"THE ALPS FROM END TO END"

PROFESSOR ARNOLD WALL has appropriately chosen for his talks on the Alps of New Zealand, a title well known to the mountaineering world. The Alps from End to End is the name of one of the best and most popular books on the European Alps, by Martin Conway. Professor Wall's right to use this title for radio talks is the best-he does know our own Alps from end to end. Professor of English at Canterbury College for many years, Arnold Wall has made botany and mountain-tramping his hobbies, and in any other spare time he has written poetry. In search of alpine plants, large numbers of which he has supplied to the herbarium at Canterbury College, Professor Wall has ranged over the whole Alpine region from Mt. Arthur in Nelson and the Northern Kaikouras to the Otago Sounds. He knows the Alps as a bot-'anist, as a lover of mountains, as a poet and as a humanist. One of the best of alpine poems, "A Botanist's Farewell to the Alps," comes from him.

The first of the six talks will be given from 1YA this Thursday, April 9.

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But shocking as it may be, he is right. War is too big for us. Civilisation itself is too big for us. We destroy ourselves with the incompetence inherent in our puny size against our huge accomplishment. We are lost in a maze of our own contriving.

Lieut.-Colonel Garsia points to what he believes is the way out. On his flanks he brings up many wise observations, much interesting fact. It remains doubtful whether these support the idea which is his centre: that a set of rules can quickly conquer mankind's disadvantages among the monsters of his own creating. It remains even more doubtful whether they can be conquered any other way, so Lieut.-Colonel Garsia wins up to a point. At that point the rules stick in the mud of human sensibility, which suspects regulations and rules, and which will not be entirely convinced by Lieut.-Colonel Garsia's remedy for making these static things as dynamic as they should have to be if "automatic planning" were to be effective.

Among the many thoughts or philosophies this extraordinary book creates in the reader's mind there is this: that it would be reassuring to know that our war has been or is being planned as well as Lieut.-Colonel Garsia would have it planned. So long as it works out no better, the Lieut-Colonel will deserve more confidence than the generals he trips so neatly when he relates his system to current facts. But it still leaves an uncomfortable feeling of incompleteness to believe with Lieut.-Colonel Garsia that human intelligence has failed so badly it must be supplanted with a sort of mathematical brain with reason but without rhyme.

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NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, APRIL 10

---S.B.