

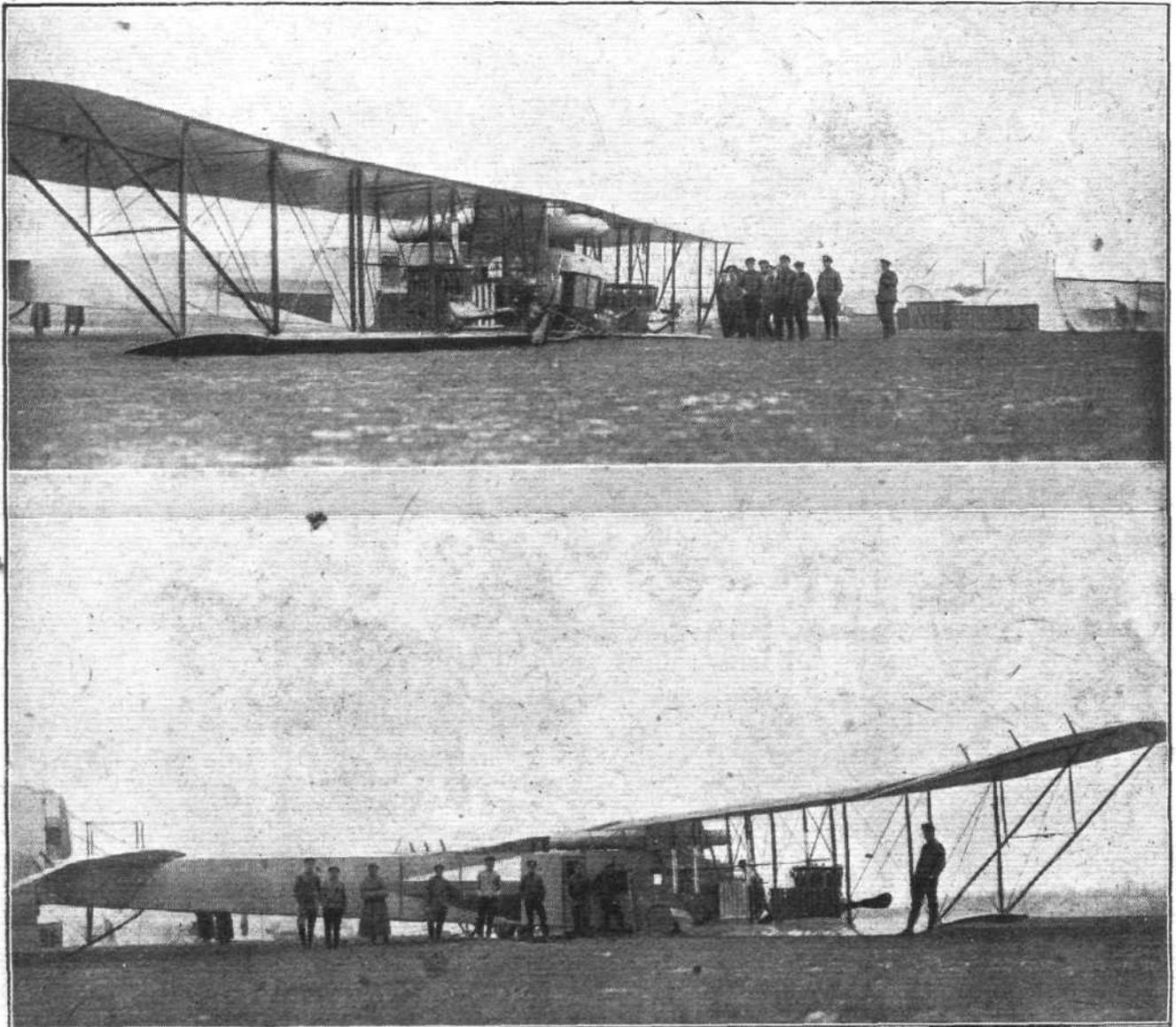
also wanted to know if the inspection by the Commission was made immediately after the armistice, and whether they succeeded in finding the jigs and dies of new classes of aeroplanes.

Mr. Churchill was not at all definite in his replies. He merely said that if his questioner had any information bearing out the suggestion contained in the first part of the question he would be glad to have it communicated to him. Generally, he said, the arrangements under which the disarmament of Germany was being carried out were set forth in the Peace Treaty and so far as these arrangements permitted them, the Allies were acting with the utmost energy. He further pointed out that the whole question of the manufacture of commercial aeroplanes was very closely allied with the manufacture of war machines, and under the Treaty the manufacture of commercial aeroplanes was allowed.

It will be observed that the Air Secretary neither admitted nor denied that secretion of aircraft and machinery has been practised. On the other hand, it is constantly being stated categorically here and in France that it has been successfully carried out. It may be argued that Germany is simply out to protect the future of her commercial aviation, and wants to save as much as possible from the wreck in order to give the industry something like a level start. We ourselves take a more serious view. There is every

warrant, after taking account with the past history of the Hun and his relations with the rest of the world, for the belief that he contemplates revenge for his defeat, and that at the earliest possible moment. At the very least it will be safer for the world to regard him with suspicion, and with the belief that he will strain every nerve to consummate that purpose. Indeed, there are still leading Huns who make no secret of the intention. If they are simply indulging in bombast, so much the worse for their country, for we cannot afford to take them otherwise than seriously. On that assumption, therefore, we can conclude only that if Germany is in fact trying to evade the Treaty by secreting material which would be invaluable to her for *la revanche*, it is for that purpose she is doing so.

We agree that it is not an easy task the Aeronautical Commission has to carry out, and we would not desire to make it heavier were it not that the matter is much too serious to be dismissed as lightly as Mr. Churchill did in his replies to Sir Frederick Hall. There must be ways and means of finding out whether there is truth or not in the repeated reports which are current. If there is nothing in them, it would be very reassuring to know it. If there is, then nothing but the iron hand will bring Germany to a realisation that it no longer pays to indulge in the bad faith that has made her name a by-word among the nations.



Two views of a Sikorsky biplane, fitted with four 160 h.p. German Argus motors, after a bad landing