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SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 1938.

THIS WEEK USHERS IN THREE NEW PLAYS TO BROADWAY

TIME INTO THEATRE

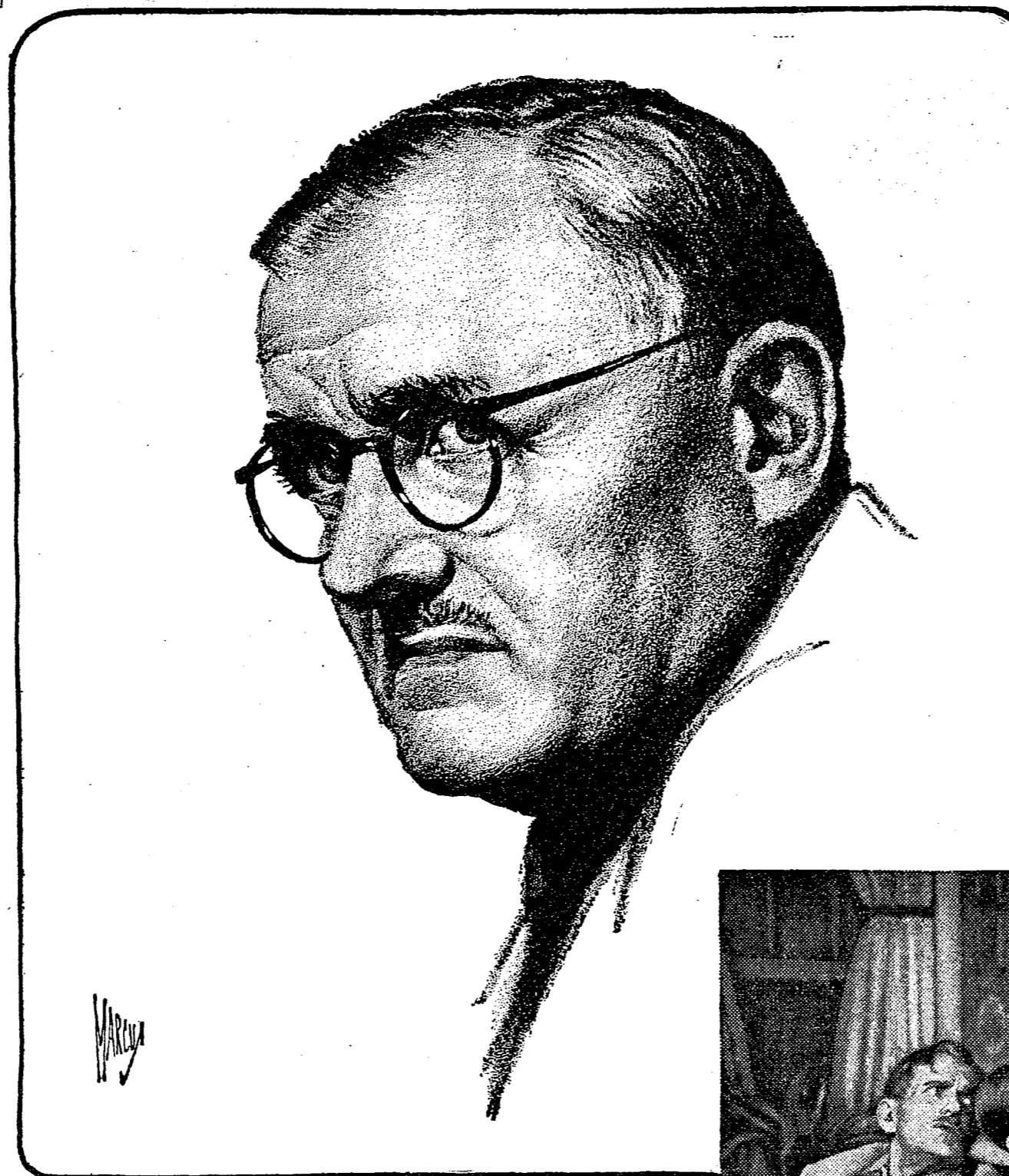
J. B. Priestley Applies a Scientific Theory To a Stage Play

By BROOKS ATKINSON
In an adjoining column J. B. Priestley, author of the current "Time and the Conways," takes issue with this department's first night assertion that he "writes down to the theatre."

But the case of "Time and the Conways" which has been welcomed in London as a masterpiece, is more individual. Some popular English authors, like Rodney Ackland, are scarcely known to American audiences.

