classes of priests. The most important of these works have come down to us, and they occupy by far the most prominent place among the literary productions of the sûtra-period. The Kalpa-sutras, or rules of ceremonial, are of two kinds:—(1) the *Śrauta-sûtras,* which are based on the £ruti, and teach the performance of the great sacri­fices, requiring three sacrificial fires ; and (2) the *Smârta- sutras,* or rules based on the smriti or tradition. The latter class again includes two kinds of treatises:—(1) the *Grihya-sûtras,* or domestic rules, treating of ordinary family rites, such as marriage, birth, name-giving, &c., connected with simple offerings in the domestic fire; and (2) the *Sâmayâchârika-* (or *Dharma-) sûtras,* which treat of customs and temporal duties, and are supposed to have formed the chief sources of the later law-books. Besides, the Śrauta-sûtras of the Yajurveda have usually attached to them a set of so-called *Śulva-sûtras, i.e.,* “rules of the cord,” which treat of the measurement by means of cords, and the construction, of different kinds of altars required for sacrifices. These treatises (the study of which has been successfully taken up by Prof. Thibaut of Benares) are of considerable interest as supplying import­ant information regarding the earliest geometrical opera­tions in India. Along with the Sutras may be classed a large number of supplementary treatises, usually called *Pariśishta (παραλιόμϵνα),* on various subjects connected with the sacred texts and Vedic religion generally.

After this brief characterization of the various branches of Vedic literature, we proceed to take a rapid survey of the several Vedic collections.

A. *Rigveda.@@1—*The *Rigveda-samhitâ* has come down to us in the recension of the Sakala school. Mention is made of several other versions ; and regarding one of them, that of the Bashkalas, we have some further information, according to which it seems, how- ever, to have differed but little from the Sakala text. The latter consists of 1028 hymns, including eleven so-called *Vâlakhilyas,* which were probably introduced into the collection subsequently to its completion. The hymns are composed in a great variety of metres, and consist, on an average, of rather more than 10 verses each, or about 10,600 verses altogether. This body of sacred lyrics has been subdivided by ancient authorities in a twofold way, viz., either from a purely artificial point of view, into eight *ashtakas* of about equal length, or, on a more natural principle, based on the origin of the hymns, and invariably adopted by European scholars, into ten books, or *mandalas, of* unequal length. Tradition (not, however, always trustworthy in this respect) has handed down the names of the reputed authors, or rather inspired “ seers ” *(rishi),* of most hymns. These indications have enabled scholars to form some idea as to the probable way in which the Rik-samhita originated, though much still remains to be cleared up by future research.

In the first place, mandalas ii.-vii. are evidently arranged on a uniform plan. Each of them is ascribed to a different family of rishis, whence they are usually called the six “family-books — ii., the Gritsamadas; iii., the Visvamitras or Kusikas; iv., the Vâma- devyas; v., the Atris; vi., the Bharadvajas; and vii., the Vasishthas. Further, each of these books begins with the hymns addressed to Agni, the god of fire, which are followed by those to Indra, the Jupiter Pluvius, whereupon follow those addressed to minor deities— the Visve Devah (“ all-gods ”), the Maruts (storm-gods), &c. Again, the hymns addressed to each deity are arranged (as Prof. Delbriick has shown) in a descending order, according to the number of verses of which they consist.

The first mandala, the longest in the whole Samhita, contains 191 hymns, ascribed, with the exception of a few isolated ones, to sixteen poets of different families. Here again the hymns of each author are arranged on precisely the same principle as the

