

The MINISTER OF JUSTICE WHO WAS RUINED 15,000 FAMILIES AND SWINDLED HIS KING WHILE PLAYING A DOUBLE PART A THIEF

A MAN of portly build, dressed in the height of fashion, wearing a silk hat and carrying a cane, walked through the doors of the police headquarters in Copenhagen.

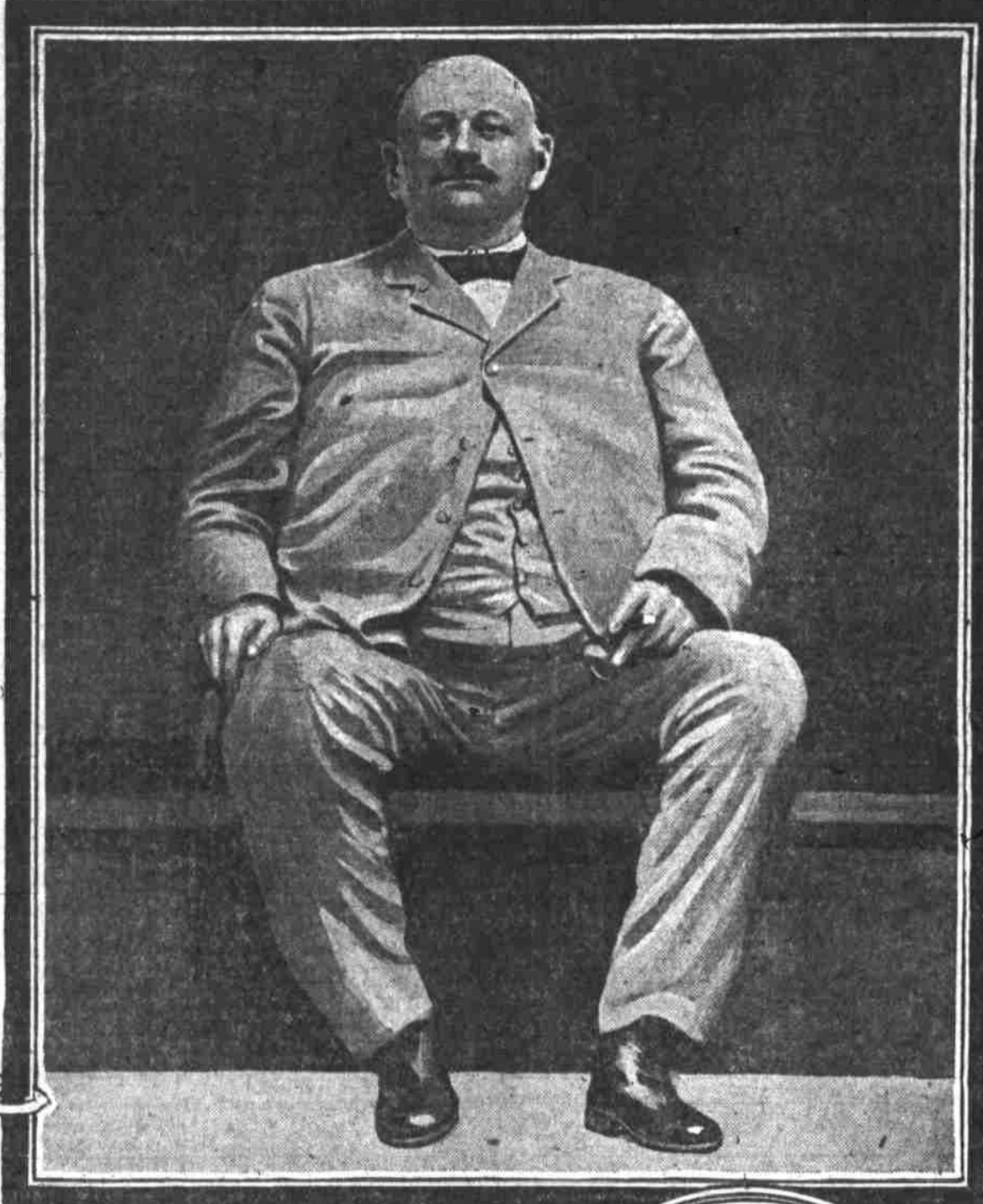
He passed leisurely up the broad hallway and stopped at the door of the chief detective inspector. He entered without knocking. As he appeared a number of police officials and detectives bowed profoundly.

"Good morning," said former Minister of Justice Alberti, cordially extending his hand. A visit from the former cabinet minister, who on his retirement from office some weeks before had been decorated by King Frederick with the highest honor in Denmark, was unprecedented. The officials were almost dazed.