"Time and the Conways" also derives from "Midnight on the Desert." In that "exursion into autobiography" Mr. Priestley records his delight in the time theories of P. D. Ouspensky and J. W. Dunne.

MR. PRIESTLEY'S current play is based in the simplest terms possible on the time theory of J. W. Dunne, which is that the past, present and future of our lives are in existence simultaneously.



Lucas & Pritchard. All from "On Borrowed Time," these players are Richard Bennett (drawing and on the left of the scene), Peter Miner, Jean Adair and Dorothy Stickney.

GOSSIP OF THE RIALTO

THE news this morning is that Labor Stage presently is to woo the spoken drama again, as opposed to the musical drama, and with help from none other than "Dead End" Sidney Kingsley.

Charles Robinson is getting set to put out his shingle again as a Broadway producer. (He did once before as a co-producer; remember "The Patriot" of November, 1929, in which when his brother already was dead, and he, himself, was about to be executed, a character remarked, "Mother will fret a lot.")

Though he has no option, John Golden has something just as good—the first refusal—for that play called "The Gardener's Window," the work of Louis E. Sheater and Norman Clark.

As to Mr. Golden's other plans—most of them in suspended animation awaiting script revisions—they involve (in addition to the World's Fair, co-producer Mr. Grover Whalen) these affairs: The new play by Edward Childs Carpenter and Morris Ryskind.

MAILED FISTS ACROSS THE SEA

The London Failure of 'You Can't Take It With You' Again Brings Up the Question of Anglo-American Taste

By CHARLES MORGAN
LONDON, Dec. 23.
Nothing are peoples so divided as in their sense of humor, and no division between the American and English peoples is harder to define than this.

If the position is to be understood, it must be understood first of all that there is in England a snobism which requires fashionable, or would-be fashionable, people to applaud American humor when they can. They imitate your slang;

CAN'T TAKE IT

"You Can't Take It With You," America's sensation of last season and this, opened at the St. James's Theatre, London, on Dec. 22. A. P. Kaye went from this side for the role of Grandpa Vandenhof; the remainder of the cast were engaged in England.

The girl who wishes to be a ballet dancer, the father who makes fireworks, the mother who taps out plays on a typewriter with the hysterical futility of a cat licking a fur glove, the heroine who, in the English performance, appears to have no individuality at all—these people seem to have no link



tasy by Post Wheeler and Mr. Gold-wood, in for the future. A cast of 100 is required and the blueprints call for an elaborate production.

To return for a moment to Mr. Marcin, he is spelling his script-doctoring with high thoughts of The Students' Stage Guild.

But "You Can't Take It With You" was too much. A considerable proportion of the cast was English. Some of the trouble may have its origin there, but by no means all.

At this point one begins to perceive why, in England, this tale is dull. The social differences are meaningless as presented to us, for, though a list of the clubs to which the rich father belongs is read out, the man himself is as much a vulgar as the poor family with which the dramatists propose to contrast him.

Item: Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne and a gang have been rehearsing at odd minutes for quite a time.

Item: A group under the direction of Benno Schneider plans a production.

Item: The Robert Steiner group—this includes Viola Roache and Uta Hagan—started rehearsing last Friday with hopes of opening in mid-February.

Item: James Bell and Joyce Arling have withdrawn from the Steiner group.

Let this corner supply bleak January with a touch of warmth, under the heading of Summer Theatre Notes.

(a) The Messrs. Richard Skinner and Day Tuttle, proprietors of the Westchester Playhouse at Mount Kisco, are enlarging same to swell capacity from 376 persons to 564.

(b) The Mohawk Drama Festival plans six or seven plays during July and August, again under the direction of Charles Coburn.

(c) Helen Arthur will be the executive director of the Spring's Ann Arbor (Mich.) Dramatic Season. Opening date, May 17.

Let me give another example, from my own experience. Just over two years ago a play of mine called "Eden End" was produced here. It had enjoyed a good and profitable run in London, where it had been highly praised by nearly all our more serious dramatic critics and, what gave me especial pleasure at the time, by such fellow-writers as H. G. Wells, E. M. Forster, Rebecca West, Noel Coward, John Van Druten, Clifford Bax.

London playwrights like to put on their nicest clothes, sit in the golden dusk of the Haymarket and St. James's Theatres, chuckle over some ancient retainer of a joke or let their eyes fill with tears at some pathetic genteel whimsy.

"Room Service" is in a different world. It is a fantastic projection of something known and comprehensible. One of the people in the Kaufman-Hart play keeps snakes in a glass container; another dances on all occasions; a third, for no reason in particular, brings a grand duchess to supper; and an unexplained woman is found drunk on a sofa.

