

At last, after many months of diogenean searching, we have stumbled upon the vast underlying difference between those two bitterly opposed factions of modern science, physics and engineering, and we hereby present to you the fruits of our untiring efforts in hopes of broadening your outlook upon this phenomenal situation.

The physicist claims that an inch, by definition, is that given length of thoriated tungsten wire, .0563 millimeters in diameter, which when heated in argon to a temperature of 1535.35 degrees centigrade, in an evacuated atmosphere of 5.54 centimeters of spectroscopically pure mercury, by a current of pi amperes, will emit 8.965×10^{10} electrons per second, the measurements being taken under standard conditions. A renowned professor has determined this length accurate to seventeen decimal places.

The plodding engineer on the other hand defines his inch as the distance between the first and second joints of his left forefinger.

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As you look through the humorous section of any engineering publication in this modern day and age you are very surprised indeed if your eyes don't run across the engineer's comical but threadworn tale of the misplaced decimal point. With this point in mind we will proceed to tell a slide rule joke to end all slide rule jokes.

It seems that Joe Bush, an enterprising young engineer, after several months of experimenting and painstaking labor, had perfected what he considered to be a perfect automobile. At last he was to harvest the reward of his masterful effort. The day of the first trial had come. To Joe's great astonishment and amazement, as the power was turned on, the car, instead of performing its normal function proceeded to turn handsprings and to set upon a neighboring pile of potatoes, peeling them with great proficiency to the accompaniment of a noise that sounded like a regiment of skeletons doing a tap dance on a tin roof during a hail storm. When the chaos had finally spent itself and normal living conditions once more set in, peering over the edge of his slipstick, Joe was heard to mutter something about a decimal point.

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