

Let  $n > 5$ .

Let  $\{p_1, p_2, \dots, p_k\}$  be the set of all primes  $\leq n$ ,  $2 = p_1 < p_2 < \dots < p_k$ .

Assume  $n! = p_1^{a_1} p_2^{a_2} \dots p_k^{a_k}$  is the prime factorization of  $n!$ .

By the definition of the Lambda function  $\lambda$ , we have

$$\lambda(n!) = \text{LCM}(\lambda(p_1^{a_1}), \lambda(p_2^{a_2}), \dots, \lambda(p_k^{a_k})) = \text{LCM}(2^{a_1-2}, (p_2-1)p_2^{a_2-1}, \dots, (p_k-1)p_k^{a_k-1})$$

By the definition of the LCM,  $\lambda(n!)$  = the product of the primes  $q$  that appear in the numbers  $(p_i-1)p_i^{a_i-1}$  with exponent the maximum of the exponents to which  $q$  appears in each of these numbers.

Clearly,  $q$  cannot be anything else but one of the primes  $2, p_2, p_3, \dots, p_k$ .

First, let  $q \neq 2$ , say  $q = p_i$ . It appears in the number  $(p_i-1)p_i^{a_i-1}$  with exponent  $a_i-1$ .

Can it appear in one of the other numbers  $(p_j-1)p_j^{a_j-1}$  with a higher exponent ?

If yes, it would be a factor of  $p_j-1$ . But,  $n!$  is divisible by the product of all the numbers  $p_j-1$ . The contribution of that product to the factor  $p_i^{a_i}$  is of course strictly less than  $p_i^{a_i}$ .

Thus,  $p_i$  cannot be in  $p_j-1$  with an exponent greater than  $a_i-1$ .

If  $q = 2$ , the same argument is valid, since we assumed  $n > 5$ . In that case, there are more even numbers than there are numbers of the form  $p_i-1$ , i.e : the highest power to which 2 enters in  $p_i-1$  can never exceed  $a_i-2$ .

Thus,  $\lambda(n!) = 2^{a_1-2} p_2^{a_2-1} \dots p_k^{a_k-1}$ , precisely Sebastian's statement.

Let's give an example :  $n = 10$ .

Then :  $10! = 2^8 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^2 \cdot 7$

Hence :  $\lambda(10!) = \text{LCM}(\lambda(2^8), \lambda(3^4), \lambda(5^2), \lambda(7)) = \text{LCM}(2^6, (3-1)3^3, (5-1)5, 7-1)$ .

$q = 3$  : the highest power of 3 in  $\lambda(10!)$  is 3 since 3 cannot enter in  $5-1$  or  $7-1$  with a higher power than 3.

$q = 5$  : the highest power of 5 in  $\lambda(10!)$  is 1 since 5 cannot enter in  $3-1$  or  $7-1$  with a higher power than 1.

$q = 7$  : the highest power of 7 in  $\lambda(10!)$  is 0 since 7 cannot enter in  $5-1$  or  $7-1$  with a higher power than 0.

$q = 2$  : the highest power of 2 in  $\lambda(10!)$  is 6 since 2 cannot enter in  $3-1, 5-1$  or  $7-1$  with a higher power than 6.

(the last reasoning would not be valid if  $n$  was equal to 5, therefore I excluded it in advance).

Thus, the value of  $\lambda(n!)$  is  $2^6 \cdot 3^3 \cdot 5$ .

Let's summarize this by saying that Sebastian's formula is valid because the  $a_i$  are big enough to ensure  $q^a$  not to divide  $p-1$  whenever  $p, q$  are primes  $\leq n$ .