But the people in "Room Service" begin on the map of experience and, as the degree of fantasticism increases, move continuously toward its edges. They move fast and wittily—and in a way that never depends for its effect on shades of social difference incomprehensible in England.

Item: James Bell and Joyce Arling are considering—though vaguely—a production of "The Sea Gull."

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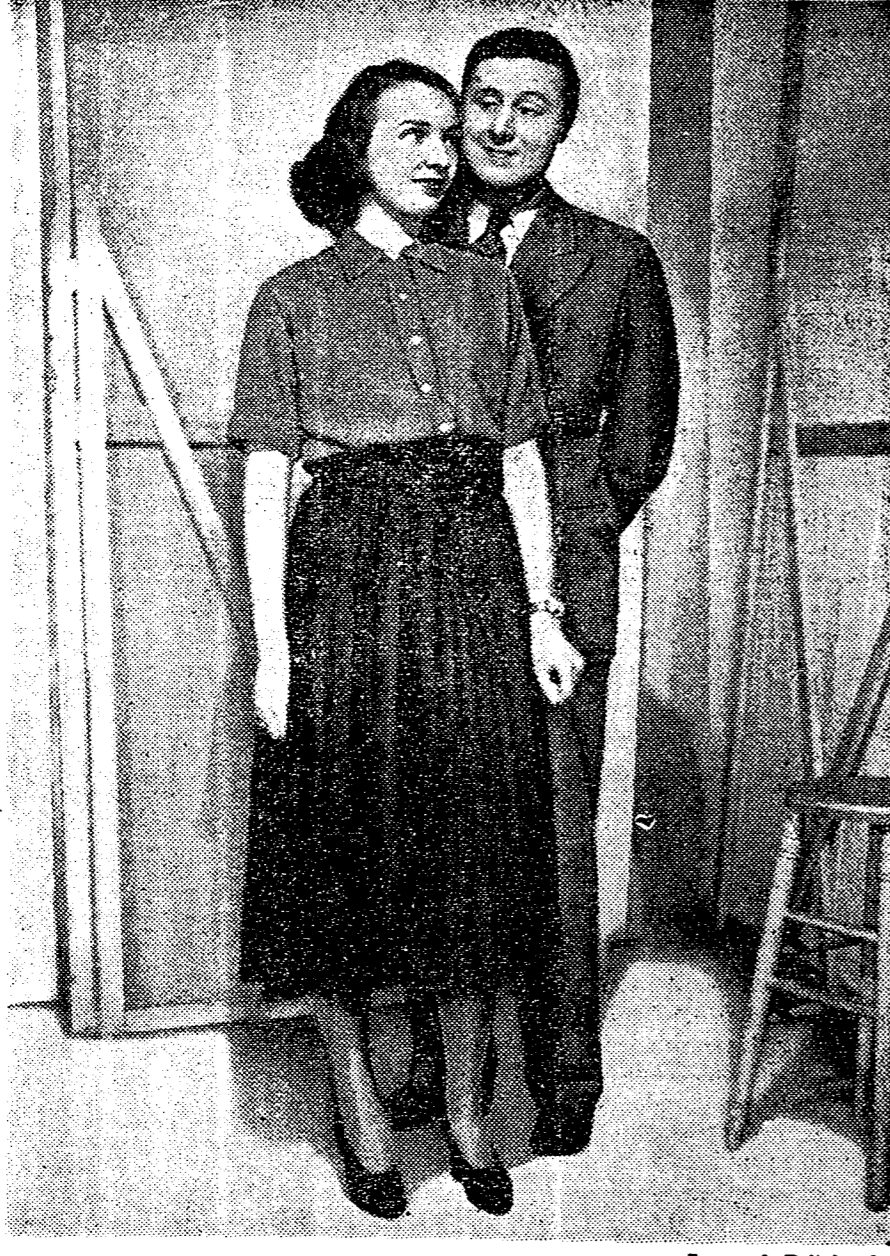
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(d) The St. Louis Municipal Opera



Lucas & Pritchard. Carmel White and Allyn Joslyn are in George Abbott's latest enterprise, "All That Glitters."

THE OPENINGS

ONE-THIRD OF A NATION—Tomorrow evening at the Adelphi Theatre. The Federal Theatre Project here offers a play, in the Living Newspaper style, on the housing problem. In the company are Charles Dill, Clarence R. Chase, Jan Ullrich, Peggy Coudray and Tommi Bissell.

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