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Wilberforce, from his boyhood days, was much opposed to slavery, and when he attained manhood he labored late and early to bring about the abolition of the slave trade. When he entered Parliament he took an active part in whatever came up about slavery. A resolution was moved, pledging the House to deal with the slave trade next session, and an act imposing some restrictions upon the traffic was also passed. He prepared himself to carry on the struggle, and on May 12, 1789, he moved a number of resolutions condemning the slave trade and spoke for three hours and a half. He was supported by Burke and Fox, and his motions carried without a division. On the 18th of April, 1791, he asked leave to introduce a bill for the abolishing of slavery, but after many hours of debate it was rejected. He then prepared himself for outdoor work in holding meetings, in 1791 he received a dying message from John Wesley, encouraging him to persevere. He held meetings and secured petitions which were presented to the House. He again proposed a motion for the abolition of the slave trade and the debate lasted many hours. Pitt spoke with much eloquence and the motion for gradual abolition was carried by 238 to 85. On the 23rd of April it was decided by a vote of 151 to 132 that the date of abolition should be on January 1st, 1796. The Government of Fox and Grenville was in favor of abolition.

In June, 1806, resolutions in favor of abolition were carried and the bill for the doing away with the slave trade was introduced into the House of Lords in 1807. The second reading carried and the bill was sent to the House of Commons. On February 10th and 23rd the chief debate took place, when Romilly, as Solicitor-General, made an eloquent comparison between Napoleon and the honored man who would that day upon his pillow remember that the slave trade was no more. Wilberforce was too much affected to be conscious of the cheers with which the House greeted him. The bill finally received the Royal assent on the 25th of March, 1807.

In 1825 Wilberforce was forced to retire from active work, and he resolved to leave London. He bought a home in Highwood Hill and there lived, greatly enjoying himself and visited by many friends. On May 15th, 1830, he made his last public appearance at a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, and on July 29th, 1833, he passed to his reward. A statue was placed in Westminster to his memory.

Wilberforce was born August 24th, 1759, and died July 29th, 1833, aged 74 years.

Lincoln was born February 12th, 1809, and died April 15th, 1865, aged 56 years.

Two good and true men called home. May there be many such men in the years yet to come.