

MILLIONAIRES ARE NOW GETTING MORE INTERESTED IN JAILS

Birsky Tells Zapp Reform Will Result in Endowments to Prisons for Tiled Bathrooms

Zapp Explains Idea Is to Send Convicts Out to Look for Work—Not for Revenge

BY MONTAGUE GLASS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIGGS.

"I SUPPOSE you are reading in the paper from this here Mr. Osburn?" Barnett Zapp said, as he finished his second cup of coffee in Wasserbauer's restaurant.

"The way the papers is so full of news nowadays," Louis Birsky replied, "I am lucky if I get through every day a couple of Mexican murders and the real estate notes. What did he ever do that he should run for President?"

"Or buttonhole makers," Birsky interrupted.

"Nine times out of ten a convict didn't got a show in the world," Zapp said.

"Neither did a buttonhole maker,"

first degree, and for the rest of his days he's a convict. Then the idea is to make the patient as comfortable as possible with chicken soup and moving pictures, and they learn him stenography, typewriting and bookkeeping, so as when he recovers or escapes he wouldn't got to go back to housebreaking or safe blowing, but could go in for something more befovet, like raising checks or forgery."

"You are the same as a whole lot of

here Osburn wants to put in a tiled bathroom with each cell and give a grand opera show every night, Zapp, he's got my permission; the only thing is he should quit talking about it, because as it is now, y'understand, Osburn and his friends goes round and gives lectures to churches, lodges and ladies' clubs, and he tells 'em how when he first come to Sing Sing the place was so dead, y'understand, it was just like being in jail, whereas nowadays they give parties up there and have elegant meals and everybody is happy and contented, y'understand, and the consequence is a lot of fellers which formerly worked themselves to death for ten or twelve dollars a week gets an idee from hearing this feller Osburn talk that if they want to improve themselves all they got to do is to go out and knock somebody on the head, which Gott soll hueten it should be, Zapp, it would be just my luck that the feller overdoes the thing and gets electrocuted."

"Osburn ain't getting off lectures about Sing Sing to exercise his voice, Birsky," Zapp said. "People invites him to these affairs. They want to hear what the feller is doing, because they take an interest in such things, and they ain't schnorrers like us, Birsky. They're rich people—millionaires."

"Sure, I know," Birsky continued. "They want to find out just what they are up against in case they didn't got the right dope from their lawyers before they went into the last big merger and floated that \$100,000,000 bond issue. What them fellers would like to see is that every cell should be big enough to take an army size Oriental rug, with a stock ticker on top of the humidifier in the corner. Millionaires is getting more interested in jails every day, Zapp, and if the Government goes to work and gets after all them millionaires which is allowing themselves such liberal cash discounts in the income tax statements, Zapp, instead of leaving their money to hospitals because they got treated so good in Mount Sinai that time they had stomach trouble, them millionaires will remember how kind Mr. Osburn was to them that time they had income tax trouble or railroad bond trouble or anti-trust trouble, and the first thing you know, Zapp, you will read it in the papers:

