

decline of slavery. Conscientious scruples led some while they lived to free their slaves, and others to do this in view of death. An important reason also lay in the fact that slavery was ill-adapted to a northern climate, as well as that the character of slave property in the neighborhood of the sea was most uncertain. In the inventory of the estate of Balthazar Creamer, Halifax, a striking illustration of this uncertainty is afforded. The item in the inventory, recorded April, 1796, of a "tract of land at Preston" is followed by "one black man by the name of Benjamin," estimated by the appraisers at sixty pounds; "one black woman by the name of Mary," sixty pounds; "one black girl by the name of Sary," thirty pounds. In a second inventory, required the following year, these items are repeated, with some brief but significant explanatory notes: "One black man, forty pounds, carried off in the Raison frigate; one black woman, ran away at Chester; one black girl, died." But most powerful of all the causes destructive to slavery was the action of the courts of law. The Hon. Thomas Andrew Strange, appointed Chief Justice of Nova Scotia about 1792, had been under the influence of Lord Mansfield, the celebrated jurist, whose decision in the famous Somerset case tended so greatly to the overthrow of slavery in Britain; and Chief Justice Strange not only influenced his successor in Nova Scotia, Sampson Salter Blowers, but also Sir James Monk, Chief Justice of Montreal, whose decision in 1799, in the "Charlotte" affair, may be said to have given the death-blow to slavery in the province of Quebec. Two notable slave trials, the one at Fredericton in 1800, the other in Nova Scotia in 1801, went far to destroy the value of slave property in the Maritime Provinces. About 1806, so Judge Marshall has stated, a master and his slave were taken before Chief Justice Blowers on a writ of *habeas corpus*. When the case itself, and the question of slavery in general, had been pretty well argued on each side, the chief justice decided that slavery had no legal place in Nova Scotia. There is, however, good ground for the opinion that this baneful system was never actually abolished in the present Canadian provinces until the vote of the British Parliament and the signature of William IV. in 1833 rendered it illegal throughout the British empire.

A few of the former slaves may have been taken to Sierra Leone by Clarkson in 1792; some are known to have been sent away and sold in the West Indies; a much larger number were either sent to