



NEW DOME FOR THE GREAT EQUATORIAL—UNITED STATES NAVAL OBSERVATORY.

works were donated by the Greenwich, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna institutions.

Lieutenant M. F. Maury was placed in charge, and entered on his duties with zealous purposes. He proposed in 1846 the immense astronomical work of a more extensive and precise cataloguing of the stars than Bessel's *Zone Observations* or Struve's *Dorpat Catalogue*. Valuable results of the scheme, so far as it could be entered on, by the observations of Professors Coffin, Walker, Yarnall, Hubbard, Keith, Major, and Ferguson, and Lieutenants Almy, Maynard, Muse, and others, have been lately reduced and published.

Two events marked this early part of the history with still more importance. Walker, in 1846, proved that the new planet Neptune, just then discovered by Le Verrier, had been catalogued as a star by Lalande in his *Histoire Celeste* in 1793; and Walker, with Lieutenants Almy and Gilliss, was the very first to use, in 1846, the new discovery of the telegraph to determine differences of longitude. The identification of Neptune with Lalande's star gave astronomers, in determining the new planet's orbit, the use of observations made fifty-two years before. It gave the *American Nautical Almanac* two years earlier ephemerides for the mariner. It brought the observatory into prominence.

The superintendency of Maury extended from 1845 to April 26, 1861, when he suddenly left the city to join the cause of the South. According readily all that his most earnest friends claim for him as a man of genius and persevering industry, it can not be questioned that his enthusiasm in the legitimate work of an observatory early died out. His attention became almost absorbed in his projected wind and current charts, and his shortened ocean routes. Of this no proof is needed other than that shown in the few annual volumes of astronomical observations which he published in the years 1846-

50, and in the failure to issue any others for the eleven following years. His labors in connection with ocean routes are now daily more and more appreciated.

In 1861 Lieutenant J. M. Gilliss was at length placed in charge. He re-established and vigorously pressed forward astronomical work as well as the duties of the "Hydrographical Office," a title which had been added to

that of the Naval Observatory. At the time of his very sudden death, after a brief superintendency of less than four years, he was earnestly engaged in bringing forward the legitimate work of the observatory, in connection with which he had contracted for the excellent transit circle described further on in this article. He had been previously much interested in his astronomical work in Chili, the report of which is to be found in the volumes of the United States naval astronomical expeditions to that country, where he had been also instrumental in establishing an observatory.

He had instituted observations there for the solar parallax simultaneously with those to be made in the United States. It was somewhat singular that on the very day of his death there should be an announcement of successful results from observations made by the two observatories which he had founded. The navy has a just pride in Gilliss's unremitting labors and in his aim to place the observatory, as he said, "under the management of naval officers, where in the practical pursuit of the highest known branch of science they would compel an acknowledgment of abilities hitherto withheld from the service."

His successor, Rear-Admiral C. H. Davis, carried forward the astronomical work with that eminent success which had been guaranteed by his previous astronomical tastes and occupancy on the Coast Survey and as superintendent of the *Nautical Almanac*. The transit circle, the contract for which had been cordially approved by him when chief of the Bureau of Navigation, was mounted in the west wing of the observatory in 1865. The full routine of astronomical work with the various instruments was maintained by the several professors in charge. In addition to various other calls upon Admiral Davis by the Navy Department, he prepared, under a resolution of the