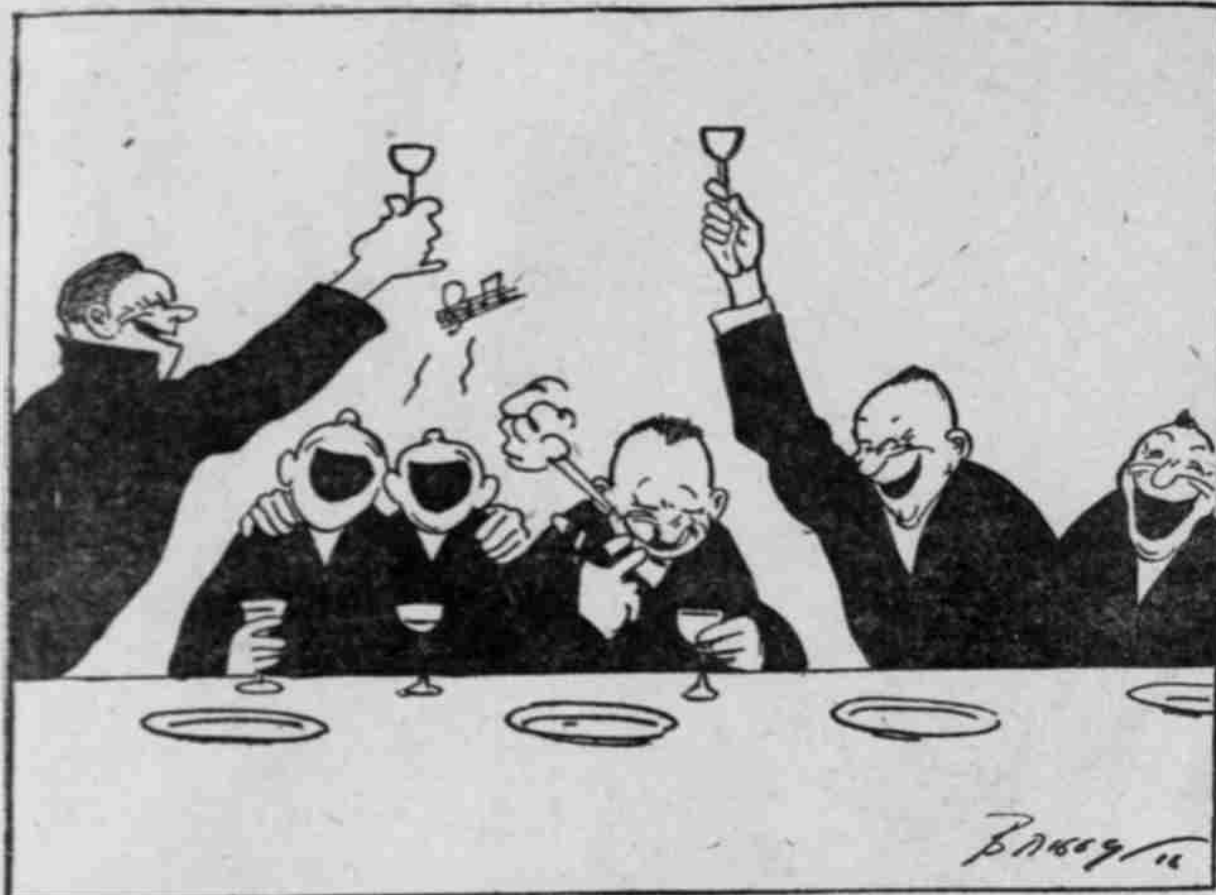
"\$2,000,000 TO SING SING
"Prison Benefits by Will of J. Van Rensselaer Mezzummen.
"Or when real estaters is taking out a couple good sucker prospects in automobiles to see lots 422 to 428, inclu-

sive, in Block 61, on a map filed in the Office of the Register of the County of Westchester, January 2d, 1916, by the number 2649, y'understand, one of the talking points will be that from any part of the property you could see the new buildings of the Judson K. Rayvock Memorial Jail, and the grounds is all fixed up elegant with flowers and trees like a high-class cemetery development, and there is lady trained nurses in white caps leading round the patients. The biggest cripple among them is an old feller which is suffering from a chain of busted banks, and when after a couple of weeks the President discharges him as incurable, he's going to live in a little cottage with his wife and take no more interest in nothing except to collect ocean steamers, and when he comes in the house and says to his wife: 'Look, Mommer, here's a new one—forty thousand tons,' she smiles and pats him on the shoulder and says: 'My! Ain't that nice!' and then she turns her head so he can't see she's crying to think that her husband who only a few months ago was a big, strong man, running two trust companies, three National banks, and a life insurance company into the ground, should now be happy like a little child over getting another forty-thousand-ton ocean steamer for his collection."

