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Highly Powerful Numbers .

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1. Introduction and Notation. Using the nomenclature of S. Golomb [5] , a natural number  $n > 1$  is said to be powerful if in its standard prime power decomposition, the exponents of the prime factors of  $n$  are all greater than unity.

Let us write throughout for  $n > 1$  ,

$$(1.1) \quad n = p_1^{\alpha_1} p_2^{\alpha_2} \dots p_k^{\alpha_k} ,$$

where  $p_1, p_2, \dots, p_k$  are distinct prime factor of  $n$  in increasing order of magnitude. Thus  $n$  is powerful if and only if

$$\alpha_i \geq 2 \quad (i = 1, 2, \dots, k) .$$

In addition, we regard 1 as a powerful number. Every powerful number has the unique representation  $a^2 b^3$  where  $a, b$  are integers and  $b$  is square-free. The number of such numbers not exceeding  $x$  is  $\{\zeta(3/2)/\zeta(3)\}\sqrt{x}$  (see [5]).

It follows that the asymptotic density of powerful numbers is zero.

In this paper, we introduce what we call "highly powerful numbers" and study some of their properties. We hope to continue our investigations on this subject in a later paper. We conclude this paper with a table of all highly powerful numbers not exceeding  $10^{27}$  . There are 288 such numbers upto two billion. Their asymptotic density is zero, of course, since they are a subset of the set of powerful numbers.

1.2. Definition. For every natural number  $n \geq 1$  we define  $\delta(1) = 1$  and for  $n > 1$  given by (1.1) ,

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$$\delta(n) = \alpha_1 \alpha_2 \dots \alpha_k .$$

1.3 Definition A natural number  $n > 1$  is called highly powerful whenever

$$\delta(n) > \delta(m)$$

for all natural numbers  $m < n$  .

It is immediate that a highly powerful number is itself powerful.

1.4 Definition The core  $\gamma(n)$  of  $n$  given by (1.1) is given by

$$\gamma(n) = p_1 p_2 \dots p_k .$$

Also,  $\gamma(1) = 1$  .

1.5 Definition A divisor  $d$  of  $n > 1$  is said to be a coreful divisor of  $n$  if  $d|n$  and  $\gamma(n)|d$  . Also 1 is taken as a coreful divisor of 1 .

We see that the number of coreful divisors of  $n$  equals  $\delta(n)$  . Hence we have

1.6. Theorem A number  $n > 1$  is highly powerful if and only if it has more coreful divisors than any natural number  $m$  less than itself.

In view of this theorem, highly powerful numbers may also be called "highly coreful numbers".

If  $n$  is highly powerful, then clearly we have  $\delta(n) < \delta(2n)$  ; hence it follows that there is at least one highly powerful number in the interval  $(n, 2n]$  . Thus the number of highly powerful numbers is infinite.

In all that follows,  $a_1, a_2, \dots, a_k, \dots$  denote the sequence of highly

powerful (h.p. for brevity) numbers. We write

$$q_1 = 2, q_2 = 3, \dots, q_k, \dots$$

for the sequence of primes. We also use the standard notation

$$(1.7) \quad a_i = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} 5^{\alpha_3} \dots q_k^{\alpha_k}$$

for the general form of a highly powerful number. It is easy to see that

$$\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \alpha_3 \geq \dots \geq \alpha_k > 1$$

Throughout,  $[x]$  denotes as usual the largest integer not exceeding  $x$ .

1.9 Remark The definition of a h.p. number and its structure given by (1.8) are reminiscent of those for highly composite numbers introduced by Ramanujan [9] and studied by him, Erdős [2] and others. However there are several differences in the structural properties of h.p. numbers and highly composite numbers, revealed by the results to follow.

It may be recalled here that Pillai [7,8] generalized highly composite numbers in two directions, while Alaoglu and Erdős [1] introduced the concept of highly abundant and collosally abundant numbers and studied some of their properties.

2. Some properties of highly powerful numbers. The following results throw some light on the structure of h.p. numbers.

2.1 Theorem Every prime divides some h.p. number.

Proof. Let  $q_{k+1}$  be the smallest prime that does not divide any h.p. number.

Then every h.p. number  $a_\ell$  has the form

$$a_\ell = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} \dots q_k^{\alpha_k}, \alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \dots$$

Since the number of h.p. numbers is infinite, we choose  $\ell$  so large that

$$(2.2) \quad 2^{[\alpha_1/2]} > q_{k+1}^2,$$

Then the number  $n$  given by

$$(2.3) \quad n = 2^{[(\alpha_1+1)/2]} 3^{\alpha_2} \dots q_k^{\alpha_k} q_{k+1}^2$$

satisfies the relation

$$(2.4) \quad n = \frac{a_\ell}{2^{[\alpha_1/2]}} q_{k+1}^2$$

on utilizing the relation  $\alpha_1 = [\alpha_1/2] + [(\alpha_1+1)/2]$  for all positive integers  $\alpha_1$ .

Hence, using (1.11) we get

$$(2.5) \quad n < a_\ell.$$

$$(2.6) \quad \delta(n) = \frac{[(\alpha_1+1)/2]\delta(a_\ell)}{\alpha_1} \geq \delta(a_\ell).$$

This contradicts that  $a_\ell$  is a h.p. number in view of (2.5), and the theorem follows.

2.7 Theorem For any h.p. numbers  $a_\ell$  given by (1.7) we have

$$(2.8) \quad q_i^{[\alpha_i/2]} < q_{k+1}^2 \quad (1 \leq i \leq k)$$

Proof We proceed as in the proof of the last theorem. If for any  $i$  ( $1 \leq i \leq k$ ),

(2.8) is false, take the number  $n$  given by

$$n = 2 \frac{a_2}{q_i^{[\alpha_i/2]}} q_{k+1}^2$$

Then,  $n < a_2$ , since in (2.8) equality of both members is not possible, being distinct prime powers. Also,

$$\delta(n) = 2^{[(\alpha_i+1)/2]} \delta(a_2)/\alpha_i \geq \delta(a_2),$$

constituting a contradiction that  $a_2$  is h.p.