“ family-books.” The eighth and ninth books, on the other hand, have a special character of their own. To the Siimaveda-sarphita, which, as wo shall see, consists almost entirely of verses chosen from the Rik for chanting purposes, these two mandalas have contributed a much larger proportion of verses than any of the others. Now, the hymns of the eighth book are ascribed to a number of different rishis, mostly belonging to the Kanva family. The productions of each poet are usually, though not always, grouped together, but no other principle of arrangement has yet been discovered. The chief peculiarity of this mandala, however, consists in its metres. Many of the hymns are composed in the form of stanzas, called *pragátha* (from *gâ,* “to sing”), consisting of two verses in the *brihatî* and *satobrihatî* metres ; whence this book is usually known under the designation of Pragathah. The other metres met with in this book are likewise such as were evidently considered peculiarly adapted for singing, viz., the *gdyaM* (from *gd,* “to sing”) and other chiefly octosyllabic metres. It is not yet clear how to account for these peculiarities ; but further research may perhaps show that either the Kanvas were a family of udgatars, or chanters, or that, before the establishment of a common system of worship for the Brahmanical community, they were accustomed to carry on their liturgical service exclusively by means of chants, instead of using the later form of mixed recitation and chant. One of the rishis of this family is called Pragatha Kanva ; possibly this sur- name “pragatha” may be an old, or local, synonym of udgatar, or perhaps of the chief chanter, the so-called *Prastotar,* or pre­centor. The ninth mandala, on the other hand, consists entirely of hymns (114) addressed to *Soma,* the deified juice of the so-called “moon-plant” *(Sarcostemma viminale,* or *Asclepias acida),* and ascribed to poets of different families. They are called *pavamdnt,* “ purificational,” because they were to be recited by the liotar while the juice expressed from the soma plants was clarifying. The first sixty of these hymns are arranged strictly according to their length, ranging from ten down to four verses ; but as to the remaining hymns no such principle of arrangement is observable, except perhaps in smaller groups of hymns. One might, therefore, feel inclined to look upon that first section as the body of soma hymns set apart, at the time of the first redaction of the Samhita, for the special purpose of being used *as pavamdnyah,—*the remain- ing hymns having been added at subsequent redactions. It would not, however, by any means follow that all, or even any, of the latter hymns were actually later productions, as they might previously have formed part of the family collections, or might have been overlooked when the hymns were first collected. Other mandalas (viz., i., viii., and x.) still contain four entire hymns addressed to Soma, consisting together of 58 verses, of which only a single one (x. 25, 1) is found in the Samaveda-samliita, as also some 28 isolated verses to Soma, and four hymns addressed to Soma in conjunction with some other deity, which are entirely unrepresented in that collection.

The tenth mandala contains the same number of hymns (191) as the first, which it nearly equals in actual length. The hymns are ascribed to many rishis, of various families, some of whom appear already in the preceding mandalas. The traditional record is, however, less to be depended upon as regards this book, many names of gods and fictitious personages appearing in the list of its rishis. In the latter half of the book the hymns are clearly arranged according to the number of verses, in decreasing order,— occasional exceptions to this rale being easily adjusted by the removal of a few additional verses. A similar arrangement seems also to suggest itself in other portions of the book. This mandala stands somewhat apart from the preceding books, both its lan- guage and the general character of many of its hymns betraying a comparatively modern origin. In this respect it stands about on a level with the Atharvaveda-samliita, with which it is otherwise closely connected. Of some 1350 Rik-verses found in the Atharvan, about 550, or rather more than 40 per cent., occur in the tenth mandala. In the latter we meet with the same tendencies as in the Atharvan to metaphysical speculation and abstract conceptions of the deity on the one hand, and ,to superstitious practices on the other. But, although in its general appearance the tenth mandala is decidedly more modern than the other books, it contains not a few hymns which are little, if at all, inferior, both in respect of age and poetic quality, to the generality of Vedic hymns.

It has become the custom, after Roth’s example, to call the Rik-samhita (as well as the Atharvan) an historical collection, as compared with the Samlritas put together for purely ritualistic pur­poses. And indeed, though the several family collections which make up the earlier mandalas may originally have served ritual ends, as the hymnals of certain clans or tribal confederacies, and although the Saipliita itself, in its oldest form, may have been intended as a common prayer-book, so to speak, for the whole of the Brahmanical community, it is certain that in the stage in which it has been finally handed down it includes a certain portion of hymn material (and even some secular poetry) which could never have been used for purposes of religious service. It may, therefore, be assumed that the Rik-samhitâ contains all of the nature of popu-

@@@1 The Rigveda has been edited, together with the commentary of Säyana (of the 14th century), by Max Müller, 6 vols., London, 1849-74. The same scholar has published an edition of the hymns, both in the connected *(samhitâ)* and the disjoined *(pada)* texts, 1873. An edition in Roman transliteration was published by Th. Aufrecht, Berlin, 1861-3 (2d ed. 1877). Part of an English translation (chiefly based on Säyana’s interpretation) was brought out by the late Prof. H. H. Wilson (vols. i.-iii., 1850-1857) and continued by Prof. E. B. Cowell (vol. iv., 1866, bringing up the work to mandala viii. hymn 20). We have also the first volume of a translation, with a running commentary, by M. Müller, containing the hymns to the Maruts or storm-gods. Complete German translations have been published by H. Grassmann (1876-7) and A. Ludwig (1876).