"Sure, I know," Zapp said, "but the idee of prison reform is that if the jail where Morse was would have been the way Mr. Osburn wants to make Sing Sing, Birsky, and Morse's friends would come to Mr. Taft and say the feller was dying, y'understand, Mr. Taft would say: 'Well, he's got a decent place to die in, anyhow.' As it stands today, Birsky, if you would

keep a dawg in a place like they keep convicts, and the neighbors complained about you, y'understand, they would arrest you and send you to a jail which would make the place where you kept the dawg look like the waiting-room of the new Pennsylvania station, the old prison idee being that the next time you felt like treating a dawg like a dawg, Birsky, that you will remember what happened to you the last time. As a matter of fact, Birsky, the idee don't

Probably people figure that here they've been paying insurance premiums for years on burglary and theft policies and never had so much as a collar button stolen on 'em to show for it, so why should Mr. Osburn reform these burglars just to make it easy for the burglary insurance companies? Also, Birsky, while we are talking about it, people ain't nearly so sore that Morse didn't get punished enough for what he done, as they are disappointed that he



"HAVE ELEGANT MEALS AND EVERYBODY IS HAPPY AND CONTENTED."

"He ain't running for President, but he's got a lot of people sore at him," Zapp said. "Also there is also a lot of people says the feller is all right, and I think so, too. He believes that them fellers should get more out of life than just working and sleeping and a little exercise and meat only three times a week. He believes they should go on a moving picture once in a while and to a theayter also."

"I believe so, too," Birsky said. "In fact, I was speaking to one of them by the name Tazee Margonin the other day, and I says to him the same like you says about going once in a while to a moving pictures, and he said what could an operator do which gets only ten dollars a week? A presser and a buttonhole maker is the same, Zapp. All them fellers is up against it for money something terrible."

"What are you talking nonsense—

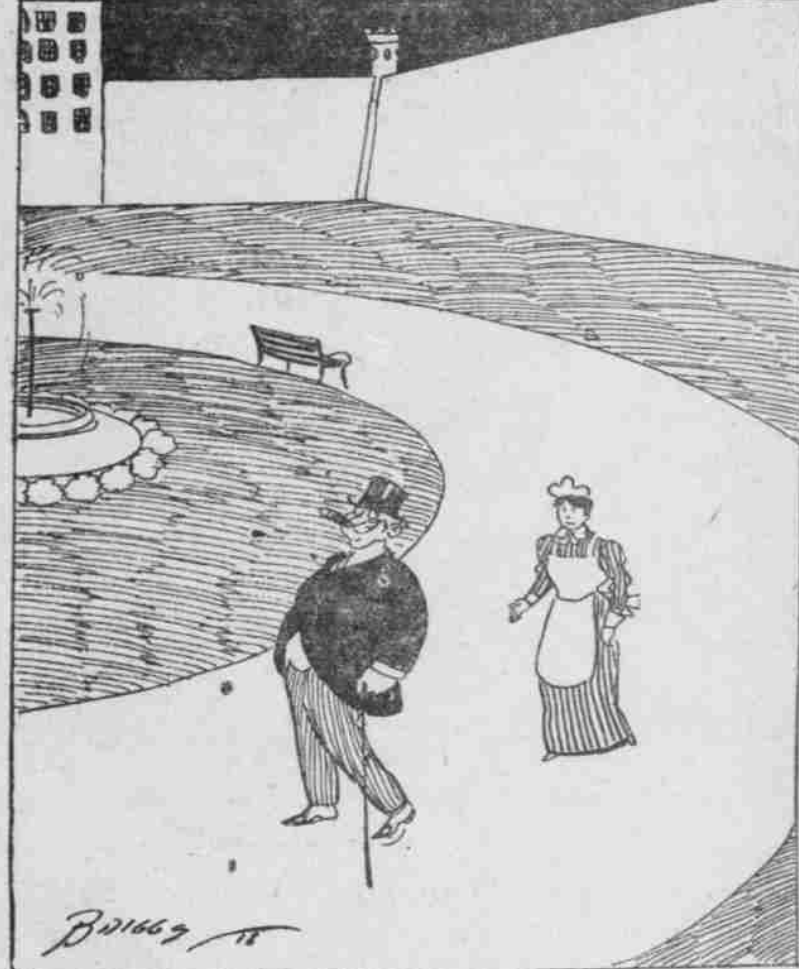
Birsky retorted, "and he worked his way up to be anyhow a buttonhole maker, whereas the convict become a convict."

