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ART. XII.—Notes on Dhammapada, with Special Reference to the Question of Nirvāṇa. By R. C. Childers, late of the Ceylon Civil Service.

I have given in the following pages some of the results of a careful study of the text of Dhammapada, rendered necessary by the preparation of a Pāli Dictionary. In endeavouring to elucidate some of the obscure or difficult points of this important text, I have given prominence to a few passages enabling me to test the theory of Nirvāṇa which I propounded last year in the columns of a periodical. Verse 203. Jīvhaçchāparamā rogā, saṅkhārā paramā dukhā, Etam āvatā yathābhūtam nibbānam paramān sukham.

The sense of this verse is, "As hunger is worse than any disease, so existence is worse than any pain; to him who has realized this truth extinction is the greatest bliss." If any proof is wanted that the author of Dhammapada believed Nirvāṇa to be the annihilation of being, it is surely here. When he says in the same breath that existence is the acme of suffering, and that Nirvāṇa is consequently the highest bliss, it follows logically and inevitably that Nirvāṇa must be the cessation of existence. Nirvāṇa must here be taken as Anupadhiçeshanirvāṇa. Saṅkhārā (in the plural) is used almost in the sense of "organic life." The comment says, "the five Skandhas," which amounts very much to the same thing; for the Skandhas are the attribute of every organized being, however low in the scale of animal life. Compare the expression sabbe saṅkhatā-saṅkhata-dhammā, "all things organized and unorganized," or "all things animate and inanimate," which includes, of course, the whole realm of creation. I take this opportunity of re-stating the theory of Nirvāṇa which I published in the July and October numbers of Trübner's Record for 1870; and I may observe that my
theory meets, as far as I know, all the difficulties of the question, and holds good in every instance in which I have tested it.

Nirvāṇa means extinction or annihilation. It is the ultimate goal of Buddhism, the supreme reward of the highest spiritual development, the sumnum bonum to which the follower of Čākyamuni is taught to look. What, then, is this Nirvāṇa or extinction which is the reward of virtuous action? It is twofold—Upadhiśeshanirvāṇa, or the extinction of human passion; and Anupadhiśeshanirvāṇa, or the annihilation of being. There are eight progressive stages of sanctification, called the Four Paths and the Four Fruitions:¹ the last and highest of these stages is called Arhattvaphala, or “full fruition of final sanctification,” and this is Upadhiśeshanirvāṇa, or, as it is also called, Kleçaparinirvāṇa. Arhatship or Arhattvaphala is admittedly a state of the highest happiness and perfection, and its identity with Upadhiśeshanirvāṇa, or, as it is more generally called, simply Nirvāṇa, cannot be too strongly insisted upon, since it accounts for the frequency with which Nirvāṇa is spoken of as a state of bliss. This, then, is one of the Nirvāṇas, the other is Anupadhiśeshanirvāṇa or Skandhaparinirvāṇa,² which it is impossible to explain as anything but absolute annihilation. The Arhat, or being who has attained final sanctification,³ though wholly free from human passion, and possessed of superhuman faculties, is still a man, and liable, like all other men, to death. Nor is his life necessarily prolonged beyond that of his fellows; Čākyamuni himself, the Great Arhat, died at an age not exceeding the common lot of humanity. But the Arhat, alone of men, when he dies ceases to exist. The oil in the lamp of life is burnt out, the seed of existence is withered, he enters the vast portals of Nothingness and Void, and entering vanishes from creation,—he has attained to Skandhaparinirvāṇa, the annihilation of the elements of being. I have said that Nirvāṇa is twofold; but is it not also one? for Skandhaparinirvāṇa is

