

that the Islands produce absolutely nothing ; and that he has himself for ten years past or thereabouts, brought off those Islands about a hundred shipwrecked persons every year, who without the aid of the inhabitants would have perished.

Mr. Claude F. Grenier appeared before your Committee.

Q. Do you know the Magdalen Islands ?

A. Yes, I know them, I lived there from 1791 to 1812.

Q. How many of them are inhabitable ?

A. Five of them are inhabitable, but some of them are not so.

Q. Do those Islands produce any thing ?

A. They only produce a few potatoes, and those in favourable Seasons only.

Q. What was the number of inhabitants on those Islands when you first went there ?

A. Thirteen heads of Families.

Q. What was the number of Families when Sir Isaac Coffin took possession of them ?

A. Sir Isaac Coffin took possession of them in 1798, and there were then a hundred families in those Islands ?

Q. Whence came the earliest inhabitants of those Islands ?

A. They were Acadians.

Q. How do those inhabitants earn their living.

A. By the Cod Fishery, and in the Spring some of them go in pursuit of Seals. Formerly the Sea Cow abounded, but that has been over for 25 years.

Q. How did Sir Isaac Coffin gain possession of those Islands ?

A. By grant. I have seen the instrument myself, which was executed I believe by Lord Dorchester in the year 1798.

Q. Did Sir Isaac know those Islands were settled ?

A. He knew it, for before he took possession he sent Agents thither to ascertain the matter.

Q. Do you know whether Sir Isaac has caused to be paid or has exacted rents from persons who were in possession of lands on the said Islands after he obtained possession of them ?

A. Yes, he has demanded six dollars or two hundred weight of Cod Fish from every head of a Family annually, from the moment of his taking possession. Some of them have paid, but others being too poor, have been unable to pay, and he has threatened to prosecute them, but has not hitherto done so. The inhabitants of these Islands have demanded that possession of their Fishing ground, and other ground be given them, which he has always refused. The inhabitants of those Islands are very poor, being obliged to subsist wholly by Fishing, the soil producing nothing in many places, not even potatoes. There are usually two Shipwrecks every year, more or less, and the persons shipwrecked are