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BRIAN FORD, the Cardiff scientist, author and lecturer, tells me he has just been granted the rare privilege of honorary membership of the Society for Basic Irreproducible Research, a tongue-in-cheek organisation run by an international group of scientists.

The accolade is granted him because of his book *Nonscience* (pronounced "nonsense")—a satirical look at science and scientific research. Mind you, Mr. Ford insists the book is seriously-intentioned. "It highlights the disparity between the way we would like our experts to perform and the way we educate them," he points out.

An example of nonscience? The change-over to metrication, says Mr. Ford, who is 32. "The whole thing is absurd. Pointless. Did you know, for example, that a metric mattress will be 15 per cent. bigger than a non-metric bed? That means anyone wanting a new mattress will probably be forced to go out and buy a new bed."

Election to the spoof society—run by scientists in Tel Aviv and America—entitles Mr. Ford to a membership card, the number of which, appropriately, is the cube root of minus three. And the executive secretary is a gentleman by the name of Dr. X Perry Mental.

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