¹ In Pāli Cattāro Magga and Cattāri phalāni.
² Generally called simply Nirvāṇa.
³ Arhattvaphala or Kleçaparinirvāṇa.
the necessary complement of Kleçapariñirvāña, as the latter is of the former. Without Arhatship there can be no cessation of existence, just as there can be no Arhatship that does not terminate in extinction. Viewed, therefore, from a distance as it were, as the goal of the pious Buddhist, Nirvāña is one; it is a brief period of the highest bliss on earth, ending in eternal death. It may here be objected—Must not great confusion be created by using one and the same term for two things so different as “bliss” and “annihilation”? I reply that in reality there is no such confusion, since the context will readily determine whether, by the word Nirvāña, Upadhiçesha or Anupadhiçesha Nirvāña is intended. And in a vast proportion of instances the term embraces both Nirvāṇas. Thus in such a sentence as “Nirvāña is the reward of a virtuous life,” it is clear that both Nirvāṇas are meant, since they are inseparably connected, and the one involves the other as a necessary consequence. There are, however, occasions when one of the Nirvāṇas is distinctly alluded to, and then the context determines which of them is meant. Thus in verse 89 the word loko specifies Upadhiçeshanirvāña, while in the verse we have been considering Anupadhiçeshanirvāña is clearly indicated by the use of the word sañkhārā.

In conclusion I wish to add that the much contested word Pariñirvāña means “the attainment of Nirvāña,” or simply Nirvāña. Like Nirvāña it is twofold, Kleçapariñirvāña, “attainment of the extinction of human passion,” and Skandhapariñirvāña, “attainment of the annihilation of the elements of being.” When the Pariñirvāña of an Arhat is spoken of, it may be translated “death”; for in the case of an Arhat, death and the attainment of Nirvāña are simultaneous. The word Mahāpariñirvāña merely means the death of Buddha.

Verse 89. Te loko parinibbuta, “they attain Nirvāña in this world”; that is they attain Upadhiçeshanirvāña or Arhatship, which is compatible with existence. Parinibbuta (pari+nis+vr̥ita) is always used for the part. perf. pass. of parinibbáti, “to attain Nirvāña.” The regular p.p.p. would be parinibbāna,

1 I mean, of course, on this earth, since, for instance, an Anāgāmin attains Skandhaspariñirvāña from one of the Brahma heavens.
but there is a confusion in Pāli between the compounds nirvāna and nirvṛtī, so much so that nibbuti (nirvṛtī) means both happiness (or tranquillity) and annihilation. It is well known that this sort of confusion is frequent in Pāli. An important reason against the use of parinibbāna as the p.p.p. of parinibbāti is that it would be readily mistaken for the noun parinibbāna. When used of an Arhat parinibbota may be translated “having died,” e.g. Lokanāthe dasabale sattāha-parinibbute, “when the world’s protector endowed with the ten forces had been dead seven days.”

Verse 153. Anēkañātisamsāraṁ sandhāvissam anibbisaṁ
Gahakārakaṁ gavesanto dukkhā jāti punappunam.

“I have run through the revolution of countless births, seeking the Architect of this dwelling and finding him not, grievous is repeated birth.” Fausböll takes sandhāvissam as a conditional, but the sense imperatively requires an aorist, and Mr. Trenckner pointed out to me some time ago that sandhāvissam in this place is a true aorist, the Sanskrit aorist in -isham. The third persons sing. and plur. of this aorist occur pretty frequently in Pāli, and end in -isi and -ism respectively. The doubled s has many analogies in Pāli. The learned Sthavira Dhammadipāma of Yātrāmullé has favoured me with a long extract from Culla Saddanīti, in which the author, misled by the doubled s, calls sandhāvissam “a future in a past sense” (attitthethe bhavissanti hoti), and cites a passage from the Tripitaka book Vimānavatthu containing an analogous example. The passage is as follows:—

Cētuddasim pāñcadasim yāva pakkhasa aṭṭhami
Pāṭihāriyapakkhaṁ ca aṭṭhangasamāhitam
Upasattham upavasisam sada silesu samvutā.5

Here Culla Saddanīti remarks, Imissā Vimānavatthupālīyā attham samvannenthei “upavasisan ti upavasim attitthhe hi idam anāgatavacanan ti vuttan” ti saccam vuttam, “the com-

1 See Abhidhānappadīpikā, v. 1015.
2 Mahāvamsa, p. 11.
3 In Pāli the 1st pers. fut. ātmane, and the 1st pers. cond. (parissa and ātmane) both end in -issam. In the cond. the augment may be dropped, so that sandhāvissam might be a future or a conditional.
4 Sanskrit it (for ihit), and iṣuḥ.
5 Compare Dh. p. 404.
mentators upon this passage of Vimánavatthu observe with truth that upavasissam is for upavasim, for here the future is used in a past sense.”

