

mounted mostly on the top of the centre section so that bullets might clear the propeller blade. This gun was operated by the pilot, who supplied the sole method of forward shooting, while the observer, who was at that time placed in the front seat, fired to the rear. A year and a half afterwards, the method of shooting practically through the propeller was evolved, which, gradually developing, has long since reached mechanical perfection.

In the early summer of 1916, the British strength had grown to some 28 or 30 squadrons in France. These numbered approximately 450 machines, distributed fairly equally along the entire front. A view of our aerial equipment as contrasted with enemy aircraft in the battle of the Somme gives the following data, but it must be understood that this was a period during which every effort was strained on either side and type followed type in rapid succession.

BRITISH.

BE2C 2-seater tractor biplane.
1 or 2 Lewis guns.
Observer in front.
Speed 70 miles.
Climb to 10,000 ft. in 50 mins.
Service ceiling 11,000 feet.

FE2B 2-seater pusher biplane.
2 Lewis guns.
Observer in front.
Speed 75 miles.
Climb to 10,000 feet in 40 mins.
Service ceiling 12,000 feet.

Morane 2-seater tractor
(French) both mono and biplane.
Same guns as BE2C, but with deflectors.
Speed 80 m.p.h.
Climb 10,000 feet in 30 mins.
Service ceiling 15,000 feet.

GERMAN.

Fokker Scout tractor monoplane.
1 gun shooting through propeller, with deflectors.
Speed 85 m.p.h.
Climb 10,000 feet in 17 mins.

Albatross Scout tractor biplane.
2 gun synchronized in line of flight. (First machine thus equipped.)
Speed 100 m.p.h.
Also 2 seater Albatross machine.

Roland Scout tractor biplane.
armed as Albatross but not quite as fast.
Also Roland 2-seater fighter, speed 90 m.p.h.
Climb 10,000 feet in 20 mins.
Halberstadt Scout tractor biplane, similar to Albatross.