

THE TELESCOPE THAT NEVER WAS USED,  
UNFINISHED INSTRUMENTS

Manila Observatory in 1931 stood as a fine example of the monuments to visual astronomy that were built in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. A nineteen inch refractor with a lens by Merz and an equatorial mounting by Saegmuller was equal in quality to most of famous telescopes of the world at that time. After all the large refractor has<sup>d</sup> been in vogue for only about a half century. Among <sup>its</sup> ~~the~~ accessories were a large multi-prism spectroscope for studying star spectra, <sup>visually</sup> a filar micrometer for measuring positions of double stars and an excellent low power eyepiece with a large flat field for the visual observation of variable stars.

Along with this wonderful telescope which had become almost a museum piece during the pre~~ced~~<sup>e</sup>ding thirty-five years there was the three and one half inch Repsold transit instrument which <sup>in 1931</sup> ~~at that time~~ was one of the busiest little telescopes in the world. Manila Observatory was primarily <sup>at that time</sup> ~~in 1931~~ an official time station for the Philippines. Three times every day time signals were transmitted by radio and telegraph to all parts of the islands and through the large transmitters of the ~~U.S. Navy~~ <sup>Naval Base</sup> at Cavite to all parts of the world. The crystal clock~~s~~ was ~~just~~ being developed. <sup>but was by no means common.</sup> The best available time keepers were the large pendulum clocks, like the Short Synchronome, which could be trusted to about a hundredth of a second per day for a constant rate anywhere <sup>in the</sup> ~~world~~ except in Manila. There one could expect a slight earth tremor<sup>l</sup> about twice every month to upset the clock rate. Hence the transit instrument worked every night and often in the late evening and early morning. After all a first class time signal had to be within one tenth of a second.

To a young astronomer both of these instruments were familiar. Their purpose was quite obvious even if for want of personnel their