


II.

Wind Instruments

WITH A KEYBOARD.

HE origin of the Organ is lost in remote antiquity. The idea, however, of a polyphonic instrument, suggested by the primitive pan-pipe, or the association of two reed pipes placed in the mouth together, and yet further improved by the addition of a wind reservoir as in the bagpipe, must have taken some practical shape before Ctesibius, in the early part of the third century B.C., produced his hydraulus or water organ. In fact, it is more than probable that the invention of this celebrated mechanic chiefly existed in applying the principle of water pressure and a new slider or key action to some crude form of pneumatic organ. His work, nevertheless, stands as the earliest example yet known of the instrument, and from the description given by his friend Hero of Alexandria, it is evident that the water was used to compress the air in the same way as in the modern instruments weights are employed. The key mechanism, simple at first, was improved by later makers—ranks of pipes, both flue and reed, were added—and at the commencement of our era we have a complete organ furnished with a practical keyboard for the fingers, and supplied with stops. This was the instrument so enthusiastically described by Roman poets and technical