Verse 166. **Attadattham paratthe na bahuná pi na hápaye**  
**Attadattham abhiññáya sadatthapasuto siyá.**

I think the meaning of this verse is, “Let him not forego his own spiritual good for the sake of another man’s, however great; when he has discerned his own spiritual good, let him devote himself thereto.” This is, I think, in accordance with the comment, and makes the sentiment one to which no exception can be taken, even from a Christian point of view. *Attha* is constantly used in Páli in the sense of spiritual good, and this very word *sadattha* (sva-artha) is used at page 12 of Turnour’s Mahávamśa, where Arhatship or spiritual perfection is intended. The words are:—

*See sannipáto, Ánanda; sekhena gamanam tathān*  
*Nā yuttan te; sadatthe tvam appamatto tato bhava.*

“Tmorrow, Ánanda, is the convocation, it is not right that thou shouldst attend it while yet imperfect, strive earnestly therefore for thy spiritual good.”

Verse 32. **Appamádarato bhikkhu pamáde bhayadassivá**  
**Abhabbo parihánaya nibbánase’ eva santike.**

The meaning of parihána here is “falling away,” “falling off,” “retrogression.” The comment says, “A priest who is in this state is not liable to fall away either from the state of tranquillity and contemplation, or from the Four Paths and their fruition: if he has attained them, he cannot lose them; if he has not yet attained them, he cannot fail to do so.” Compare the passage at Dham. p. 254, where Godhika Thera is said to have attained the first Jhána and then fallen away from it: the expressions used are, “*samádhikam cetovimuttim phusitvá tato pariháyi,*” “*chakkhattum jhánam nibbattetvá parihino,*” “*jhánam parihino.*” I would render the whole verse “The recluse who delights in diligence, who sees danger in sloth, is not liable to fall away from holiness, but is close upon

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1 Compare also Dham. verse 364, *Dhammaṁ anussaram bhikkhu saddhamm na pariháyat,* the recluse who remembers the Law will never fall away from true religion.
the attainment of Nirvāṇa.” That is to say, his salvation is assured, nothing can prevent its accomplishment. Nibbāna here means klecaparinirvāṇa or Arhatship (see the comment).

Verse 55. Candanaṁ tagaram vā pi uppalam atha vassikti
Etesāṁ gandhajātānaṁ silagandho anuttaro.

The meaning of the second hemistych is, “The perfume of virtue (sīla) far surpasses the perfume of these spices.” There is a confusion in the construction, as the literal rendering would be, “Of these sorts of perfumes (gandhajātāni), the perfume of virtue is the best.” I do not see how sīla can be taken as anything but the Sanskrit ċīla; the commentator takes it so, and the analogy of the preceding and following verses requires it.

Verse 71. Na hi pāpaṁ kataṁ kammat sājukhiṁva muccati
Duham tāṁ bālam anveti bhasmāechanvo va pāvako.

The word muccati, in Pāli, when applied to milk, means “to curdle,” literally, “to be got rid of;” I suppose because, in the process of curdling, the milk in great measure disappears and is replaced by curds. The Sthavira Subhūti informs me that the true version of the comment is, Sājukhṭran ti taṁkhānaṁ yera dhenuyā thanehi dhovitrā gahitakhiṁ, na muccattī na parinamati na pakatibhavat jahati na dadhibhavat āpajati, “Sājukhṭra means milk just drawn from the previously washed udder of the cow; na muccati means that it does not change, does not leave its original state, does not turn into curds.” This explanation makes sāaju not an independent word qualifying the sentence na hi pāpaṁ kataṁ kammat muccati, but the first part of a compound word sājukhiṁva, meaning “new milk.” It is a satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and the sense of the whole verse would be, “As newly drawn milk will not curdle for a long while, as fire covered by ashes goes on smouldering for a long while, so it takes a long while to get rid of the consequences of an evil action.” Of course in a translation the play upon the two meanings of muccati is lost, and the simile is deprived of most of its force. It is worthy of notice than in the Sinhalese Prakrit mid, the equivalent of muc, means, according to Clough, “to loosen, to release,” and also “to congeal, to coagulate.”
Verse 252. Sudassam vajjam aññesaṁ attano pana duddasamā
Paresam hi so vajjani opunati yathā bhusam
Attano pana chādeti kalim va kitacā sātha.

