

viable international organization, the USSR participation in the UN has been characterized by obstructive tactics, refusal to cooperate in UN activities to which the USSR was hostile or indifferent, use of UN organs as forums for propaganda assaults on the West, and a general derogation of the effectiveness of the UN.

## COOL BELL

*BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN*

Suddenly, two thousand miles  
From home and boyhood was this sound  
Of a bell he would have known  
Over half the world around.

A cool, cool bell from balsam hills  
Here in the palm-trees' flat hot home;  
The last he followed it, he drove  
Cows home by the Maine coast foam.

But now the bell came into sight,  
And it was under a horse's chin,  
Behind it coolness came on wheels  
After the bronze bell's frosty din.

An old man vending ice-cream came,  
A dozen bare blond boys in tow,  
And this Texan handsomeness  
Joined that of the long ago.

Cool milk, sweet milk still could draw  
The little hot boys home from play;  
The man was safe in boyhood still  
Though miles and many years away.

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# THE THEATRE

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

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## LO, THE POOR CRITIC

IT NEED hardly again be mentioned that many of our theatrical producers' favorite, consoling explanation of any unfavorable criticism of their exhibits is that it was composed by a critic suffering from dyspepsia. That the explanation long since has taken its place in the joke-books has not hindered its autoactivation. The belief that a critic beset by one malaise or another is bound to be influenced by his personal discomfort against a play or show which duty compels him willy-nilly to review is but one of a number of fallacies shared alike by producers, playwrights, and volunteer secular diagnosticians. The fact of the matter is that, instead of being influenced against what he has to review, the critic's indisposition influences him rather in its favor, and for a reason that even the amateur psychologist may determine.

When the critic for one cause or another finds his physical and mental vivacity not what it should be, he, like any other man, is inclined to be

self-apologetic and in that mood far from contentious. He is induced by his enfeebled state to resign himself for the time being to the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, to let things slide, and to avoid anything in the way of discommoding argument. The mere consciousness of so little as a pimple on his nose has been known to humble a man's self-assurance in the presence of another man, or, more particularly, woman whom otherwise he would flee as from the plague. Any critic who has been practising for any length of time knows that the less fit he feels the greater his disposition to be easy on what he reviews. He will not, of course, openly admit it — his *amour propre* is too considerable for that; but the truth remains that any such one depressed by anything short of small-pox is naturally reduced to a charitableness which under other circumstances would be wholly foreign to him.

It is not only theatre criticism that has been inflicted with the opposite conviction. Criticism in general has frequently been criticized in turn on