lead the life of anchorites, do not greatly differ in char­acter and style from the Brahmanas, but like them are chiefly ritualistic, treating of special ceremonies not dealt with, or dealt with only imperfectly, in the latter works, to which they thus stand in the relation of supplements. The Upanishads, on the other hand, are of a purely specu­lative nature, and must be looked upon as the first attempts at a systematic treatment of metaphysical ques­tions. The number of Upanishads hitherto known is very considerable (about 170); but, though they nearly all pro­fess to belong to the Atharvaveda, they have to be assigned to very different periods of Sanskrit literature,—some of them being evidently quite modern productions. The oldest treatises of this kind are doubtless those which form part of Vedic Sanihitas, Brahmanas, and Aranyakas, though not a few others which have no such special con­nexion have to be classed with the later products of the Vedic age.

As the sacred texts were not committed to writing till a much later period, but were handed down orally in the Brahmanical schools, it was inevitable that local differences of reading should spring up, which in course of time gave rise to a number of independent versions, more or less differing from one another. Such different text-recen­sions, called *sakha (i.e.,* branch), were at one time very numerous, but only a limited number of them have sur­vived. As regards the Samhitas, the poetical form of the hymns, as well as the concise style of the sacrificial formulas, would render these texts less liable to change, and the discrepancies of different versions would chiefly consist in various readings of single words or in the different arrangement of the textual matter. The diffuse ritualistic discussions and loosely connected legendary illustrations of the Brahmanas, on the other hand, offered scope for very considerable modifications in the traditional matter, either through the ordinary processes of oral transmission or through the special influence of indi­vidual teachers.

An original Brahmana, then, may be characterized as a series of theoretic discourses, composed by recognized authorities on ritualistic matters, such as might be delivered or referred to in connexion with practical instruction in the sacrificial art. The growing intricacy of the ceremonial, however, could not fail, in course of time, to create a demand for treatises of a more practical tendency, setting forth, in concise and methodical form, the duties of the several priests in the sacrificial perform­ances. But, besides the purely ceremonial matter, the Brahmanas also contained a considerable amount of matter bearing on the correct interpretation of the Vedic texts; and, indeed, the sacred obligation incumbent on the Brahmans of handing down correctly the letter and sense of those texts necessarily involved a good deal of serious grammatical and etymological study in the Brahmanical schools. These literary pursuits could not but result in the accumulation of much learned material, which it would become more and more desirable to throw into a system­atic form, serving at the same time as a guide for future research. These practical requirements were met by a class of treatises, grouped under six different heads or subjects, called *Vedangas, i.e.,* members, or limbs, of the (body of the) Veda. None of the works, however, which have come down to us under this designation can lay any just claim to being considered as the original treatises on their several subjects; but they evidently represent a more or less advanced stage of scientific development. Though a few of them are composed in metrical form— especially in the ordinary epic couplet, the *anushtubh śloka,* consisting of two lines of sixteen syllables, or of two octosyllabic padas. each—the majority of them belong

to a class of writings called *stitra, i.e.,* “string, consisting as they do of strings of rules in the shape of tersely expressed aphorisms, intended to be committed to memory. The Sûtras form a connecting link between the Vedic and the classical periods of literature. But, although these treatises, so far as they deal with Vedic subjects, are included by the native authorities among the Vedic writ­ings, and in point of language may, generally speaking, be considered as the latest products of the Vedic age, they have no share in the sacred title of *sruti* or revelation. They are of human, not of divine, origin. And yet, as the production of men of the highest standing, and pro­foundly versed in Vedic lore, the Sfitras are naturally regarded as works of great authority, second only to that of the revealed scriptures themselves; and their relation to the latter is expressed in the generic title of *Smriti,* or Tradition, usually applied to them.

The six branches of Vedic science, included under the term Vedânga, are as follows :—

1. *Sikshâ,* or Phonetics. The privileged position of representing this subject is assigned to a small treatise ascribed to the great grammarian Pânini, viz., the *Pâninîyâ śikshâ,* extant in two different (Rik and Yajus) recensions. But neither this treatise nor any other of the numerous aikshas which have recently come to light can lay claim to any very high age. Scholars, however, usually include under this head certain works, called *Prâtisdkhya, i.e.,* “belonging to a certain *śakhâ* or recension,” which deal minutely with the phonetic peculiarities of the several Samhitas, and are of great importance for the textual criticism of the Vedic Samhitas.
2. *Chhandas,* or Metre. Tradition makes the *Chhan- dah-sûtra* of Pingala the starting-point of prosody. The Vedic metres, however, occupy but a small part of this treatise, and they are evidently dealt with in a more original manner in the Nidana-sûtra of the Samaveda, and in a chapter of the Rik-pratisakhya. For profane prosody, on the other hand, Pingala’s treatise is rather valuable, no less than 160 metres being described by him.
3. *Vydkarana,* or Grammar. Panini’s famous grammar is said to be *the* Vedânga; but it marks the culminating point of grammatical research rather than the beginning, and besides treats chiefly of the post-Vedic language.
4. *Nirukta,* or Etymology. Yâska’s *Nirukta* is the traditional representative of this subject, and this important work certainly deals entirely with Vedic etymology or ex­planation. It consists, in the first place, of strings of words in three chapters:—(1) synonymous words; (2) such as are purely or chiefly Vedic ; and (3) names of deities. These lists are followed by Yâska’s commentary, interspersed with numerous illustrations. Yâska, again, quotes several pre­decessors in the same branch of science; and it is probable that the original works on this subject consisted merely of lists of words similar to those handed down by him.
5. *Jyotisha,* or Astronomy. Although astronomical calculations are frequently referred to in older works in connexion with the performance of sacrifices, the metrical treatise which has come down to us in two different recen­sions under the title of Jyotisha, ascribed to one Lagadha, or Lagata, seems indeed to be the oldest existing systematic treatise on astronomical subjects. With the exception of some apparently spurious verses of one of the recensions, it betrays no sign of the Greek influence which shows itself in Hindu astronomical works from about the third century of our era; and its date may therefore be set down as probably not later than the early centuries after Christ.
6. *Kalpa,* or Ceremonial. Tradition does not single out any special work as the Vedanga in this branch of Vedic science; but the sacrificial practice gave rise to a large number of systematic sfitra-manuals for the several