

## THE FABULOUS SPRINGER ESTATE

GEORGE W. PONTON CLAIMS TO BE THE VICTIM OF A CONSPIRACY.

Charles W. Van Dorn, a real estate broker of No. 7 Warren-street, obtained a warrant on Nov. 9 for the arrest of George W. Ponton, alias George E. Evans, on a charge of grand larceny. Ponton was arrested in London, Ontario, and brought to New-York, and was arraigned yesterday in the Tombs Police Court before Justice Smith. Van Dorn made affidavit that in October, 1882, he became acquainted with Charles H. Bierce, through William F. Ogden, whom he had known a number of years. Bierce represented to him that Carl Christopher Springer died many years ago leaving a large estate consisting of lands in the city of Wilmington, Del., and valued at over \$100,000,000. Bierce said that his mother, Henrietta Schroeder, was an heir at law of the said Springer, and she was entitled to one twenty-seventh part of the estate, and that she had assigned one-half of her interest to Bierce. In February, 1883, Bierce represented that the heirs of the estate, through Edward P. Springer, of Providence, R. I., had agreed to release their claim to the city of Wilmington, and that the authorities of the city had agreed to pay the heirs the sum of \$20,000,000 for the estate, and that he (Bierce) was entitled to one-half of one twenty-seventh part of this sum. Bierce also displayed a circular purporting to be signed by E. P. Springer, which stated that the city of Wilmington would pay the heirs the sum of \$20,000,000. He also represented to the deponent that George W. Ponton was the agent of E. P. Springer, and had entire charge of the settlement of the estate, that he was expected in this City in a few days, and that Ponton would give him a certificate entitling him to one-half of one twenty-seventh part of the estate. On April 10, 1883, the deponent was introduced to Ponton by Bierce, and Ponton said he was the agent of E. P. Springer, and that he had charge of the settlement of the estate; that the city of Wilmington would pay a portion of the \$20,000,000 on May 10; that any money which the deponent would let Bierce have would be repaid him on that date, when Bierce would receive \$90,000 as his share of the estate.

Relying on the statements of Bierce and Ponton, Van Dorn, on April 13, gave Bierce \$200, which the latter agreed to repay on May 10, when he got his \$90,000. Van Dorn swore that each of the representations of Bierce and Ponton was false. The deponent was informed by the Treasurer of the city of Wilmington that no compromise or settlement had ever been made with the heirs of Carl Christopher Springer, and that the authorities of the city had never agreed to pay said heirs, or any other person, the sum of \$20,000,000, or any other sum for the estate. The deponent was also informed by E. P. Springer that Henrietta Schroeder, the mother of Bierce, is not an heir of C. C. Springer; that Bierce has no right, claim, or interest in the estate; that the circular mentioned was not signed or issued by him, (E. P. Springer,) and that George W. Ponton is not, and never was, his clerk or agent, nor had any authority in or about the estate or in the settlement thereof. At the preliminary examination yesterday before Justice Smith, Ponton gave his age as 48. He said he was a native of Ireland and his residence was in Ontario, Canada. He waived examination and was held in \$1,000 on a charge of grand larceny. Ponton has a wife and four children. He says he was simply a tool in the hands of Bierce, in whose employ he was in London, Ontario, where he knew him as a real estate dealer under the name of Edward Emerson. He said he was under the influence of drugs when he made the representations mentioned to Van Dorn. Bierce was arrested on Sept. 19, and was indicted for grand larceny in the second degree and lodged in the Tombs. He is 26 years old, married, and his home is in Chicago. He claims to be the victim of a conspiracy, and that he is one of the heirs who have been assessed to prosecute the estate. He professes to be able to prove that the city of Wilmington has paid a certain sum to stop proceedings, and that he was yesterday offered \$20,000 to give up certain papers in his possession. Another outcome of the conspiracy, he claimed, was to induce his wife to get a divorce from him.