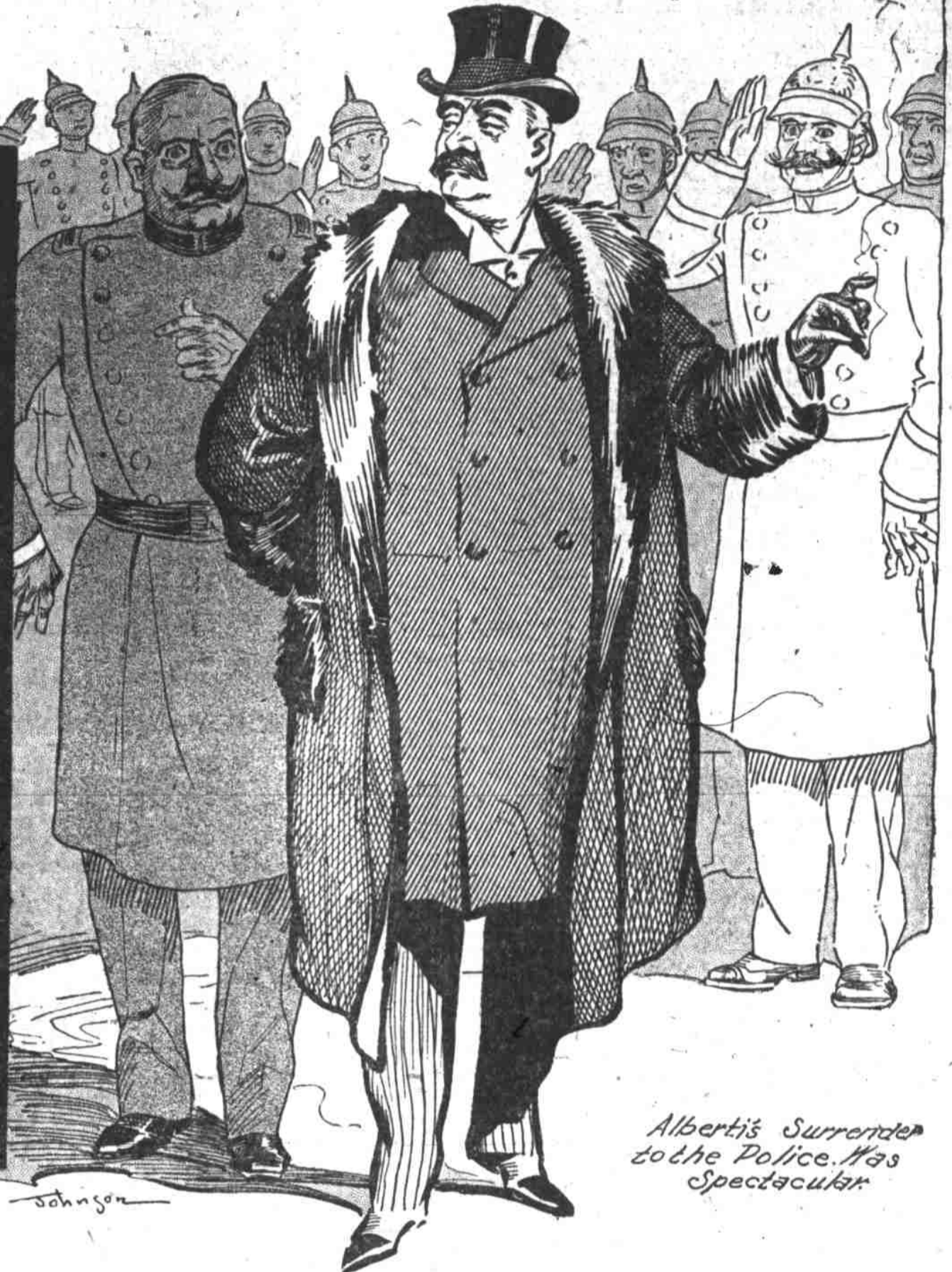
"I wish to speak to you," blandly declared the impressive former minister graciously. "By all means." The officer led the way into an inner office.

Seating himself comfortably in a leather-covered chair, removing his hat and slowly peeling off his gloves, the former dignitary spoke slowly, calmly, gently:

"Listen. I've come to give myself up. I am guilty of fraud and forgery," he smiled cheerfully. "See." He produced a receipt from a bank for bonds worth \$2,500,000, and added: "Those signatures are forged. I'm caught—like a gentleman."



M. Adler Alberti, Cabinet Minister and Champion Swindler.



Alberti's Surrender to the Police. Was Spectacular.



The King of Denmark, Who Lost Half a Million Dollars.

the police were stunned. When the public heard of his confession at first they could not believe it—grasp it—comprehend it! And then when it dawned upon them, and when his confession was verified, they were staggered and bewildered.

