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Hour has always been that the speakers have something important to say. It is a pity to see them sacrificed to the Moloch of commercial advertisement or mown down in their prime by adherence to a too-rigid programme schedule.

Women Composers

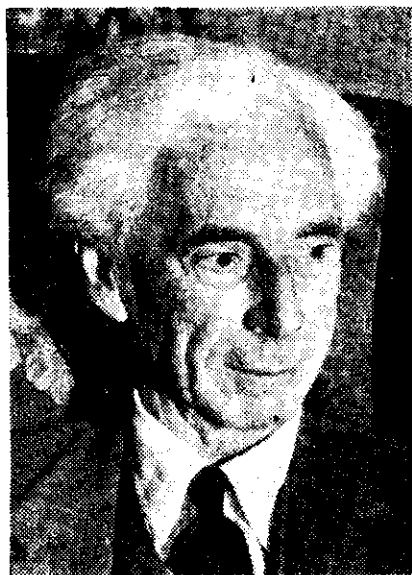
THE broadcast of the elimination contest for the finalist in the Melba Scholarship, held in conjunction with the Dunedin Competitions, was a dismal failure, and must have disappointed many listeners in other centres, who would be listening to 4YA in hopes of hearing the singer from their own district. Something went wrong with the technical side of the relay, and the intermittent bursts of song which came over in the early stages were just enough to make listeners really irritated, especially as the winner was one of those who had already sung before the hitch was remedied. It was a consolation to find that on the same evening's programme from 4YA there was a good studio recital by Patricia Thorn, who chose a group of modern art songs by women composers. With a very few exceptions, women have not distinguished themselves in compositions on a larger scale, but a programme such as this illustrated their ability to make a thoroughly artistic job of a smaller work. Ethel Smyth maintained that there was a male conspiracy against the recognition of women composers, which may indeed have been a factor to be reckoned with in her early days; but I imagine the field to be an entirely open one nowadays, and there must be other reasons why the famous woman composer hasn't yet arisen.

Original Compositions

MOST music-lovers would be interested in the 4YA broadcast of the two compositions for two pianos which shared the 1948 Philip Neill Prize. The winners this year were Donald Byars and John Ritchie, and their works were performed by Professors V. E. Galway and Vernon Griffiths. It was inevitable, when the works were played following each other on the same programme, that comparisons would be made by the listeners; but it was plain why the judges had decided to share the prize, for in musical ability the two works displayed were of equal merit. These efforts suggest that the science of composition is well taught and well apprehended in our universities; but there is more than the study of the technique of composition in the making of a composer. The one thing which cannot be taught is the production of the raw material of the composer's art, his ideas, themes, inspirations. Here I thought the second composition scored. Donald Byars's Variations were on a borrowed theme; but the delightful and breezy theme of John Ritchie's Passacaglia was evidently the composer's own, and lent itself to a really sparkling fugal treatment.

THE REITH LECTURES

LAST spring it was announced that the BBC had established an annual series of lecture broadcasts, to be known as the Reith Lectures. The intention was that each year some acknowledged authority—in literature, philosophy, sociology, public affairs, or some other field—would be invited to undertake some original research and present his findings in four to seven broadcasts. It was hoped that by careful selection of speaker and subject the lecture-series would not only prove to be the peak



EARL RUSSELL

of the BBC's effort in serious talks, but would also become a significant national institution.

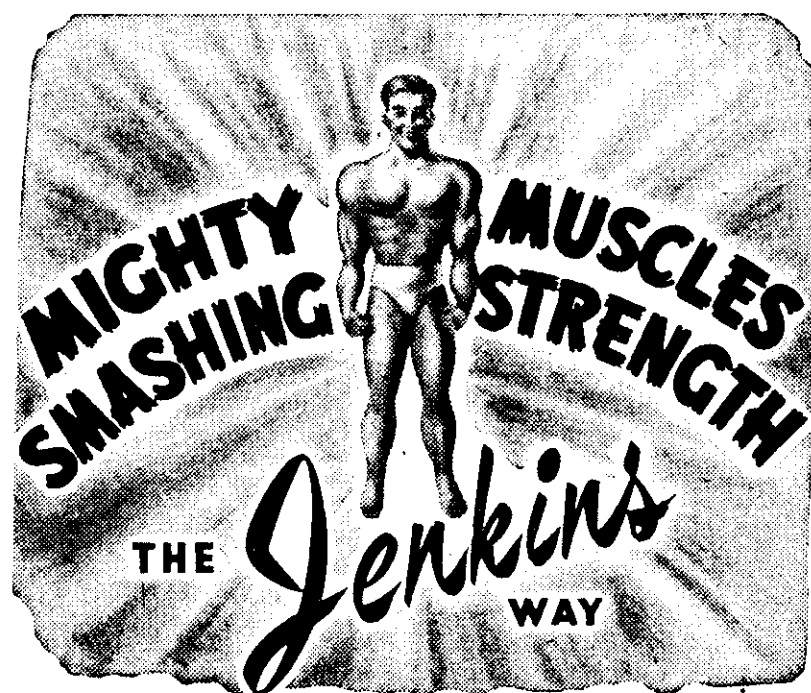
News of the first lecturer and his subject suggests that the series will be impressively inaugurated. The lecturer will be Earl Russell, better known to the world as Bertrand Russell, the philosopher and mathematician, and his subject will be *Authority and the Individual*.

According to the BBC's announcement Earl Russell will "examine the great theme which runs through history from the time of ancient Greece, and is raised in the world to-day in an acute form. The need for individual liberty to give sufficient play to initiative and to creative thought and action has to be considered against the need for social cohesion and law. Lack of balance can lead on the one hand to anarchy, but on the other to tyranny. The interplay of these two forces will be illustrated historically, leading to an analysis with direct reference to the world to-day."

There will be six lectures in the first Reith series, and each will last thirty minutes.

NATIONAL FILM UNIT.

THE National Film Unit's Weekly Review No. 367, which will be released on September 17, is a full-reel item on the work of the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society. This organisation (which has branches throughout the Dominion) has helped to bring health to many crippled children in New Zealand and the Film Unit's review helps to show how this humanitarian work is being carried out.



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