1.12 For low-speed (laminar) flow in a tube of radius r_o, the velocity u takes the form

$$u = B\frac{\Delta p}{\mu}\left(r_o^2 - r^2\right)$$

where μ is viscosity and Δp the pressure drop. What are the dimensions of B?

Solution: Using Table 1-2, write this equation in dimensional form:

$$\{u\} = \{B\}\frac{\{\Delta p\}}{\{\mu\}}\{\mathbf{r}^2\}, \quad \text{or:} \quad \left\{\frac{L}{T}\right\} = \{B?\}\frac{\{M/LT^2\}}{\{M/LT\}}\{L^2\} = \{B?\}\left\{\frac{L^2}{T}\right\},$$

$$\text{or:} \quad \mathbf{\{B\} = \{L^{-1}\}} \quad \textit{Ans.}$$

The parameter B must have dimensions of inverse length. In fact, B is not a constant, it hides one of the variables in pipe flow. The proper form of the pipe flow relation is

$$u = C\frac{\Delta p}{L\mu}\left(r_o^2 - r^2\right)$$

where L is the *length of the pipe* and C is a dimensionless constant which has the theoretical laminar-flow value of (1/4)—see Sect. 6.4.