2.9 Corollary  $\alpha_k \leq 5$ , for  $a_2 > 2^7$ .

Proof If  $\alpha_i \geq 6$ , then the inequality (2.8) would be false for  $q_i^3 > q_{i+1}^2$  for  $i \geq 2$ .

2.10 Corollary:  $\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} k = \infty$ .

2.11 Theorem In any h.p. number  $a_2$ , at most one exponent in the prime power decomposition is 2, that is,  $\alpha_i > 2$  for all  $i < k$  in the notation (1.7).

Proof. If  $p^2$  and  $q^2$  occur as factors of a h.p. number  $a$ , where  $p, q$  are primes and  $p < q$ , then take the number  $\hat{a}$  obtained from  $a$  by replacing the product  $p^2 q^2$  occurring in  $a$  by  $p^4$ . Then  $\hat{a} < a$ , but  $\delta(a) = \delta(\hat{a})$ , a contradiction that  $a$  is h.p.

2.12 Theorem  $\lim_{i \rightarrow \infty} \alpha_i = \infty$  ( $i = 1, 2, \dots$ ).

Proof Suppose the theorem is false. Then for some particular  $i$ , there exists an infinite subsequence of h.p. numbers, say,  $\bar{a}_1, \bar{a}_2, \dots$ , for which  $\alpha_i$ 's are bounded by  $\beta$ , say (here  $\alpha_i$  denotes the power of the  $i$ th prime in the canonical expansion of  $\bar{a}_1, \bar{a}_2, \dots$ ;  $\alpha_i$ , of course varies with each member of this sequence).

Choose  $q_k$  so that  $q_i^{\beta^2} < q_k^2$ . By corollary 2.10, we can find a  $\bar{a}_2$  so that  $q_k | \bar{a}_2$ . Consider the number  $n$  given by

$$(2.13) \quad n = (\bar{a}_2 q_i^{\beta^2}) / (q_k^{\alpha_k} q_i^{\alpha_i})$$

Then

$$\delta(n) = \delta(\bar{a}_2) \beta^2 / (\alpha_i \alpha_k) \geq \delta(\bar{a}_2),$$

since  $\beta^2 \geq \alpha_i \alpha_k$ . But  $n < \bar{a}_2$ . Hence this contradicts that  $\bar{a}_2$  is a h.p. number, and the theorem follows.

2.14 Theorem Let  $a_2$  be a h.p. number with  $\alpha_k = 2$ , say

$$(2.15) \quad a_2 = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} \dots q_k^2,$$

and  $i$  ( $1 \leq i \leq k-1$ ) be fixed. Let  $r = r(i)$  be the positive integer given by

$$(2.16) \quad r = \left[ \frac{\log q_k}{\log q_i} \right] + 1.$$

Then

$$(2.17) \quad q_i^{\alpha_i} > q_k^2$$

and

$$(2.18) \quad \alpha_i < 3r$$

Remark By (2.16) we have

$$(2.19) \quad q_i^{r-1} < q_k < q_i^r .$$

Proof of the theorem. (a) Assume

$$(2.20) \quad q_i^{\alpha_i} < q_k^2 .$$

Let  $\hat{a}$  be given by

$$\hat{a} = a_2 q_i^{\alpha_i} / q_k^2$$

Then  $\hat{a} < a_2$  and also

$$\delta(\hat{a}) = \delta(a_2) \frac{2}{2} = \delta(a_2)$$

But this is a contradiction, since  $a_2$  is a h.p. number. Hence (2.20) cannot hold.

(b) Assume

$$(2.21) \quad \alpha_i \geq 3r$$

Take the number  $\hat{a} = a_2 q_k / q_i^r$ .



Then  $\hat{a} < a_2$  on using (2.19) .

Also

$$\delta(\hat{a}) = (3/2) \left( \frac{\alpha_i - r}{\alpha_i} \right) \delta(a_2) ,$$

we claim

$$\frac{3}{2} \left( \frac{\alpha_i - r}{\alpha_i} \right) \geq 1 ,$$

that is

$$3\alpha_i - 3r \geq 2\alpha_i ,$$

that is

$$\alpha_i \geq 3r ,$$

which is what we assume. Thus  $\delta(\hat{a}) \geq \delta(a_2)$  , leading again to a contradiction.

Thus the theorem is established.

2.22 Remark Theorem 2.11 follows immediately from the above result, specifically from (2.17) , since for (2.17) to hold  $\alpha_i$  should be at least 3 .

2.23 Theorem Let  $a_2$  given by (1.7) be a h.p. number. For each pair of primes  $q_i , q_j$  ( $1 \leq i < j \leq k$ ) let  $r = r(q_i, q_j)$  be defined by

$$r = \left[ \frac{\log q_j}{\log q_i} \right] + 1 .$$

Then we have

$$(2.24) \quad (\alpha_j - 1)(r-1) < \alpha_i < (\alpha_j + 1)r .$$

Remark.  $r$  is equivalently defined by

$$(2.25) \quad q_i^{r-1} < q_j < q_i^r .$$

Proof (a). Assume

$$(2.26) \quad \alpha_i \leq (\alpha_j - 1)(r-1)$$

Take  $\hat{a}$  given by

$$(2.27) \quad \hat{a} = a_2 q_i^{r-1} / q_j$$

Then

$$(2.28) \quad \hat{a} < a_2$$

by (2.25) .

$$\delta(\hat{a}) = \delta(a) \left( \frac{\alpha_i + r - 1}{\alpha_i} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j} \right)$$

we claim that

$$\left( \frac{\alpha_i + r - 1}{\alpha_i} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j} \right) \geq 1 .$$

This follows routinely from (2.26) . Thus  $\delta(\hat{a}) \geq \delta(a)$  , which together with (2.28) lead to a contradiction.