"The faults of others are easily seen, our own are difficult to see; a man winnows his neighbour's faults like chaff, his own he keeps out of sight as the fraudulent gambler hides his loaded dice." Fausböll translates yathā bhusam, "as much as possible," taking it as a compound word, the equivalent of which would be yathābhriṣam in Sanskrit. But bhusam in Pāli means also "chaff,"¹ and the use of opunāti almost positively demands that yathā bhusam should be translated "like chaff." The commentator takes this view in the most decided and unmistakable manner, for he says bhusam opunāto viya opunāti, "winnows them like one winnowing chaff." The force and beauty of the metaphor is obvious enough.

Verse 257. I do not see how dhammassa gutto can be rendered "custos legis," since gutta (gupta) is used only in a passive sense. I would translate the passage, "The wise man who is guarded by justice (or by the Law) is called just." A man guarded by justice would of course mean a man whose actions or words are directed by a sense of justice. The comment says dhammagutto dhammarakkhito, which can only mean "guarded by dhamma, kept by dhamma."

Verse 272. Dhammārāma informs me that the true reading of the last line is bhikkhu viśāsa m'āpādi appatto āsavakkhayam, or rejecting sandhi bhikkhu viśāsa mā āpādi appatto āsavakkhayam, "priest, be not confident as long as thou hast not attained the extinction of desire."

Verse 283. Vanam chindatha mā rukkham vanato jāyati bhayam
Chetrā vanañ ca vanathaḥ ca nibbānā hotha bhikkhave.

"Cut down the whole forest, not the tree, danger comes out of the forest; when ye have cut down both the forest and its undergrowth, then shall ye be free from passion." Half the force of this passage is lost in a translation, from the impossibility of rendering the play on the two meanings of vana. It is doubtful whether nibbānā or nibbanā (nisa+vana) be the right reading. Vāna² means "desire" in Pāli as well as

¹ See Abhidhānappadīkā, 463: it is the Sanskrit busa. ² Abhidhān. 163.
vāna, and nībbāna would not be a participle, but an adjective meaning "free from vāna or lust."

Verse 344. Subhūti informs me that the true reading is nībbanatho, and the first line means, "he who having got rid of desire hankers again for desire." The readings of Fausböll's three manuscripts are nībbanatho, nībbanato, and nībbānato. Mr. Fausböll now agrees with me in thinking that the two last are obvious copyists' errors.

Verse 329. Nībbānagamanam maggam khippaṁ eva visodhayet.

This is an instance of Nībbāna, meaning both Nirvānas. (See my remarks at p. 221).

Verse 331. Tuṭṭhi sukhā yā itaritarena, "A blessed thing is joy, whatever be the cause." Itaritara in Pāli does not mean "mutual," but "any whatever." Thus in the text of one of the Buddhist classifications we have Idh' āvuso bhikkhu santuttho hoti itaritareṇa cīvarena, "contented with whatever robes he is presented with," that is, whether they be of fine or of coarse material. In this verse kāraṇeṇa might be supplied after yā itaritarena. The comment says parittenā vā vipulena vā, "caused by a small or a great matter." Any one who has seen a child in ecstasies of delight over the veriest trifle will agree that "a blessed thing is joy, whatever be the cause."

Verse 369. Chetvā rāgaṁ ca dosaṁ ca tato nībbānam ehiṁ. "When thou hast rooted out lust and hate then shalt thou go to Nirvāna." Here Skandhaparīñirvāṇa or Anupadhiçheshañirvāna is intended, for he who has rooted out rāga and dvesha is the Arhat (vītarāga), who "afterwards" (tato, or, as the comment says, aparabhāge, viz., at the end of the few years he has to live), attains the annihilation of being. The comment distinctly specifies this Nirvāna to be Anupadhiçhesanirvāna: the words are rāgadosasabandhanāni chinīdēva arahattam patto tato aparabhāge anupadhisesanībbānam ehiṁ atto, "having severed the bonds of lust and hate and attained Arhatship, thereafter thou shalt go to Nirvāna." It will be observed that the Pāli equivalent of upadhiçesa is upādisesa. This is a compound of sesa (çesha) with upādi, a masculine noun formed from the root dā "to take" with â and upa. Upādi

