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wheelbarrow and swinging death blows with a hammer. The fence was well flattened and overgrown by thorn bushes. We started to clear these with slashing and grubbing tools, while Perry swung on what wire was left, and the heifers eyed us with smug unconcern. My host, a kind but credulous man, insisted on consulting me about tactical details: the line of the fence, now, was it on the best line? I made a short reconnaissance flight into the thorn bushes to obtain information. I returned safely to base, but sustained some material damage.

"It seems the only practical line," I said.

"You surrre have a hole in your shirt," Perry said.

The vicinity of the fence gradually took on the aspect that forward areas must have worn when Canadian Pacific were pushing through their transcontinental railway. Coils of wire, cut, recut and discarded, snaked everywhere, blood and thorn clippings littered the rocks, Perry saw to it that no tools of the trade were ever handy, and the heifers meditatively chewed the leather glove we had intended for handling barbed wire.

At lunch time we buried our dead and retired from the battlefield temporarily. When we returned to the slaughter in the afternoon we found the heifers had flattened a further section and were standing in our property chewing wisps of a paper bag that had once held staples. We ignored them, drove a post a few yards out in the waters of Lake Unpronounceable, and stretched double chicken wire from it to a tree. Then,

cheered by the way this stayed vertical, we attacked the other two sections, aiming at a four wire masterpiece. We devised an unheard of means of straining the wire with a wrecking bar, a tree, and a shifting spanner, and had one section done in less than an hour.

"We should get the heifers back before we put up the last section," my host said. "I suppose you're used to working with cattle."

I wrapped the fragments of my shirt about me, put Perry out on a cast to the right, and took the lake shore beat myself.

"I see 'em," Perry said, out of sight in the scrub. He let out two terrible cries, and I thought he was gored and trampled, but he was merely urging them down to me, the expert. Three of the four heifers broke past me in a second, thundered along the lake shore and carried our chicken wire before them as if it had been a hair net. The fourth heifer circled in a clearing, shaking her head. I advanced, she dithered, put her head down at me and then backed away into the four wire masterpiece.

"No!" cried my host, covering his eyes. The heifer got her back legs in between the bottom and second strand, kicked out heartily, wheeled and trotted off after her sisters, trailing tinkling strands of glory.

"The resources of our civilisation seem to have come to an end," my host said. "I think Brad could put this up in half a day if we gave him a hand."

"He surrre could," Perry said.

"Spoken like a true Canadian," my host and I said in chorus.

New Shows From the ZBs

WHEN, in our pleasantly unsuperstitious age, we want a label for the cause and effect of circumstance, we usually call it fate. Later we get round to calling it Fate, with a capital letter. And Fate, as everyone knows, is a heartless goddess, even though she has a hand in most things we do. She is always stepping in, willing things, bringing people together or dragging them apart.

This is something of the idea behind the new ZB programme, *Fate Walked Beside Me*, scheduled for broadcast at 1.30 p.m. every Thursday. It has just started at 1ZB, and will have its first broadcast from 2ZB on January 17, from 3ZB on January 24, and 4ZB on January 31.

A series of quarter-hour programmes, it deals with decisive moments in the lives of various people, some fairly ordinary, others more picturesque characters. There is, for instance, the story of the doctor who felt he had to decide whether to let a malformed child live or not; of the plain woman whose blind husband was about to see her for the first time; of Baron Ferrari, the stamp-collector who needed one stamp to make his collection perfect. In the way each acted there was an element of compulsion, this-has-to-be, or whatever you like to call it. Certainly, at the time there was only one way in which they could act.

Needless to say, though, people don't think very much about Fate when they're actually making up their minds. They're too much concerned with practical things. It's only afterwards, when the lovers are holding hands, or the for-



JOHN TATE, one of the players in "Fate Walked Beside Me," a new ZB Thursday afternoon programme

lorn are seeking consolation, that she is thanked or cursed.

THE Kents are the latest to join the long line of serialised families who wear their hearts on their sleeves and tell their troubles to the radio audience. They spend their lives—as do most people of their kind and constitution—getting themselves and each other into and out of trouble. Whether or not the trouble could have been avoided with a little common sense is a pointless question, for the Kents are no common family, as serial lovers will find if they listen to *The House of Conflict* when it begins from 3ZB on January 27 at 7.45 p.m. It will be heard from then on from the Christchurch station on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

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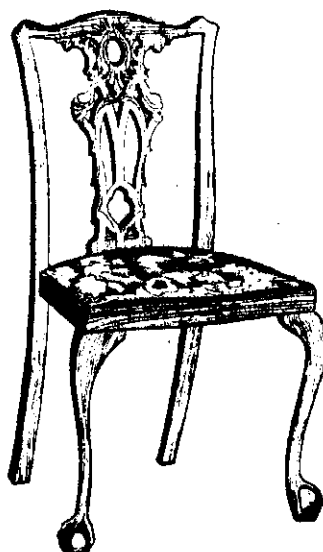
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