(b). Assume

$$(2.29) \quad \alpha_i \geq (\alpha_j + 1)r .$$

Let

$$\hat{a} = a_2 q_j / q_i^r .$$

Then, using (2.25) we have

$$(2.30) \quad \hat{a} < a_2$$

Also

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(\hat{a}) &= \delta(a_2) \left( \frac{\alpha_j + 1}{\alpha_j} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_i - r}{\alpha_i} \right) \\ &\geq \delta(a_2) \end{aligned}$$

by (2.30) . Hence we have a contradiction in view of (2.30) .

The theorem now follows.

2.31 Theorem If  $a_2$  given by (1.7) is a h.p. number, and if

$$(2.32) \quad \frac{q_{k+1}}{2^{[\alpha_1/9]/2}} < q_{j-1} < q_j < q_k ,$$

then  $\alpha_j = 3$  .

Proof. Assume  $\alpha_j > 3$ . Then  $\alpha_i \geq \alpha_j \geq 4$ . Consider

$$\hat{a} = \frac{q^{2k+1} a_2}{2^{[\alpha_1/9]} q_{j-1} q_j}$$

Then

$$\hat{a} < a_2 .$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(a) &= \delta(a_2) \left( \frac{\alpha_1 - [\alpha_1/9]}{\alpha_1} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_{j-1} - 1}{\alpha_{j-1}} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j} \right) 2 \\ &\geq \delta(a_2) \left( \frac{\alpha_1 - \alpha_1/9}{\alpha_1} \right) (3/4)^2 2 \\ &= \delta(a_2) . \end{aligned}$$

We used here the fact that since  $\alpha_{j-1}, \alpha_j$  are  $\geq 4$ ,  $\frac{\alpha_{j-1} - 1}{\alpha_{j-1}}$ ,  $\frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j}$  are  $\geq 3/4$ . Hence  $\delta(a) \geq \delta(a_2)$  while  $\hat{a} < a_2$ , a contradiction. Hence  $\alpha_j \leq 3$ .

But by theorem 2.11, not more than one exponent can be 2. Hence  $\alpha_j = 3$ .

**2.33 Corollary** For any fixed positive integer  $r$ ,  $3^r$  divides  $\delta(a_\ell)$  for sufficiently large  $\ell$ ; all h.p. numbers after a stage have last exponents a string of 3's (possibly ending with a single 2).

Proof: This follows from Theorem 2.31, Theorem 2.12 and the prime number theorem.

**3. Estimates for  $(a_{\ell+1} - a_\ell)$  and  $\delta(a_{\ell+1}) - \delta(a_\ell)$ .**

**3.1 Lemma.** Let  $a_\ell$  be the  $\ell$ th highly powerful number, given by (1.7). For any fixed positive  $s$ , we have

$$\frac{\alpha_1}{(\delta(a_2))^{1/s}} = O(1) \quad (\ell \rightarrow \infty) .$$

Proof. By (2.13) we have

$$\alpha_1 \rightarrow \infty \quad \text{as } \ell \rightarrow \infty .$$

Now by the prime number theorems (or Chebychev inequality) ,  $q_k = O(k \log k)$  .

Also, (2.16) and (2.18) give

$$\alpha_1 < 3[\log q_k / \log 2] + 1 = O(\log k)$$

But since for each  $i$  ,  $\alpha_i \geq 2$  , we have

$$\delta(a_2) > 2^k .$$

Hence

$$\frac{\alpha_1}{(\delta(a_2))^{1/s}} < \frac{O(\log k)}{2^{k/s}} = O(1) \quad \text{as } \ell \rightarrow \infty .$$

(3.2) Lemma. (Dickman [4] ; Norton [6] pp.8-10). Let  $\psi(x, y)$  denote the number of positive integers  $\leq x$  with no prime factor bigger than  $y$  . Then for every  $\alpha \geq 1$  ,

$$(3.3) \quad \psi(x, x^{1/\alpha}) \sim \rho(\alpha)x$$

where  $\rho(\alpha)$  is defined by:

$\rho(\alpha) = 1$  ,  $0 \leq \alpha \leq 1$  ; and

$$\rho(\alpha) = \rho(N) - \int_N^\alpha V^{-1} \rho(V-1) dV \quad , \quad N < \alpha \leq N+1$$

( $N = 1, 2, \dots$ )

Furthermore (Chowla and Vijayaraghavan [3] ; Norton [6] p.10)

$$(3.4) \quad \lim_{\alpha \rightarrow \infty} \rho(\alpha) = 0 \quad .$$

3.5 Theorem  $\overline{\lim}_{\ell \rightarrow \infty} \delta(a_{\ell+1}) - \delta(a_\ell) = \infty$  .

Proof Choose any number  $d > 0$  . We shall show that

$$\delta(a_{\ell+1}) - \delta(a_\ell) > d$$

for some  $\ell$  . By lemma 3.2 , there is an  $\alpha > 0$  so that

$$\frac{\psi(x, x^{1/\alpha})}{x} \sim \frac{1}{d+1} \quad .$$

This follows from (3.3) , (3.4) and the continuity of  $\rho(\alpha)$  . Hence we can find  $N$  arbitrarily large so that for all  $n$  satisfying  $N \leq n \leq N+d-1$  ,  $n$  has a prime factor  $\geq (n)^{1/\alpha}$  .

Let  $S(N)$  denote the sequence

$$S(N) = \{N, N+1, \dots, N+d-1\} \quad .$$

Let  $a_\ell$  be the smallest h.p. number with  $\delta(a_\ell) \geq N$  . Then  $\delta(a_{\ell-1}) < N$  .

By lemma 3.1 , if  $N$  is sufficiently large,

$$\alpha_1 < (\delta(a_\ell))^{1/\alpha}$$

Since  $\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \dots \geq \alpha_k$ , we see that  $\alpha_1 \geq$  the largest prime factor of  $\delta(a_\ell)$ . Thus  $\delta(a_\ell)$  is not a member of  $S(N)$ , and so

$$\delta(a_\ell) - \delta(a_{\ell-1}) > d$$

This completes the proof.