"I wouldn't argue with you," Zapp said, "but a buttonhole maker don't got to remain a buttonhole maker if he don't want to, whereas when you are a convict it's got to run its course like stomach trouble."

"Sure, I know," Birsky agreed, "and that's the way it is nowadays. People treats a convict like he would got up one morning perfectly strong and healthy with a wife and six children, and he kisses 'em all good-bye and goes downtown, y'understand, happy and contented that he is a decent, respectable citizen, understand me, eats a hearty lunch, smokes a good cigar, and in the drop of a bucket, y'understand, he gets stricken down in the prime of life with grand larceny in the

other people, Birsky," Zapp said. "Just because Mr. Osburn wants to have a prison a place for human beings and not dawgs, y'understand, you claim he is trying to make Sing Sing a sort of combination between the Waldorf-Astoria and Palm Beach; if somebody says that every room in a tenement-house should ought to got anyhow one window, you say: 'What do you want for fourteen dollars a month—studio apartments?' If the Board of Education pays a professor ten dollars to give a public lecture for a thousand people, you holler your head off that it's the equivalence of hiring Caruso and Pavlova, and you wouldn't put it beyond the Board of Education that they split up with the professor on his fees and their wives is shopping in twin sizes with the proceeds."

"I don't know what you are talking about at all," Birsky said. "If this



"SUFFERING FROM A CHAIN OF BUSTED BANKS."



"Where they learn a convict to go out and look for revenge."

work out that way, because all the time you are in that black hole, Birsky, you are saying to yourself: 'Wait till I get out of here and I'll show that dawg what cruelty to animals really ought to be.' And after you get out, every time you meet a dawg and nobody is looking, you kick the dawg for the sake of his friend who got you into jail."

"What are you talking nonsense, Zapp?" Birsky said. "I never look at a dawg from one year's end to the other."

"I am only talking in a manner of speaking, Birsky," Zapp explained. "I am trying to tell you that Mr. Osburn wants to make a prison a place where they learn a convict to go out and look for work, while the people which is opposed to Mr. Osburn want to make a prison a place where they learn a convict to go out and look for revenge."

didn't go to work and die as promised. Furthermore, it wouldn't been so bad if the feller had started in to bust a few more banks and trust companies, but when he turns right around and makes a legitimate fortune in the ocean steamship business, it breaks them all up."

"Say, I ain't knocking Morse," Birsky protested. "The way the real estate business is nowadays, I'd be willing to spend a couple years in Sing Sing under Mr. Osburn's management, if I thought I could make a tenth the success that Morse did after he come out."

"The chances is you'd be sent right back again," Zapp concluded, "because the police is very old-fashioned that way, like the people that oppose Mr. Osburn. They like to see an ex-convict behave as such, and it ain't their fault if he don't."

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AS THE ARTIST SEES LIFE SARA MOORE



BY SARA MOORE

THE LAST STRAW—(FOR THE WOMAN WHOSE HUSBAND ENCOURAGED HER TO DRESS IN A "SIMPLE AND WHOLESOME" WAY.) "NOW, MY DEAR—THERE GOES MY IDEA OF A LOVELY WOMAN."

RECKLESS QUOTATIONS—GUARD YOUR ILLUSIONS, THEY ARE ALL THAT MAKE LIFE WORTH WHILE.—FROM "WIDOWS' WISDOM."