

Bunkhouse Philosophy

By W. R. COCHRANE, Cowley, Alta.

Looks like someone ought to keep us posted when regulations are put in effect that change the course of our social life. We have always cheerfully accepted the job of furnishing steaks and roasts for the nation with no holds barred in regard to price. We have put up with tariffs and sales tax to keep the government percolating and enable our infant industries, that refuse to grow up, to keep themselves in three-cornered pants. We have been compelled to submit to freight rate boosts so that our railways can still use black ink on their books, keep ahead of the sheriff, and keep their stations and hostleries from falling into disrepair, but by thunder when we are advised that a lot of the music of the present day is controlled and we have to dig up good coin of the realm if we wish to play it at our annual get-together, it is rather "phen-osticatin'" and looks sort of unreasonable like. The boys had no more than got the bills settled up for the annual ball when along comes a notice from some outfit down east a-claiming that our orchestra had played some tunes that they had hog-tied or copywrited or some such thing and reckoning that we should dig up for a permit to operate this foot-stomp in consequence and informing us that some act or other had been put in effect to regulate such things. We're an optimistic, good feeling, hospitable sort of folk out here on the range and when things get to looking a bit tough are apt to keep our spirits up by busting forth into song or get up a dance in order to put our tribulations into the background for a spell. But by so doing we are told that we have run foul of some regulation or other we just get downhearted and plumb frustrated.

Now that the old days are gone we have been endeavoring to try to absorb some of this here culture we have heard tell about. We aim to be law-abiding and always eat our own meat; we've shaved off our handle-bar mustachios so they don't get in the soup and offend the more fastidious. We always leave our shooting irons to home and take off our spurs when we go dancing and refrain from chawing and smoke tailor-mades and drink out of a glass instead of the bottle when visiting where the bright lights shine and feel that we have done our best in this culture annexing business. But, by Dad, temperatures have gone up over this here new regulation and it begins to look as though culture was going to come a bit high. Some of the boys have been threatening to quit cow-tending as they

reckon there ain't much encouragement for them to practice up any of the modern tunes when out riding on the range or fixing fence out behind the butte if they can't try them out at the monthly dance in the Community Hall without making the whole neighborhood liable for permit fees on account of having made a small charge so that they can eventually get the mortgage on the district gathering place paid off. So they reckon that all the practicing they have done on night herd and whilst riding range, all by their lonesome, has been of no avail as they haven't the facilities to ascertain what pieces of music they can use for free and, as these copyright fellers have got such a head-start, they wouldn't be surprised to hear that they had control of the Song of Solomon by now. Things got so serious that we were afraid that the boys would plumb abandon their pursuit of culture and hit for more remote sections of the country so the Bunk House Parliament met in solemn session and, after due deliberation, we feel now that perhaps we may have the proposition licked for a spell. The session felt that they didn't begrudge the folk who compose tunes any financial benefits they can come by, but would like to know who in thunder made their efforts popular if it wasn't folks like us a-taking them up and giving our approval as to whether or not they were of the right calibre and tempo to trip the light fantastic to. Some of the boys who had earned their diplomas for old-time dancing, when some of the modern exponents were still in swaddling clothes, recalled that some of the tunes that are very popular today were in vogue when they were shaking a wicked hoof on the dance floor and they wondered if they are under control now and, as the writers must have ridden to the last round-up a long time since, who are now reaping the permit benefits.

Looking backward to the pioneer days when the country was young and musicians were scarce, we remember a dance being called in one of our cow-towns and when the evening rolled round the music failed to show up. Quite a gathering had ridden in from the ranches for miles around figuring on quite a hop and were quite disappointed when it began to look as though we would have to just sit and visit a spell, while eating the lunch the good ladies had brought along, then saddle up and hit the trail for home. But Hank came to the rescue. Hank rode for a well-known Willow Creek ranch and no one had suspected that he was musically inclined but he had been secretly practicing on a fiddle that he had got in a trade and reckoned

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A lot of Applicator-Castrators are going out for young calves and you'll likely want dehorning supplies as leavin' horns on is going to cost you money from now on.

You folks that's fittin' ponies for the horse show better check your equipment and let us know what you want.

And don't forget to order yer Morton's Tenderquick and Sugar Cure, and Sausage Seasoning so as to have it on hand for butcherin' time.

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he had got one tune down pat and if someone would borrow a fiddle he was sort of anxious to try it out in public. Well, a fiddle was rustled and Hank opened the ball with the Circassian Circle and it went over fine, so the next dance he slowed it up a bit and played her in waltz time and we two-stepped, schottische and quadrilled all evening to the same tune. By golly Hank was an artist and could rig his one-man, one-tune orchestra to any sort of dance anyone suggested. We reckon there must be one tune that these copyright fellers have overlooked and although we are a little late in getting started, owing to the laxness of our representatives, we're going to take the bull by the horns, before our local government gets them all taxed off, and register a tune all our own and reckon we can get along with that till some of our own fellers

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BUNKHOUSE PHILOSOPHY (Continued from Page 37)

get busy and compose some tunes that we can use without paying a fee on. We reckon that we shouldn't be too much surprised over this here permit business as it came from down east, where they seem to be under the impression that we who live out here in God's back fields are anxious and willing to stand and deliver for most any sort of proposition. We send most of our insurance money down where the mighty have pitched their wigwams, they collect pretty heavy on interest out hereabouts; our transportation costs have been a bone of contention for some time; their factories flourish largely due to a protected western market; we pay our share of the transportation subsidies on feed and livestock and now we hear that we will likely have to see that their requirements of the natural gas that we have developed will have to be taken care of before we will be allowed to do any exporting anywhere else.

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