3.6 Theorem  $\lim_{\ell \rightarrow \infty} (a_{\ell+1} - a_\ell) = \infty$

Proof. By Theorem 2.12,  $\alpha_1$  grows without bound. Therefore, for any fixed  $n$ , for  $\ell$  sufficiently large,  $\alpha_1 > n$  for  $a_\ell, a_{\ell+1}, \dots$ . Hence

$$2^n | a_\ell$$

$$2^n | a_{\ell+1}$$

Thus

$$2^n | (a_{\ell+1} - a_\ell)$$

It follows that  $a_{\ell+1} - a_\ell \geq 2^n$  and this implies the theorem.

3.7 Theorem  $\lim_{\ell \rightarrow \infty} \{\delta(a_{\ell+1}) - \delta(a_\ell)\} = \infty$

Proof. By corollary 2.33, for any given  $r$ , for sufficiently large  $\ell$ ,  $3^r | \delta(a_\ell)$ , and  $3^r | \delta(a_{\ell+1})$ . Thus

$$3^r | (\delta(a_{\ell+1}) - \delta(a_\ell))$$

and the theorem follows.

3.8 Remark The above theorem is a stronger result than theorem 3.5.

3.9 Theorem  $\lim_{l \rightarrow \infty} \frac{a_{l+1}}{a_l} = 1$ .

Proof. Suppose the theorem is false, then there exists an  $r > 1$  and an infinite sequence  $\bar{a}_1, \bar{a}_2, \dots$  (which is a subsequence of the sequence of h.p. numbers  $a_1, a_2, \dots$ ), satisfying

$$a_i^*/\bar{a}_i > r \quad (i = 1, 2, 3, \dots),$$

$a_i^*$  is the element immediately following  $\bar{a}_i$  in the sequence of all h.p. numbers.

Consider any element  $\bar{a}$  in the sequence  $\{\bar{a}_1, \bar{a}_2, \dots\}$ ; say,

$$a = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} \dots q_i^{\alpha_i} \dots q_j^{\alpha_j} \dots q_k^{\alpha_k}.$$

If  $q_j/q_i < r$ , we claim

$$(3.10) \quad \alpha_i - \alpha_j \leq 1$$

If this is not the case, let

$$\hat{a} = \bar{a}$$

$$\hat{a} = \bar{a} q_j / q_i$$



Then

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{a} &< r \bar{a} \\ \delta(\hat{a}) &= \frac{\alpha_i - 1}{\alpha_i} \frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j} \delta(\bar{a}) \\ &= \left(1 + \frac{\alpha_i - \alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_i \alpha_j}\right) \delta(\bar{a}) \end{aligned}$$

This is  $> \delta(\bar{a})$  on using  $\alpha_i - \alpha_j > 1$ .

Hence

$$\frac{a^*}{a} \leq \frac{\hat{a}}{a} < r,$$

contradicting the defining property of  $\bar{a}$ .

Thus our claim in (3.10) is established. By the prime number theorem, there is an infinite sequence of primes

$$p_1, p_2, p_3, \dots$$

so that

$$(3.11) \quad \frac{1+r}{2} < \frac{p_{i+1}}{p_i} < r \quad (i = 1, 2, \dots)$$

Clearly, (3.11) gives

$$p_{m+1} > \left(\frac{1+r}{2}\right)^m p_1 \quad (m = 1, 2, 3, \dots)$$

Furthermore, if

$$p_{m+1} < q_k,$$

(where  $q_k$  is the largest prime dividing  $\bar{a}$ ), and letting  $\alpha_i$  be the exponent of

$p_i$  in the canonical expansion of  $\bar{a}$ ,  $i \geq 1, 2, \dots, m+1$ ,

we get

$$\bar{a}_1 - \bar{a}_{m+1} = (\bar{a}_1 - \bar{a}_2) + (\bar{a}_2 - \bar{a}_3) + \dots + (\bar{a}_m - \bar{a}_{m+1})$$

By applying (3.10) to each term in the right-hand side of the above equation, we find

$$(3.12) \quad \bar{a}_1 - \bar{a}_{m+1} \leq m \quad .$$

Choose  $m$  so large that

$$\left(\frac{1+r}{2}\right)^m > p_1 \quad .$$

Thus

$$(3.13) \quad p_{m+1} > p_1^2$$

Choose  $\bar{a}$  so large that

$$(3.14) \quad \bar{a}_{m+1} \geq 3 \quad \text{while} \quad \bar{a}_1 > 2(m+1) \quad .$$

By theorem 2.23 ,

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{a}_1 &> (\bar{a}_{m+1} - 1) \left[ \frac{\log p_{m+1}}{\log p_1} \right] \\ &> (\bar{a}_{m+1} - 1) 2 \end{aligned}$$

on using (3.13) . But applying (3.12) to the above, we have

$$\bar{\alpha}_1 > 2(\bar{\alpha}_1 - m) - 2$$

This gives

$$\bar{\alpha}_1 < 2(m+1)$$

This contradicts our choice of  $\bar{a}$  as given by (3.14), and thus the theorem is established.

