

Paquin ^{to} 14 September 1914

Sir—Your able sub-leader on the subject of naturalization deserves the careful consideration of all Australians, and the Federal Parliament should at an early date cause some amendments in the Act, with a view of making it more difficult for Germans, in particular, to 'become naturalized British subjects, and also placing those already naturalized on such a footing that they would clearly understand what it meant to violate the oath of allegiance. At present it is altogether a one-sided business, and the person desiring to be naturalized merely considers the personal gain to himself from a financial point of view for the time being—remaining in his heart or hearts a loyal subject of the nation to which he owes his birth, and does not value or sufficiently regard the importance of the oath of allegiance. While on this subject it would be as well for the Federal Parliament to consider the position in Australia of foreign Ambassadors and Consuls. We have been told that a Consul is merely a commercial agent. If this be correct, why did one of these commercial agents advertise for all Belgians to return and take part in the present war, and their passages, &c., would be paid; and another commercial agent take the earliest opportunity of declaring his loyalty to the British Crown, but did not follow the example of the Belgian Consul, whose duties and privileges, it is to be assumed, are identical? We need not go far for an answer. When we find the Germans adopting a system of barbarity and violating all principles of humanity, it behoves us at least to be cautious with Consuls or commercial agents representing that country. At a time like this we need stand on no ceremony. We must understand the position clearly. But is it correct that a Consul is merely a commercial agent; if so, whose commercial agent is he? That a Consul has many privileges and many duties to perform is clearly shown in Spencer Walpole's well-known work on "Foreign Relations," but the time has now arrived when Parliament should define, and clearly define, the distinction between an Ambassador and a Consul, and their respective duties, privileges, and obligations.

I am, Sir, &c., ROINESTOR.

Sir—Every Briton who reads it—no matter where he happened to be born—will be thankful for the leader "Under Which Flag?" in The Register of September 12. The well-known citizen referred to claimed to speak for others besides himself. So far, I think, no equally well-known citizen of German descent has repudiated being included in the "others." Possibly it is not necessary, but many people think such a repudiation would be expedient. Let it not be forgotten that Germany is fighting Australia now, just as much as she is fighting England. The only reason why German cruisers have not made their appearance in Australian waters is not want of will, but inability to get there. It follows that our sons and brothers at Morphettville are going to Europe for the defence of Australia among other things; and it would be interesting to know how many of them bear German names. I know one or two. If it can be shown that the 33,000 German-Australians in South Australia have contributed a fair percentage then much of the present mistrust would disappear.

I am, Sir, &c., T. SCOTT.

Murray Bridge.