

DENVER PAPERS AND DEPARTMENT STORES.

AN extraordinary contest has started in this city, says a Denver, Colorado, telegram of Jan. 13, with all the daily papers on one side and fourteen of the largest dry goods and clothing departmental stores on the other. No advertisements of any kind of these firms appeared in yesterday's papers and formal notice has been given that none will appear until the papers accede to the demands of the merchants. Last week the business managers of the dailies were informed that the department store combination had arbitrarily decided that advertising rates must be reduced about 20 per cent. The firms declined to enter into the discussion of the justice of the demand, simply stating that they had given their ultimatum. They control about 50 per cent. of the city advertising and believed that the papers must submit to their dictation, notwithstanding that advertising rates in Denver are lower than in any other city of the same size in the country. The newspapers replied that concessions to the autocratic order was not only impossible for business reasons, but would destroy the independence of the press. The first result of the contest is the passage of a resolution by the trades assembly calling on the city council to impose a heavy license on departmental stores and warning all members of the labor unions against them.

The smaller merchants are taking advantage of the opportunity to increase their advertising. In Denver, as in other cities, the departmental stores have been crushing the smaller stores, and the latter are exceedingly glad of the chance to cut into the business of their larger rivals.

[This, if true, is a very extraordinary state of affairs. In the large Canadian cities the department stores are steadily expanding. As they are usually more enterprising in advertising than smaller stores, the daily papers view this expansion with perfect equanimity. When complaints are made by the smaller stores that departmental establishments are crowding them out of existence and legislation is demanded, the daily papers usually take the severely economic ground that concentration of trade is a natural evolution and nothing can prevent it. In Toronto the merchants with small capital have been weeded out to a great extent. The bulk of those who remain are not advertisers. The daily papers look, therefore, to the three department stores—Simpson, Eaton and Murray—and get good prices. If anything similar to what is reported from Denver should occur in Toronto there would result a situation decidedly interesting.—C.]

ENGLISH LIBEL SUITS.

Three libel actions against newspapers were tried before Lord Russell of Killowen, the other day, says an English paper, all of them, as he expressively put it, trumpery actions. But they were of a kind that those who conduct newspapers have learned to dread. And for this simple reason, that no matter how trivial the grievance, judges, in days gone by, forgetting that every man is assumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty, approached these cases with a previous conviction that newspapers are always in the wrong. This frame of mind encouraged many a pettifogging attorney to bring actions at a venture. However slender the grounds, most newspapers could be counted on to compound, for it is cheaper to settle than to fight, and even to win. And so a splendid field for virtual black-

mail was created. Now, we are grateful to Lord Russell, not for any new decision in the common law, but for a masterly vindication of common sense. He has put the matter, once and for all, on a rational basis; and his words will carry the greater weight because in the particular cases that came before him yesterday no suspicion of a discreditable motive could attach either to the plaintiffs or their advisers. Here are his words to the jury after the cases were over: "There is no more valuable remedy for the protection of the characters of private and public persons than the law of libel, and there is no remedy more susceptible of abuse, and I am very glad to see that juries are ready and able to discriminate between trumpery and real cases."

A HANDSOME CALENDAR.

In calendars, Buntin, Gillies & Co., Hamilton, have again gone in for an artistic figure in very fine contrasted colorings. Their '98 calendar has Robin Hood blowing his horn in his Lincoln green habit and other accoutrements of the famous outlaw. The Royal Arms and the Union Jack draped are the background. The whole thing is handsome and unique. The firm have a good supply for all who wish to get one. Drop a post card.

USING A GAS ENGINE.

The Windsor Record has added an Olin gas engine to its plant, purchased from Toronto Type Foundry. These engines are just the thing for printing offices, as they can be run by natural or manufactured gas or gasoline, and are both simple and economical.

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