We shall next establish

3.15 Theorem  $\lim_{l \rightarrow \infty} \delta(a_{l+1})/\delta(a_l) = 1$  .

we first need the following

3.16 Lemma. Let

$$(3.17) \quad a_l = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} \dots q_k^{\alpha_k}$$

be a h.p. number; if

$$(3.18) \quad \alpha_i \geq (\alpha_i + 1)^2 \quad (i = 2, 3, \dots, k) \quad ,$$

then for all  $q_j$  ( $j = 1, 2, \dots, i-1$ ) satisfying

$$(3.19) \quad q_j > \frac{1}{2} q_i \quad (j = 1, 2, \dots, i-1)$$

we have

$$(3.20) \quad \alpha_j - \alpha_i \leq 1 \quad .$$

Proof. If  $\alpha_j - \alpha_i > 1$ , then define  $\hat{a}$  by

$$\hat{a} = (a_2 q_i) / 2q_j$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{a} &< a_2 ; \\ \delta(\hat{a}) &= \delta(a) \left( \frac{\alpha_1 - 1}{\alpha_1} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_j - 1}{\alpha_j} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha_i + 1}{\alpha_i} \right) \\ &= \delta(a_2) \left( \frac{A-1}{A} \right) \left( \frac{B-1}{B} \right) \left( \frac{C+1}{C} \right) , \text{ say} \end{aligned}$$

where  $A = \alpha_1$ ,  $B = \alpha_{i-1}$ ,  $C = \alpha_i$ , all  $\geq 2$ . We claim that

$$(3.21) \quad \left( \frac{A-1}{A} \right) \left( \frac{B-1}{B} \right) \left( \frac{C+1}{C} \right) \geq 1 .$$

This is the same as

$$(A-1)(B-1)(C+1) \geq ABC ;$$

equivalently,

$$(3.22) \quad A(B-C-1) \geq BC + B - C - 1 ,$$

or

$$A \geq \frac{BC}{B-C-1} + 1$$

(Note that  $B-C-1 > 1$ ).

Let

$$f(B) = \frac{BC}{B-C-1} .$$

Then

$f'(B) < 0$  and so  $f$  is decreasing.

$f$  is maximum when  $B = C+2$ , since  $B-C \geq 2$ . A simple calculation shows that

$$\text{Max } f(B) = C^2 + 2C$$

It is therefore sufficient to show that

$$A \geq C^2 + 2C + 1,$$

that is

$$\alpha_1 \geq (\alpha_i + 1)^2,$$

which establishes our claim (3.21).

Hence

$$\delta(\hat{a}) \geq \delta(a_2);$$

this is a contradiction of the definition of  $a_2$ . The lemma follows.

**3.23 Corollary.** For any fixed  $m \geq 3$  for  $a_2$  sufficiently large, there exist  $\alpha_i = m$  and  $\alpha_{i+1} = m - 1$ .

Proof. Choose  $a_2$  so large that

$$2^{(4m+1)^2} < p_{k-1}$$

and further that there is a prime  $p_i$  satisfying

$$p_i^{m-1} < p_{k-1} < p_i^m,$$

By theorem (2.23) , since  $\alpha_{k-1} = 3$

$$m < 2(m-1) < \alpha_i < 4m .$$

Applying lemma 3.16 , we see that  $\alpha_i , \alpha_{i+1} , \dots , \alpha_{k-1}$  is a non-increasing sequence of integers with  $(\alpha_j - \alpha_{j+1}) \leq 1$  ,  $\alpha_i > m$  ,  $\alpha_{k-1} = 3$  . Thus for some  $j$  ,  $\alpha_j = m$  and  $\alpha_{j+1} = m-1$  .

3.24 Theorem  $\lim_{\ell \rightarrow \infty} \delta(a_{\ell+1})/\delta(a_\ell) = 1$

Proof. If the theorem is false, there exists a  $d$  with  $0 < d < 1$  and an finite sequence  $a_{\ell_1} , a_{\ell_2} , \dots$  so that

$$(3.25) \quad \frac{\delta(a_{\ell_i+1})}{\delta(a_{\ell_i})} > 1 + d .$$

Choose  $m$  so large that

$$(3.26) \quad 4/(m^2+m) < d .$$

Choose  $a_{\ell_i+1}$  so large that there is an  $\alpha_j = m+1$  and  $\alpha_{j+1} = m$  .

Let

$$\hat{a} = a_{\ell_i+1} \binom{p_j/p_{j+1}}$$

Then

$$\hat{a} < a_{\ell_i+1}$$

Also

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(\hat{a}) &= \delta(a_{2_i+1}) \left( \frac{m+2}{m+1} \right) \left( \frac{m-1}{m} \right) \\ &= \left( 1 - \frac{2}{(m+1)m} \right) \delta(a_{2_i+1}) \\ &> \left( 1 - \frac{2}{m(m+1)} \right) (1+d) \delta(a_{2_i}) \end{aligned}$$

on using (3.25). Now using  $1 + d < 2$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(\hat{a}) &> \left( 1 + d - \frac{4}{m^2+m} \right) \delta(a_{2_i}) \\ &> \delta(a_{2_i}) \end{aligned}$$

recalling our choice of  $m$  given by (3.26). Thus if  $\hat{a} > a_{2_i}$ , then

$$a_{2_i+1} \leq \hat{a}$$

contradicting (3.27). If  $\hat{a} < a_{2_i}$ , we contradict the definition of  $a_{2_i}$ .  
(Note that  $\hat{a} \neq a_{2_i}$  because  $\delta(\hat{a}) \neq \delta(a_{2_i})$ ).

The theorem is thus established.

Remarks. Professors Carole Lacampagne and John Selfridge have informed the author that they have proved that there are only nineteen highly powerful numbers which end in the square of a prime. These are given below.

$2^2$	$2^9 \cdot 3^6 \cdot 5^4 \cdot 7^3 \cdot 11^2$
$2^4 \cdot 3^2$	$2^{11} \cdot 3^7 \cdot 5^4 \cdot 7^3 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^2$
$2^5 \cdot 3^2$	$2^{11} \cdot 3^6 \cdot 5^5 \cdot 7^4 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17^2$
$2^7 \cdot 3^3 \cdot 5^2$	$2^{10} \cdot 3^7 \cdot 5^5 \cdot 7^4 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17^2$
$2^6 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^2$	$2^{11} \cdot 3^7 \cdot 5^5 \cdot 7^4 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17^2$
$2^5 \cdot 3^5 \cdot 5^2$	$2^{11} \cdot 3^7 \cdot 5^5 \cdot 7^4 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17^3 \cdot 19^2$
$2^7 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^2$	$2^{11} \cdot 3^8 \cdot 5^5 \cdot 7^4 \cdot 11^3 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17^3 \cdot 19^2$
$2^8 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^2$	
$2^7 \cdot 3^5 \cdot 5^3 \cdot 7^2$	
$2^7 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^4 \cdot 7^2$	
$2^8 \cdot 3^5 \cdot 5^3 \cdot 7^2$	
$2^8 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^4 \cdot 7^2$	

Results concerning an estimate for the number of highly powerful numbers not exceeding  $x$ , and related matters will be dealt with in a separate paper.