1 See Dham. p. 466.
is closely allied with upādāna, the more regularly formed derivative of upa-ā-dā, and is used to designate the Five Skandhas. This word is interesting because it is one of the forms which give evidence that the Pāli or southern recension of the Buddhist scriptures is the original one, and that the oldest Sanskrit texts of Northern Buddhism are translations from it, possibly made some time after the Pāli text of the Tripiṭaka had been settled. Upādi is one of the unclassical forms which abound in Pāli, and restore to it so much of the wealth it loses from assimilation and other causes. The final syllable di must be formed from dā, on the analogy of dhi from dhā. I imagine, then, that the translators of the Pāli religious texts into Sanskrit, meeting with this word, and unable to make anything of it, replaced it by the nearest approach they could find to it in classical Sanskrit, viz., Upadhi.\footnote{Upadhi is used also in Pāli in a metaphysical sense, the four Upadhīs being the Skandhas, the Kāmaguṇas, Kleça, and Abhisamanā.} Other instances might be adduced; thus the word phāṣucīhāra occurs frequently in the Pāli Tripiṭaka with the meaning of “life of ease or happiness.” Phāsu is a Pāli neuter noun, meaning “comfort, ease, happiness,” the etymology of which I have failed to discover. The author of Saddharmapuṇḍarika,\footnote{Lotus, p. 425–7.} meeting with the word phāsu, took it for the equivalent of sparṣa, and rendered the compound phāṣucīhāra by sukhaspārṣcavīhāratā, “life of agreeable contact.” But phāsu can really have nothing to do with sparṣa, first because its meaning and use are totally distinct from those of sparṣa,\footnote{For instance, phāṇyagamanam, “pleasant journey,” phāntukam phīnanam, “comfortable quarters.” Besides phīna is properly an adjective, see Abhidhān. p. 15, note.} and secondly because the regularly formed equivalent of sparṣa, namely phassa, is in constant use in Pāli in the sense of “touch” or “contact.” Again, the Pāli word pāramitā, “perfection,” is formed by adding the suffix -tā to pārami, an anomalously formed derivative of pāram.\footnote{Int. p. 464. Pārami is a feminine noun, the plur. is pāramiyo.} The author of Saddharmapuṇḍarika probably found the form pārami very puzzling, for he almost entirely ignores it, and employs the longer form pāramitā, which he takes to be a
compound of pāra and ita, like pāragata. The circumstance that pāramī is much more frequently used in Pāli than pāramitā, is almost conclusive against this derivation. Again, the well-known Pāli word uposatha is simply a contracted form of upavasatha, but the o in the second syllable evidently misled the Sanskrit translators, for the North Buddhist equivalent is uposhadha, which seems to be a sort of compromise between the Pāli form uposatha and the Sanskrit part. perf. pass. uposhita.

Verse 295. Mātaram pitaram hantvā rājāno dee ca sotthiyo
Veyyagghapañcamaṁ hantvā anigho yāti brāhmaṇo.

"The true brahmin goes scatheless though he have killed father and mother, and two holy kings, and an eminent man besides."

It is a remarkable fact that Čākyamuni, though never remiss in declaiming against the errors of the Brahmins, adopted the word brāhmaṇa, with all its sanctity and prestige, into his own system, but made it a denomination of the Arhat, or devout Buddhist who has attained to final sanctification. Buddha even applied the epithet to himself in a Udānavāthā, "hymn of joy," he uttered after his attainment of omniscence.

Yadā have pātubhavanti dhammā
Ātāpino jhāyino brāhmaṇassa
Ath’ assa kaṅkhā ’o’ apayanti sabbā
Yato pajānati sahetudhammam.

"When the Truth is made manifest to the striving, the meditating brahmin, then his doubts all flee away when he knows existing things and their causes." The Brāhmaṇavagga of Dhammapada tells us that the true Brahmin is not he who is born of Brahmin parents, but the man in whom passion is destroyed—khīnasavām arahantāṁ tam aham brāmi brāhmaṇam. But to return to our verse: Fausböll thinks the sentiment it conveys inconsistent with Buddhist doctrine, though quite in accordance with the Brahminical system. This, however, is on the assumption that the word brāhmaṇa is taken in its natural sense, whereas we have seen that it may perfectly mean an Arhat, and the comment says nikkilesa, which is the

same thing. In my judgment this verse is intended to express in a forcible manner the Buddhist doctrine that the Arhat cannot commit a serious sin. It is as much as saying, "An Arhat cannot commit sin, but were he to commit even sins so dreadful as parricide and murder he would be scatheless," that is, as Dr. Max Müller has observed, if he does commit these crimes, it must be by accident, so that no guilt would rest upon him. Veyyaggha is a derivative of vyaggha, and means, I think, "an eminent man," literally, "a tigerish man."

