The Place of the Balloon in Military Science.

To the Editor of the New York Times:

The achievement of Mr. Lowe in his telegraphic cooperation from the balloon at the battle of Fair Oaks is an event of such importance as to merit more than a passing mention. The following letter from Mr. Parker Sprigg, Superintendent of telegraph construction in Gen. McClellan's army, given on receipt of a copy of Mr. Lowe's description of his services, may be reasonably expected from the perfonnance of this branch of military service. He says:

"The battle had commenced. When it had reached its height, Mr. Lowe, Prof. and myself, in the telegraph, had reached an altitude of two thousand feet, and could see all sorts of things. I could look down on the whole field of battle, and view the whole affair between these powerful contending armies.

"And as the battle progressed, hasty observations were made by the Professor and given to me verbally, all of which I instantly forwarded to Gen. McClellan. When we could not look for theobold field instrument which stood by our side in the bottom of the balloon, and which would have admitted a multitude of ball-bullets to open upon our brave fellows. In such cases the occupants of the balloon would inform our adversary of its position, and the next shot or two would, in every case, silence the masked and annoying customer.

"And until quite dark, we remained in the air, the telegraph keeping up constant communication with some point. From the balloon to Fort Monroe and elsewhere, this line worked beautifully. A number of messages were sent and received both ways, and a field instrument could not have been better for the tremendous rush of business on the wire. I should have telegraphed you directly from the balloon.

"Sunday morning at daylight we again ascended. Early in the morning the battle was renewed, and continued during practically the entire day before. Incensed firing of musketry and artillery was kept up until noon. We could see from the balloon a telegraphic message from the balloon, that we could see the enemy retreating rapidly toward Richmond.

"Sunday afternoon and evening of the 28th, we saw a very desolated appearance, but very few people to be seen in the streets. During the afternoon and evening of the 29th, we saw the field literally covered with the mangled remains of the rebels and wounded, all of which we could distinctly see from the balloon. It was a very sad scene. Every wheel that had wheels was brought into requisition for that purpose. From the scene of battle we had seen the scene of triumph. From Richmond we saw the camps. From the camps we saw the hospitals. From the hospitals we saw the dead and wounded. From the dead and wounded we saw the camps.

"In this way we saw camp fires innumerable around the city; smoke issued from all its hospitals and barracks, which assured us for a certainty that our body of army had fallen back toward Richmond."

To Mr. Lowe belongs, in great measure, the credit of having established telegraphic cooperation between the armies. We assure our friend of his just claims. Our object is to express our suggestions that from time to time have appeared, and the further credit of having reduced to comparative simplicity the contrivances for inflicting and transporting the battle. It is to the credit of the Department of War that he has been the first to share in the conduct of an actual engagement from a balloon.

But while awarding these honors to Mr. Lowe, it is proper to assign to others whatever instrumentality they have had in making the balloon a useful adjunct a military weapon.

At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in August, 1860, Capt. Hussey, of the United States Engineers, presented a paper on telegraphic balloon from which the following is an extract:

"The use of balloons for military purposes clearly ought to be reduced to system. The attention of the Department of War, in the battle of Pea Ridge, with the observations from a balloon actually did exercise, has been a just matter of consideration. It should be remembered, as the Sebastopol operations actually offered, it should have been utilized. The advantage of the balloons was not observed. The observations were restrained by the service requirements. In the present an ideal conception of the balloon has been the first to share in the conduct of an actual engagement on a balloon.

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server should, of course, be aided by the greatest serviceable telescopic power."

It will be seen that Capt. Hunt very accurately pointed out the employment of the telegraph in connection with the balloon, and may be said to have anticipated the actual use which was made of the instrument by Mr. Parker and Mr. Lowe at the battle of Fair Oaks.

Capt. Hunt suggested other uses that, in time of difficulty with foreign Powers, are not unlikely to be called into service.

E. N. H.