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Algebra

Powerful Numbers  $a_1 = 2^{\alpha_1} 3^{\alpha_2} 5^{\alpha_3} 7^{\alpha_4} 11^{\alpha_5} \dots$  up to  $10^{27}$

$a_1$	$\delta(a_1)$	$\alpha_1$	$\alpha_2$	$\alpha_3$	$\alpha_4$	$\alpha_5$	...
4	2						
8	3	3					
16	4	4					
32	5	5					
64	6	6					
128	7	7					
144	8	4	2				
216	9	3	3				
288	10	5	2				
432	12	4	3				
864	15	5	3				
1296	16	4	4				
1728	18	6	3				
2592	20	5	4				
3456	21	7	3				
5184	24	6	4				
7776	25	5	5				
10368	28	7	4				
15552	30	6	5				
20736	32	8	4				
31104	35	7	5				
41472	36	9	4				
62208	40	2	5				
86400	42	7	3	2			
108000	45	5	3	3			
129600	48	6	4	2			
194400	50	5	5	2			
216000	54	6	3	3			
259200	56	7	4	2			
324000	60	5	4	3			
432000	63	7	3	3			
518400	64	8	4	2			
648000	72	6	4	3			
972000	75	5	5	3			
1296000	84	7	4	3			
1944000	90	6	5	3			
2592000	96	8	4	3			
3888000	105	7	5	3			
5184000	108	9	4	3			
6480000	112	7	4	4			
7776000	120	8	5	3			
11664000	126	7	6	3			
12960000	128	8	4	4			
15552000	135	9	5	3			
19440000	140	7	5	4			
23328000	144	8	6	3			
31104000	150	10	5	3			
38880000	160	8	5	4			

	46656000	162	9	6	3	
	58320000	168	7	6	4	
	77760000	180	9	5	4	
	116640000	192	8	6	4	
	155520000	200	10	5	4	
	190512000	210	7	5	3	2
	222264000	216	6	4	3	3
	311040000	220	11	5	4	
	317520000	224	7	4	4	2
	333396000	225	5	5	3	3
	381024000	240	8	5	3	2
	444528000	252	7	4	3	3
	635040000	256	8	4	4	2
	666792000	270	6	5	3	3
	889056000	288	8	4	3	3
1	333584000	315	7	5	3	3
1	778112000	324	9	4	3	3
2	222640000	336	7	4	4	3
2	667168000	360	8	5	3	3
4	000752000	378	7	6	3	3
4	445280000	384	8	4	4	3
5	334336000	405	9	5	3	3
6	667920000	420	7	5	4	3
8	001504000	432	8	6	3	3
10	668672000	450	10	5	3	3
13	335840000	480	8	5	4	3
16	003008000	486	9	6	3	3
20	003760000	504	7	6	4	3
26	671680000	540	9	5	4	3
40	007520000	576	8	6	4	3
53	343360000	600	10	5	4	3
80	015040000	648	9	6	4	3
106	686720000	660	11	5	4	3
120	022560000	672	8	7	4	3
133	358400000	675	9	5	5	3
160	030080000	720	10	6	4	3
240	045120000	756	9	7	4	3
280	052640000	768	8	6	4	4
320	060160000	792	11	6	4	3
373	403520000	800	10	5	4	4
400	075200000	810	9	6	5	3
480	090240000	840	10	7	4	3
560	105280000	864	9	6	4	4
746	807040000	880	11	5	4	4
800	150400000	900	10	6	5	3
960	180480000	924	11	7	4	3
1120	210560000	960	10	6	4	4
1600	300800000	990	11	6	5	3
1680	315840000	1008	9	7	4	4
2240	421120000	1056	11	6	4	4
2800	526400000	1080	9	6	5	4
3360	631680000	1120	10	7	4	4

4480	842240000	1152	12	6	4	4	
4800	902400000	1155	11	7	5	3	
5601	052800000	1200	10	6	5	4	
6721	263360000	1232	11	7	4	4	
8401	579200000	1260	9	7	5	4	
9681	819840000	1296	9	6	4	3	2
11202	105600000	1320	11	6	5	4	
13442	526720000	1344	12	7	4	4	
14200	002432000	1350	10	5	3	3	3
16803	158400000	1400	10	7	5	4	
17750	003040000	1440	8	5	4	3	3
21300	003648000	1458	9	6	3	3	3
26625	004560000	1512	7	6	4	3	3
33606	316800000	1540	11	7	5	4	
35500	006080000	1620	9	5	4	3	3
53250	009120000	1728	8	6	4	3	3
71000	012160000	1800	10	5	4	3	3
106500	018240000	1944	9	6	4	3	3
142000	024320000	1980	11	5	4	3	3
159750	027360000	2016	8	7	4	3	3
177500	030400000	2025	9	5	5	3	3
213000	036480000	2160	10	6	4	3	3
319500	054720000	2268	9	7	4	3	3
372750	063840000	2304	8	6	4	4	3
426000	072960000	2376	11	6	4	3	3
497000	085120000	2400	10	5	4	4	3
532500	091200000	2430	9	6	5	3	3
639000	109440000	2520	10	7	4	3	3
745500	127680000	2592	9	6	4	4	3
994000	170240000	2640	11	5	4	4	3
1065000	182400000	2700	10	6	5	3	3
1278000	218880000	2772	11	7	4	3	3
1491000	255360000	2880	10	6	4	4	3
2130000	364800000	2970	11	6	5	3	3
2236500	383040000	3024	9	7	4	4	3
2982000	510720000	3168	11	6	4	4	3
3727500	638400000	3240	9	6	5	4	3
4473000	766080000	3360	10	7	4	4	3
5964001	021440000	3456	12	6	4	4	3
6390001	094400000	3465	11	7	5	3	3
7455001	276800000	3600	10	6	5	4	3
8946001	532160000	3696	11	7	4	4	3
11182501	915200000	3780	9	7	5	4	3
13419002	298240000	3840	10	8	4	4	3
14910002	553600000	3960	11	6	5	4	3
17892003	064320000	4032	12	7	4	4	3
22365003	830400000	4200	10	7	5	4	3
26838004	596480000	4224	11	8	4	4	3
29820005	107200000	4320	12	6	5	4	3
35784006	128640000	4368	13	7	4	4	3
44730007	660800000	4620	11	7	5	4	3
59640010	214400000	4680	13	6	5	4	3

