

# A Word With You

THERE are all sorts of critics and each one has a different method of operating. Anyone who has ever tried to do anything, and who has therefore been exposed to a critic, will recognize them.

There is the *prosecuting attorney* type, who keeps you reeling with accusations until you feel sure you're guilty, even if you're not. He daren't stop, because then you might ask *him* a question. Then there's the *Jeremiah*, to whom nothing is right and who wails continually at everything you do.

The *atom bomb* lets go with one terrific blast, but *Halley's Comet* is a little different. He appears in a blaze of indignation, showering criticism right and left, and before you've had a chance to reply, he's gone—but he'll reappear at steady intervals—perhaps once a month, once a year, once every ten years.

The *flyspeck critic* will sit through an entire performance of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," without a ripple. When asked how he liked it, he will reply that it's ungrammatical to say "the most unkindest cut of all"—not realizing that this double superlative is the only way to describe *his* kind.

Even more unkind is the *Eurys-theus critic*—named after the sottish king who commanded Hercules to perform his twelve labors. You may bring Cerberus from Hades or clean the Augean stables—nothing will impress him except why didn't you do it

better? If he tried it himself, he'd fall flat on his face.

The *vanishing American* will descend upon you like a Sioux brave, with a tomahawk and a hoop-de-do, and assail you for not doing this, that and the other. He'll scalp you if you don't carry out his plans. Impressed, you do carry them out—and of course they're a flop. But now our brave is nowhere in sight and unavailable for comment.

His opposite number is *postmortem Charlie*. You wish he'd be available for help and guidance in advance of a project—but he succeeds in dodging you. The moment it's all over, there he is standing in front of you telling you all about what went wrong. If you ask him why he didn't tell you all this in advance, he retorts, "You didn't ask me."

Surely you've met *Little Mary Sunshine* who deals out nothing but compliments—but you feel the razor's edge underneath, and you long for a good honest insult.

And let's not forget the *Swedish nightingale*, who is more impressed by his own sonorous pomposities than by the thing he's criticizing.

At this point Dear Reader asks: "Have you never engaged in the kind of criticism you're complaining about?"

Dear Reader, I would say more about this, but my time is up. See you next month.

Robert (Halley's Comet) Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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