to the effect that a slave by coming into those countries from the West Indies did not become free, and might be com­pelled by his master to return to the plantations. Chief- Justice Holt had expressed a contrary opinion ; and the matter was brought to a final issue by Mr Granville Sharp in the case of the negro Somerset. It was decided by Lord Mansfield, in the name of the whole bench, on June 22d 1772, that as soon as a slave set his foot on the soil of the British islands he became free. In 1776 it was moved in the House of Commons by David Hartley, son of the author of *Observations on Man,* that “ the slave trade was contrary to the laws of God and the rights of men ” ; but this motion—the first which was made on the subject—failed ; public opinion on the question was far from being yet fully ripe.

The first persons in England who took united practical action against the slave trade were the Quakers, following the expression of sentiment which had emanated so early as 1671 from their founder George Fox. In 1727 they declared it to be “ not a commendable or allowed ” practice; in 1761 they excluded from their Society all who should be found concerned in it, and issued appeals to their members and the public against the system. In 1783 there was formed amongst them an association “for the relief and liberation of the negro slaves in the West Indies, and for the discouragement of the slave trade on the coast of Africa.” This was the first society established in England for the purpose. The Quakers in America had taken action on the subject still earlier than those in England. The Pennsylvanian Quakers advised their members against the trade in 1696; in 1754 they issued to their brethren a strong dissuasive against encouraging it in any manner; in 1774 all persons concerned in the traffic, and in 1776 all slave holders who would not emancipate their slaves, were excluded from membership. The Quakers in the other American provinces followed the lead of their brethren in Pennsylvania. The individuals amongst the American Quakers who laboured most earnestly and indefatigably on behalf of the Africans were John Woolman (1720-1773) and Anthony Benezet (1713-1784), the latter a son of a French Huguenot driven from France by the revocation of the edict of Nantes. The former confined his efforts chiefly to America and indeed to his coreligionists there ; the latter sought, and not without a large measure of success, to found a universal propaganda in favour of abolition. A Pennsyl­vanian society was formed in 1774 by James Pemberton and Dr Benjamin Rush, and in 1787 (after the war) was reconstructed on an enlarged basis under the presidency of Franklin. Other similar associations were founded about the same time in different parts of the United States. The next important movement took place in England. Dr Peckard, vice-chancellor of the university of Cam­bridge, who entertained strong convictions against the slave trade, proposed in 1785 as subject for a Latin prize dissertation the question, “ An liceat invitos in servitutem dare.” Thomas Clarkson resolved to compete for the prize. Reading Anthony Benezet’s *Historical Account of Guinea* and other works in the course of his study of the subject, he became so powerfully impressed with a sense of the vile and atrocious nature of the traffic that he ere long determined to devote his life to the work of its abolition, a resolution which he nobly kept. His essay, which obtained the first prize, was translated into English in an expanded form by its author, and published in 1786 with the title *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species.* In the process of its publication he was brought into contact with several persons already deeply interested in the question ; amongst others with Granville Sharp, William Dillwyn (an American by birth, who had

known Benezet), and the Rev. James Ramsay, who had lived nineteen years in St Christopher, and had published an *Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of the African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies.* The distribution of Clarkson’s book led to his forming connexions with many persons of influence, and especially with William Wilber­force, who, having already occupied himself with the subject, went fully into the evidence bearing on it which Clarkson laid before him, and, as the result of his inquiries, undertook the parliamentary conduct of the movement which was now decisively inaugurated. A committee was formed on 22d May 1787 for the abolition of the slave trade, under the presidency of Granville Sharp, which after twenty years of labour succeeded, with the help of eminent public men, in effecting the object of its foundation, and thus removing a grave blot on the character of the British nation, and mitigating one of the greatest evils that ever afflicted humanity. It is unquestionable that the principal motive power which originated and sustained their efforts was Christian principle and feeling. The most earnest and unremitting exertions were made by the persons so associated in investigating facts and collecting evidence, in forming branch committees and procuring petitions, in the instruction of the public and in the infor­mation and support of those who pleaded the cause in parliament. To the original members were afterwards added several remarkable persons, amongst whom were Josiah Wedgwood, Bennet Langton (Dr Johnson’s friend), and, later, Zachary Macaulay, Henry Brougham, and James Stephen.

In consequence of the numerous petitions presented to parliament, a committee of privy council was appointed by the crown in 1788 to inquire concerning the slave trade ; and Mr Pitt moved that the House of Commons should early in the next session take the subject into con­sideration. Wilberforce’s first motion for a committee of the whole House upon the question was made on 19th March 1789, and this committee proceeded to business on 12th May of the same year. After an admirable speech, Wilberforce laid on the table twelve resolutions which were intended as the basis of a future motion for the abolition of the trade. The discussion of these was postponed to the next session, and in 1790-91 evi­dence was taken upon them. At length, on 18th April of the latter year, a motion was made for the introduction of a bill to prevent the further importation of slaves into the British colonies in the West Indies. Opinion had been prejudiced by the insurrections in St Domingo and Martinique, and in the British island of Dominica ; and the motion was defeated by 163 votes against 88. Legislative sanction was, however, given to the estab­lishment of the Sierra Leone Company, for the coloniza­tion of a district on the west coast of Africa and the discouragement of the slave trade there. It was hoped at the time that that place would become the centre from which the civilization of Africa would proceed ; but this expectation was not fulfilled. On 2d April 1792 Wilber­force again moved that the trade ought to be abolished ; an amendment in favour of gradual abolition was carried, and it was finally resolved that the trade should cease on 1st January 1796. When a similar motion was brought forward in the Lords the consideration of it was postponed to the following year, in order to give time for the examination of witnesses by a committee of the House. A bill in the Commons in the following year to abolish that part of the trade by which British merchants supplied foreign settlements with slaves was lost on the third read­ing ; it was renewed in the Commons in 1794 and carried there, but defeated in the Lords. Then followed several years during which efforts were made by the abolitionists