67095011	491200000	4800	10	8	5	4	3	
77993513	357760000	4860	9	5	4	3	3	3
89460015	321600000	5040	12	7	5	4	3	
116990270	036640000	5184	8	6	4	3	3	3
134190022	982400000	5280	11	8	5	4	3	
155987026	715520000	5400	10	5	4	3	3	3
178920030	643200000	5460	13	7	5	4	3	
215982036	990720000	5544	11	7	4	3	3	2
233980540	073280000	5832	9	6	4	3	3	3
311974053	431040000	5940	11	5	4	3	3	3
350970810	109920000	6048	8	7	4	3	3	3
389967566	788800000	6075	9	5	5	3	3	3
467961080	146560000	6480	10	6	4	3	3	3
701941620	219840000	6804	9	7	4	3	3	3
818931890	256480000	2912	8	6	4	4	3	3
935922160	293120000	7128	11	6	4	3	3	3
1 091909187	008640000	7200	10	5	4	4	3	3
1 169902700	366400000	7290	9	6	5	3	3	3
1 403883240	439680000	7560	10	7	4	3	3	3
1 637863780	512960000	7776	9	6	4	4	3	3
2 183818374	017280000	7920	11	5	4	4	3	3
2 339805400	732800000	8100	10	6	5	3	3	3
2 807766480	879360000	8316	11	7	4	3	3	3
3 275727561	025920000	8640	10	6	4	4	3	3
4 679610801	465600000	8910	11	6	5	3	3	3
4 913591341	538880000	9072	9	7	4	4	3	3
6 551455122	051840000	9504	11	6	4	4	3	3
8 189318902	564800000	9720	9	6	5	4	3	3
9 827182683	077760000	10080	10	7	4	4	3	3
13 102910244	103680000	10368	12	6	4	4	3	3
14 038832404	396800000	10395	11	7	5	3	3	3
16 378637805	129600000	10800	10	6	5	4	3	3
19 654365366	155520000	11088	11	7	4	4	3	3
24 567956707	694400000	11340	9	7	5	4	3	3
29 481548049	233280000	11520	10	8	4	4	3	3
32 757275610	259200000	11880	11	6	5	4	3	3
39 308730732	311040000	12096	12	7	4	4	3	3
49 135913415	388800000	12600	10	7	5	4	3	3
58 963096098	466560000	12672	11	8	4	4	3	3
65 514551220	518400000	12960	12	6	5	4	3	3
78 617461464	622080000	13104	13	7	4	4	3	3
98 271826830	777600000	13860	11	7	5	4	3	3
131 029102441	036800000	14040	13	6	5	4	3	3
147 407740246	166400000	14400	10	8	5	4	3	3
196 543653661	555200000	15120	12	7	5	4	3	3
294 815480492	332800000	15840	11	8	5	4	3	3
393 087307323	110400000	16380	13	7	5	4	3	3
491 359134153	888000000	16632	11	7	6	4	3	3
540 495047569	276800000	16800	10	7	5	4	4	3
589 630960984	665600000	17280	12	8	5	4	3	3
687 902787815	443200000	17325	11	7	5	5	3	3
786 174614646	220800000	17640	14	7	5	4	3	3

884	446441476	998400000	17820	11	9	5	4	3	3
982	718268307	776000000	18144	12	7	6	4	3	3
1080	990095138	553600000	18480	11	7	5	4	4	3
1179	261921969	331200000	18720	13	8	5	4	3	3
1375	805575630	886400000	18900	12	7	5	5	3	3
1474	077402461	664000000	19008	11	8	6	4	3	3
1621	485142707	830400000	19200	10	8	5	4	4	3
1768	892882953	996800000	19440	12	9	5	4	3	3
1965	436536615	552000000	19656	13	7	6	4	3	3
2063	708363446	329600000	19800	11	8	5	5	3	3
2161	980190277	107200000	20160	12	7	5	4	4	3
2751	611151261	772800000	20475	13	7	5	5	3	3
2948	154804923	328000000	20736	12	8	6	4	3	3
3242	970285415	660800000	21120	11	8	5	4	4	3
3930	873073231	104000000	21168	14	7	6	4	3	3
4127	416726892	659200000	21600	12	8	5	5	3	3
4323	960380554	214400000	21840	13	7	5	4	4	3
5404	950475692	768000000	22176	11	7	6	4	4	3
5896	309609846	656000000	22464	13	8	6	4	3	3
6485	940570831	321600000	23040	12	8	5	4	4	3
7566	930665969	875200000	23100	11	7	5	5	4	3
8046	824753660	172480000	23328	9	6	4	4	3	3
8254	833453785	318400000	23400	13	8	5	5	3	3
8647	920761108	428800000	23520	14	7	5	4	4	3
9466	852651364	908800000	23760	11	6	5	4	3	3
10809	900951385	536000000	24192	12	7	6	4	4	3
11495	463933800	246400000	24300	10	6	5	3	3	3
12971	881141662	643200000	24960	13	8	5	4	4	3
14200	278977047	363200000	25200	10	7	5	4	3	3
16093	649507320	344960000	25920	10	6	4	4	3	3
21619	801902771	072000000	26208	13	7	6	4	4	3
22700	791997909	625600000	26400	11	8	5	5	4	3
22990	927867600	492800000	26730	11	6	5	3	3	3
24140	474260980	517440000	27216	9	7	4	4	3	3
28400	557954094	726400000	27720	11	7	5	4	3	3
32187	299014640	689920000	28512	11	6	4	4	3	3
40234	123768300	862400000	29160	9	6	5	4	3	3
48280	948521961	034880000	30240	10	7	4	4	3	3
64374	598029281	379840000	31104	12	6	4	4	3	3
68972	783602801	478400000	31185	11	7	5	3	3	3
80468	247536601	724800000	32400	10	6	5	4	3	3
96561	897043922	069760000	33264	11	7	4	4	3	3
120702	371304902	587200000	34020	9	7	5	4	3	3
144842	845565883	104640000	34560	10	8	4	4	3	3
160936	495073203	449600000	35640	11	6	5	4	3	3
193123	794087844	139520000	36288	12	7	4	4	3	3
241404	742609805	174400000	37800	10	7	5	4	3	3
289685	691131766	209280000	38016	11	8	4	4	3	3
321872	990146406	899200000	38880	12	6	5	4	3	3
386247	588175688	279040000	39312	13	7	4	4	3	3
482809	485219610	348800000	41580	11	7	5	4	3	3
643745	980292813	798400000	42120	13	6	5	4	3	3