Verse 302. I think the comment affords a satisfactory explanation of this difficult verse, "The traveller on the long road of Samsāra meets with nothing but pain; painful is the life of the recluse, painful is the life of the householder, painful is association with those who are not our equals: therefore let him travel no more, and so he will not be exposed to suffering." That is, let him obtain Nirvāna, and bring to an end his journey through Samsāra. Compare p. 280 of Dhammapada, where it is said that there are two sorts of roads on which a man may be a traveller, kantāraddhā, a road though a difficult country, and raṭtaddhā, the road through Samsāra.

Verse 368. Adhīgacche padāṁ santami sankhārūpasamāṁ sukhāṁ.

"He will attain the tranquil, blessed lot, where existence is no more." Here I believe Skandhaparinirvāna to be intended, as in the verse which immediately follows, and which we have already considered. From a Buddhist point of view there is really no reason why annihilation should not be spoken of as "blessed," or even as "bliss"; it is a "happy release" from suffering which without it would be endless.

Verse 394. Kin te jātāhi dummedha kin te ajinasātiyā
Abbhantaram te gahanam bāhiram parimajjasi.

"Thou fool, what dost thou with the matted hair, what dost thou with the raiment of skin? thine inward parts are full of wickedness, the outside thou makest clean." Abbhantanam is a noun, and means "inner man," "heart." It is, I think, best to take gahanam as an adjective in agreement with

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1 Abbabho khipdsavo bhikkhu saññicca pāṇām jivita vīropetum, etc.
2 Vritta, "the circle of Samsāra"+adīvān.
abhantaram, and meaning, choked, filled up, impenetrable from the forest growth of sin; or it might be taken as the noun gahanam, a forest or jungle, a thicket. The metaphor is the same as at verse 283, where vana means desire or lust.

Verse 396. Bhovádi náma so hoti, he is called Arrogant. In the Páli texts bho is a familiar term of address used to inferiors or equals. The compound bhovádin would mean one who says bho, and the comment on this verse says, Bhováditte yo pana ámantanádisu bho ti vate vacarati, a man is called Bhovádin who goes about saying Bho when he accosts people or otherwise addresses them. Brahmins not converted to Buddhism are always represented as saying bho Gotama to Buddha, and this address must have greatly jarred upon pious Buddhists, who never spoke to their master but with the highly reverential epithet of Bhante, Lord. Buddhists therefore in calling Brahmins Bhovádin meant, I suppose, to imply that they were a proud and haughty class, so proud as to address even the Buddha with familiarity if not disrespect.

Verse 339. Subhúti informs me that the right reading is not mantipassa vaná, but mantipassavaná, flowing in the channels of pleasure. Mantipassavaná is a compound of mantápa and savana, and is an adjective in the nom. fem., agreeing with tánhá, understood. The comment is mantápesu rúpádisu savati pacattatiti mantipassavaná tánhá bhusá balavati hoti.

Verse 341. Subhúti informs me that saríta is, as conjectured by Fausbøll, the part. perf. pass. from sara-gatimhi, viz., sri. The comment should be saritántti anusaritáni payatáni. At verse 345 the comment should be sáratatattá ti sáratá hutá rátá balavarágaratá ti atetho.

Verse 129. Upamá is the accusative of the fem. noun upamá. Aittánam upamám katvá exactly conveys the idea, "do as you would be done by." The comment says yathá aham evam ańne pi sattá.

1 Abhidhán. 536.
2 A Ťíká on Kaccányana, in the India Office, explains bhovádi thus: Bho bho vaditum silam assiti bhovádi, one whose custom it is to say bho to people is a bhovádi.
3 See, for instance, Dham. p. 98.
4 From srw, to flow.