatments non-factorial my view may be censorial
(Neglect of interactions being shocking).

I understand equations, both the simple and quadratical;
I comprehend the gen'ral linear model;
The Normal distribution, the binomial and the Poisson
Are for me the merest element'ry doddle!

I'm fairly good at integral and differential calculus;
And conic sections, too, I've not forgotten:
Parabola, hyperbola, ellipse and simple circle - yes
They're useful curves that turn up fairly often.

The variance I analyse, in deviance I specialise;
I calculate the GLM predictions;
Significance I tolerate, but D*nc*n tests I really hate -
For reasons based on logic and convictions.

Regression, correlation, standard errors and residu'ls are
Some tools that I employ for my conclusions;
Then, simple prose report wherein the words do not distort or dim
The tale the reader wants without effusions.

I love our VAX computer and my friendly desk-top terminal -
I use them for my sums and for my writing:
My dearest pal is Genstat (tho' some swine has nicked my man-u-al);
And electronic mail I find exciting!

I'm not the very model of modern Major Gen-er-al;
I'm not the Lord High Bonze of Titipu; yet
My skills are so contemp'rary, my thoughts are so exemplary,
I really think I'm valu'ble - don't you, mate?

D.A.Preece

boo-boos: mistakes
doddle: very easy task
Titipu: town in the opera "The Mikado"