

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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The instrument described in the following pages was procured for the Observatory by the late Captain Gilliss. On his accession to the Superintendency, the want of a suitable Meridian Circle was strongly felt. The military operations of the government temporarily delayed the supply of this want. In October, 1863, however, the necessary authority was granted by the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, and the instrument was ordered from Messrs. Pistor and Martins, of Berlin. Correspondence respecting the size and plan of the instrument occupied the remainder of the year, and terminated by concluding on an object glass of at least eight Paris inches clear aperture, and by leaving the plan of the instrument and its mountings altogether in the hands of the artists.

The parts of the instrument arrived in October, 1865. The work of mounting was commenced on the 16th of that month, and on the 28th the instrument was in position. The next two months were occupied in determining the errors of flexure and division, and in making the necessary preparations for active work. Regular astronomical observations were commenced on January 3, 1866.