

Aircraft with Machine-Guns

apart from his bombs was a pistol, was at the disadvantage not only of flying slower than his enemy but of having no adequate method of replying to his fire. So he turned his machine, in evident desperation, and drove pell-mell at the other. No great distance separated the two machines, and the German bore down rapidly on his foe. The French sergeant-aviator, unprepared for such a drastic move, was for a moment taken by surprise; while his passenger, though he continued to use his machine-gun, could place no shot in his adversary such as would stop his swift approach. At the last moment, however, the pilot of the French machine awoke to his danger. He swung his craft violently sideways, being only just in time to avoid the impact. The suddenness of this manœuvre and the strain it threw on the aircraft were such that the machine-gun was unshipped from its position in the bow and rendered useless for further service.

This gave the German his opportunity, and he turned so as to escape towards his own lines. But he was not out of danger. The combat had been watched from the ground by one of the French military aviators who were stationed at Amiens; and he, taking a mechanic with him who was armed with a rifle, went in pursuit of the German in a monoplane. The latter, who again found his machine the slower craft, was overtaken and turned once more to fight. The French mechanic fired ten shots at him with his