It was learned that for fourteen years the most honored man in Denmark had led a veritable Jekyll and Hyde existence, that he had used his position for the most daring, most unscrupulous forgeries; that his position as minister of justice was used for private gain, and that contracts for materials to be used for public improvements had been purchased at exorbitant prices from his own firms.

What his defalcations actually amount to has as yet not been determined. Alberti himself estimates them as from \$2,750,000 to \$4,150,000. There is a widespread belief in Denmark that even the latter figure will be exceeded.

As it now appears, Alberti was an opportunist. Without any definite political opinions or any outlined policy, he seized every opportunity for self-advancement, falling in line now with one party and then with the other, acting as moderator between the opposing factions, and thereby winning a reputation for level-headedness and sound business ability.

Alberti, now notorious as the most daring and unscrupulous forger of Europe, is the son of Kristian Karl Alberti, a well-known and honored lawyer and founder of the Peasants' Savings Bank.

In politics his father championed the interests of the farmers and won their confidence. They became customers of his bank, as did their sons after them. Young Alberti took up the study and practice of law



Prime Minister Christensen, Who Had Faith in Alberti Until the Last.

and when a young man organized a fire insurance company.

A desire for wealth filled him. The fever of gambling got into his veins. He wished to become the greatest power, financial and political, of Denmark. His life was directed toward this goal; every opportunity that might further his ambitions was utilized. His attention to business was absolute; he labored indefatigably. He won the honor and confidence of people—and success.

In the interests of his fire insurance company

Alberti was compelled to make frequent trips to London, and there, it is said, began to play the stock market.

About the time he began to speculate in the London stock market he developed political aspirations. This was about 1892. The reform party was then gathering force and Alberti saw his opportunity. He became the leader.

Opponent after opponent he vanquished, and he was swept into office years ago. He was appointed a deputy and advocate in the Supreme Court. He purchased a newspaper and became the most powerful politician in Denmark. To his credit it must be said many beneficial laws were enacted through his agency, and when, in 1901, he was appointed to the cabinet and made minister of justice he carried out many reforms.

Meanwhile, as he rose to power and won the absolute confidence of the king, he had been unscrupulously gambling with the people's money. Wild plunges were made in the Paris and London markets, and, almost invariably, he lost.

His method, according to his confession, was to take bonds from the safe of his savings bank and deposit them in other banks, thereby getting advances on them. Loans were made on this basis in London and Paris; only a few weeks before his disgrace Alberti tried to raise a large sum of money in London.

Big sums were advanced to Alberti by many man-

ufacturing enterprises and from friends, even from King Frederick himself.

Charges were first made against Alberti many years ago in the "Politiken," the leading journal of Copenhagen. These attacks were long continued and bitter, but people paid little attention to Viggo Hoerup, the editor. For was not Alberti a minister, the confidant and adviser of the king? When Hoerup died Henrik Cavling took the editorship and continued the opposition to the minister. Still the public did not believe.

Then—somehow—the editor got some one in sympathy with him into Alberti's bank as director. The reports of the meetings were made to the newspaper editor, and finally revelations leaked out that something was wrong with the bank.

There were accusations, too, that Alberti used his position for private gain. Charges were made that materials for public improvements were purchased from his own companies, that because of his policies real estate speculators were able to make money, which was shared with Alberti, and that, furthermore, he was behind lottery companies operating in defiance of the laws of the country.

Formal charges were framed against him, but because of the friendship and confidence of J. C. Christensen, Danish premier, investigations were deferred. Last June Alberti resigned his portfolio on the pretext of ill health. It was accepted, and the king, to show his confidence in his favorite, in the face of charges, conferred upon him an honor never given to any but retiring premiers and made him a member of the board of the Great Northern Telegraph Company.

In the face of such confidence what could the people do? What could they believe? Alberti was a hero, a man grossly calumniated, and his accusers found themselves more unpopular than ever.

Alberti himself, alone in his palatial home, saw the structures of his ambitions tottering down about him. He foresaw the inevitable disclosures that must come—when the officials of the bank made their investigations.

Here was a man who had reached an apex of power. His word with his party had been taken without question. Laws were passed at his dictation. To him the king confided his secrets and plans, as the king's father, Christian, had done before him. He had been the sponsor of reforms. He had become the idol of the people. Now he was about to lose their respect and love, and become the most wisely execrated man in the country.

HONORED IN OTHER LANDS

The day before he left the ministerial buildings honors were conferred upon him by Greece, Norway and Germany. His name shone before men, yes, before the nations! That he would soon be branded as a scoundrel, an embezzler, one of the most notorious and despicable of the age—did this cause him anguish during the long nights?

What can tell? He stood high in the church; his charities were many. He was soon to bear the ignominy of a man who robs the poor of their savings. His friends still rallied to his defense; the king had invited him a few days before to a meeting of the Royal Shooting Club, where he sat next the monarch. What was to be done? During all the time when charges were made against him he had preserved a calm demeanor, his eloquent defense of himself had disarmed all suspicion. But now the fatal day had come.