724214	227829415	523200000	43200	10	8	5	4	3	3	3
965618	970439220	697600000	45360	12	7	5	4	3	3	3
1448428	455658831	046400000	47520	11	8	5	4	3	3	3
1931237	940878441	395200000	49140	13	7	5	4	3	3	3
2414047	426098051	744000000	49896	11	7	6	4	3	3	3
2655452	168707856	918400000	50400	10	7	5	4	4	3	3
2896856	911317662	092800000	51840	12	8	5	4	3	3	3
3379666	396537272	441600000	51975	11	7	5	5	3	3	3
3862475	881756882	790400000	52920	14	7	5	4	3	3	3
4345285	366976493	139200000	53460	11	9	5	4	3	3	3
4828094	852196103	488000000	54432	12	7	6	4	3	3	3
5310904	337415713	836800000	55440	11	7	5	4	4	3	3
5793713	822635324	185600000	56160	13	8	5	4	3	3	3
6759332	793074544	883200000	56700	12	7	5	5	3	3	3
7242142	278294155	232000000	57024	11	8	6	4	3	3	3
7966356	506123570	755200000	57600	10	8	5	4	4	3	3
8690570	733952986	278400000	58320	12	9	5	4	3	3	3
9656189	704392206	976000000	58968	13	7	6	4	3	3	3
10138999	189611817	324800000	59400	11	8	5	5	3	3	3
10621808	674831427	673600000	60480	12	7	5	4	4	3	3
13518665	586149089	766400000	61425	13	7	5	5	3	3	3
14484284	556588310	464000000	62208	12	8	6	4	3	3	3
15932713	012247141	510400000	63360	11	8	5	4	4	3	3
19312379	408784413	952000000	63504	14	7	6	4	3	3	3
20277998	379223634	649600000	64800	12	8	5	5	3	3	3
21243617	349662855	347200000	65520	13	7	5	4	4	3	3
26554521	687078569	184000000	66528	11	7	6	4	4	3	3
28968569	113176620	928000000	67392	13	8	6	4	3	3	3
31865426	024494283	020800000	69120	12	8	5	4	4	3	3
37176330	361909996	857600000	69300	11	7	5	5	4	3	3
40555996	758447269	299200000	70200	13	8	5	5	3	3	3
42487234	699325710	694400000	70560	14	7	5	4	4	3	3
47798139	036741424	531200000	71280	11	9	5	4	4	3	3
53109043	374157138	368000000	72576	12	7	6	4	4	3	3
60833995	137670903	948800000	72900	12	9	5	5	3	3	3
63730852	048988566	041600000	74880	13	8	5	4	4	3	3
74352660	723819993	715200000	75600	12	7	5	5	4	3	3
79663565	061235707	552000000	76032	11	8	6	4	4	3	3
95596278	073482849	062400000	77760	12	9	5	4	4	3	3
106218086	748314276	736000000	78624	13	7	6	4	4	3	3
111528991	085729990	572800000	79200	11	8	5	5	4	3	3
127461704	097977132	083200000	80640	14	8	5	4	4	3	3
148705321	447639987	430400000	81900	13	7	5	5	4	3	3
159327130	122471415	104000000	82944	12	8	6	4	4	3	3
174294224	164279335	916800000	83160	11	7	5	4	3	3	2
191192556	146965698	124800000	84240	13	9	5	4	4	3	3
207125269	159212839	635200000	84480	11	8	5	4	4	4	3
212436173	496628553	472000000	84672	14	7	6	4	4	3	3
220772683	941420492	161280000	85536	11	6	4	4	3	3	3
223057982	171459981	145600000	86400	12	8	5	5	4	3	3
275965854	926775615	201600000	87480	9	6	5	4	3	3	3
297410642	895279974	860800000	88200	14	7	5	5	4	3	3

318654260	244942830	208000000	89856	13	8	6	4	4	3	3
331159025	912130738	241920000	90720	10	7	4	4	3	3	3
414250538	318425679	270400000	92160	12	8	5	4	4	4	3
441545367	882840984	322560000	93312	12	6	4	4	3	3	3
446115964	342919962	291200000	93600	13	8	5	5	4	3	3
522882672	492838007	750400000	95040	11	8	5	4	3	3	2
551931709	853551230	403200000	97200	10	6	5	4	3	3	3
662318051	824261476	483840000	99792	11	7	4	4	3	3	3
827897564	780326845	604800000	102060	9	7	5	4	3	3	3
993477077	736392214	725760000	103680	10	8	4	4	3	3	3

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