

easy at this season to get a ready means of shipping *direct* to Boston, and later on in the season, we can find an outlet for it in Newfoundland.

We have heard a rumor that other parties have got leave from the Department to hold *until further orders*, and if you can treat us in a similar manner we would feel greatly obliged.

Yours most respectfully,

(Signed) A. C. MACDONALD, M.P.,
Kings.

Of the firm of Macdonald Bros. & Co., Importers.

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CUSTOMS, St. John, September 10th, 1879.

Sir S. L. TILLEY, Minister of Finance.

SIR,—In compliance with your wishes, I beg to offer a few observations, on the laws relating to the importation and inspection of refined petroleum, and to those who desire to import and use American oil.

The first Act on the subject of the inspection of foreign oil was framed in 1868 (31 Vic., cap. 50), and it enacted, that no more be imported, or sold, or offered for sale, which will not bear the fire-test of at least 115 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer, without giving off vapor that will ignite or explode on the application of fire thereto.

The same Act provided that the Governor-in-Council may from time to time make such regulations as he may think proper for determining the nature of the "fire-test" to be applied, and the *instruments* to be used for applying such test. The next Act on the Statue book was framed in 1871 (34 Vic., cap. 15), and the second section enacted that the fire-test should be 105 degrees, instead or in place of 115, provided in the first Act of 1868.

The next step taken by the Government was an Order-in-Council, passed on the 15th of January, 1875, under the authority of the Act of 1868, stating that the instrument used for testing all imported refined petroleum shall be the coal oil pyrometer, made by Charles Potter, of Toronto, and that all such petroleum as will not stand the fire-test of 105 degrees, as required by said pyrometer, *when used according to the instructions*, accompanying the *same*, should be dealt with, as may be advised by the Minister of Customs in each case. These instructions, I may observe, provides for a flash test.

Two years after this, namely, April, 1877, another Act was passed (40 Vic., cap. 14), which still kept the *fire test* at 105, but allowed oils below that standard to be entered for consumption on the packages being branded with the word "explosive."

In May last, an Act was passed (42 Vic., cap. 18) repealing the Act of 1877, and providing that the standard *fire test* for *imported* petroleum should be 130 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer. All below that standard is to be deemed explosive, and is to be seized, and then exported out of Canada within 48 hours or destroyed. It further provides, that the standard fire-test for Canadian, or imported or foreign petroleum shall be ascertained and determined by means of such pyrometers, or other instruments, as may from time to time be ordered by Departmental regulations in that behalf; and it then establishes the specific gravity, which is to be equal to not more than eight hundred and seven thousandths of the weight, or the weight of an equal measure of distilled water, when both are at a temperature of 62 degrees of Fahrenheit's thermometer.

In putting this act in force at this port I have so far used Potter's pyrometer, and this instrument provides how to test oils by what is termed the flash test, and as the oils imported after the Act of 1877, and up to May last, generally stood a test of from 105 to 115, it naturally follows that very little oil has arrived here from the United States that would stand a test of 130 degrees and the specific gravity fixed by the Act.