Morning dawned and Alberti, dressed in his best, entered an automobile and drove to the police building. That afternoon the inspector of savings banks closed his institution. Before the Stock Exchange of Copenhagen closed the news of the appalling confession of defalcation was known. That night while the streets of the capital were thronged with people, while frenzied men and women who had lost their all wandered the streets, howling curses upon the man they had trusted, Alberti sat in his cell, the cabinet held a meeting and later resigned—a cloud of dishonor upon it.

About thirty years ago Alberti's only brother left Denmark because he was implicated in frauds. Alberti's divorced wife is now the wife of Peter Cornelius, the Danish tenor.

What Has Become of the Fall Crop of Slang?

HAVE you noticed something missing this fall—the usual crop of slang? That is, real good, striking, catchy slang words and phrases.

Not for a number of years has the slang production been at such a low ebb. How little really new and good has been devised by phrase or word makers since last winter? Of course, one hears on every side the "fine and dandy" miniature imitation of good slang, but how little else?

NEW slang terms are the life of new slang comedies, as they enliven the streets. In a way, they keep things going and preserve us from mental indigestion.

There's something delightfully unconventional, a suggestion of a freedom from the trite and hidebound, in the use of slang. In the course of time many slang words become invested with a certain literary repute and become recognized as good English.

For what "gets 'em going" so much as a happy word, such as "rubber-neck" to the rubbers in a theater! What delights the sentimentally inclined as a "soft" song with lots of "gush" words in it! What becomes so popular as a slang word, and who doubts that "on the bum," as a term of description, "riddled" more gentle folk than Mr. Cleveland's correct "innocuous desuetude"?

But what is the matter with this season's slang-makers? Have their brains "petered out"? Or are they taking a vacation? There have been almost no new and striking slang "wurruds" this fall. The slang crop is poor.

Are you interested in slang? Have you never realized that "four-flushing" is a more contemptuous expression for the "mutt" who cheats at cards than the correct English adjective "unfair"? Or that to call a man a "light wad" is more eloquent than to call him "extremely economical"? And would you not like better to "smash" a gentle enemy than merely to "punch" him?

To tell some one that a friend is "pinched" is to give a more comprehensive idea of his plight than to say he was merely placed under arrest. Slang is usually terse and expressive. Almost every season new slang words and phrases



come into favor. But how it seems the supply is exhausted. Many of the words so popular a few years ago are already lost in the mists of the past.

One does not hear the expression, "O slush," nearly so much as one did four years ago. Even, "O piffle," is losing favor. "Get the nook" gave way to "twenty-three, skidoo," and even now this eloquent term is losing ground.

Many old slang terms have become recognized by the dictionary authorities. In the sixteenth century a "blackguard" was a menial who traveled with a lord and carried smoky utensils. Once a person who talked grandiloquently was said to use "bombast," which meant literally cotton wadding used to pad hoselets of that early period. It is now a recognized term in English. Other old slang words which by usage have been made proper are "cockney," "fop," "srit," "dude" and "sand."

Slang has always been favored by the "lodies" and "gentle" of the "dramatic profess." Once the term "greenroom" was slang, because in early days this

waiting-room was painted green. A theatrical failure was called a "fiasco"—a slang term—which originated in the Italian phrase "far fiasco," meaning to make flask, for glassblowers would make flasks, instead of flowers, of faulty glass.

An "angel" came to mean the kind gentleman backing a play, and the "heavy," the actor who played villainous parts. An actress who "turned down" a suitor might also be said to "give him the cold shoulder," or "the icy stare." Or he may have been "cut der," by a deadly rival. Or the fair lady may have "put her foot" on his aspirations. And when he was told to "cheese it," in sheer despair he may have gone to a "joy shop" and got "tight," after which probably he "went on the water wagon."

Where and how some of these slang terms originate must and will remain a mystery. That they have a humble origin among clever denizens of a world unused to dictionary learning cannot be doubted.

Big boy may "kick over the traces," "work a bunco game" on an "easy mark" and get "caught with the goods," and sent to "college." After a financial panic a broker may be "cleaned out," and will be spoken of as being "on his uppers" or a "dead one." He may have "cold feet," and "keep out of the game," or he may again "butt in," "take a plunger," and "make good."

A "fy" hubby may find that his better half intends to "make it hot for him" if he doesn't firm over a new leaf, and ever thereafter may "walk the chalk line." His friends will tell you that the "missus" has him "under her thumb." The son may go to college and "sow his wild oats," and after having a "hot time" at school return home "all broken up" and learning by experience, may "cut out" the fellows and "buckle down" to work.