From the Philada. Evening Bulletin.

"RICHARD'S HIMSELF AGAIN."

In the year 1850, Richard Wagner, moved thereto by "a desire to purify the realm of musical art," contributed an article to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, which created not a little excitement. The article, it seems, it was entitled "Judaism in Music," and labored to prove that the Jew is, by nature, unfit to produce that which is truly great in art. Trying to the Jew, by his appreciation of the purely ideal, admitting their talent for nothing more exalted than the practical, he conceded that they might make money, they might write, and preceded, to his intense satisfaction no doubt, to prove all that he intended.

Although the article made some stir at the time, the interest in it was short-lived. There was a tacit admission on the part of the better minded, those who could see through the thin veil with which Wagner endeavored to hide his hatred of the Jews, that while his music was claimed to be in advance of the age, his opinions were far behind it. While they were willing to postpone listening to the former, they thought that the latter might, with propriety, be spoken of at once.

With the errors in fact, or the absurd theories by which the musical nightmare of his genius seeks to explain his position, we have naught to do. Our interest in the pamphlet is due to the opportunity it affords us of studying the character of the author. It must have sent sorrow through Israel to learn, from Wagner, that the race is incapable of producing that which can, or should, live in art. It was funny, however, to find that he had chosen Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer as proofs of his theory.

In his subsequent admission of a belief in the genius of Beethoven, we have somewhat an vehicle for a conundrum. To this article of faith we all subscribe and here it may be pertinent to suggest that, with those who most fully understand the genius of Beethoven, Mendelssohn is held in higher esteem than Wagner.

We have no concern with Wagner's position as a composer. For he is from time to time present upon his musical writings. Where they have been produced with every accessory that wealth and science and art can lend to furnish—where singers and players were alike interested in contributing to the success of the performance of an infuriated monarch—audiences came, and yawned, and went away dissatisfied.

The composer would not accept this want of popular success as a proof of a lack of genius, and Wagner declines to accept the verdict of his audiences. They refuse to be interested in him or his works, and the musicians are guilty of the future forbidding blames the Jews. He has behaved so baldly to them that he cannot avoid believing them to be his enemies, and, as such, the cause of his failures. To their relentless hate, provoked by his relentless essay on "Judaism in Music," he ascribes his trouble. Jewish wealth, talent and social influence have combined, he imagines, to crush him.

In this he overrates his own importance. His essay had been forgotten by the majority of those who were at one time annoyed by it. The few who still remembered it film believed that he had grown to be ashamed of its foolish utterances. The Jews whom he, with wounted fatuity, regards as his enemies, had merely proven that they possessed as good taste as their Christian brethren, in ignoring the unsavory compound of prose and poetic monstrosities.

That he does not wish to be let alone we have abundant proof. Unfortunately for his vanity there is no evidence of a desire to gratify his taste for notoriety. Sufficiently egotistic to be ashamed of his failures to excite the public seems determined to judge him on his own merits.

There are certain cases which one might imagine as striking examples of the inconsistency. Such, for instance, as Walt Whitman denying music or rhythm to the verse of Milton, or "Beulah" Evans insisting that St. Elmo is a more genial work than Esmond. Of a piece with these imaginary judgments is the Wagner pronouncement on Mendelssohn. Had he the proper appreciation of his subject, he would not attempt to extravagant a belief in his own excellence. Were he able to sympathize with the genius of one whose creations are delightly free from those spots which Wagner seems to think conducive to fame, we might have been spared some of the bombast and musical antics of the composer of the *Meistersinger*.

It is now nearly twenty years since the essay referred to in these lines first saw the light. Many a heart would have felt ashamed of such progeny, but Wagner feels otherwise, and presents us with a new edition of his "Judaism in Music." Is this the result of a mournful, or is it merely a new bid for notoriety?

FELIX SCHNEIDER.

FLIRTING.

[From the Saturday Review.]

There are certain things which are necessarily described—things so shadowy, so fitful, so dependent on the mood of the moment, both in the actor and the spectator, that analysis and representation are equally at fault. And flirting is one of them. What is flirting? Who can define or determine? It is more serious than talking nonsense, and not so serious as making love; it is not chaff, and it is not feeling; it means something more than indifference, and yet something less than affection; it blinds no one, it convinces no one, it only raises expectations in the individual, and sets society on the tiptoe of curiosity. It is a plaything in the hands of the experienced, but a deadly weapon against the bread of the unwary; and it is a thing so vague, so protean, that the most accurate measurer of moral values would be puzzled to say where it exactly ends and where serious intentions begin. But again we ask, what is flirting? what constitutes its essence? what makes the difference between it and chaff on the one hand, and it and love-making on the other? This is a comparative power, and, according to the old saying of many a little thing a mickle, does a long series of small flirtings make up a concrete whole of love? or is it like an unnoticed heap of bricks, possibility of utility if conditions were changed, but valueless as things are? The man who would be able to reduce flirting to a definite science, who could analyze its elements and codify its laws, would be a benefactor to his fellow-creatures; but we fear that this would be as difficult as finding the pot of gold under the end of a rainbow, or counting small birds with a pinch of salt. Every one has his or her own ideas of what constitutes flirting; consequently every one judges of that pleasant exercise according to individual temperament and experience. Faded flowers, who are improprietry in everything they are no longer able to enjoy, say, with more or less severity, that Henry and Angelina are flirting if they are laughing and whispering in an obscure hedge-row, or in the market-place, or anywhere in the world; but the fact that they are enjoying themselves in their own way, shed a silly cast of thought on the faded flower to think they are after mischief, flirting being to her mind about the same kind of mischief that Satan humanity can appreciate. The watchful mother, intent on her offspring, says that dancing together is necessary for good breeding and just the kind of attention demanded by circumstances. The jealous lover finds