

This was the last conversation I had with the Clockmaker on politics. I have endeavoured to give his remarks in his own language, and as nearly verbatim as I could; but they were so desultory and discursive, that they rather resembled thinking aloud than a connected conversation, and his illustrations often led him into such long episodes, that he sometimes wandered into new topics before he had closed his remarks upon the subject he was discoursing on. It is, I believe, not an uncommon mode with Americans, when they talk, to amuse rather than convince. Although there is evidently some exaggeration, there is also a great deal of truth in his observations. They are the result of long experience, and a thorough and intimate knowledge of the provinces, and I confess I think they are entitled to great weight.

The bane of the colonies, as of England, it appears to me, is ultra opinions. The cis-Atlantic ultra tory is a nondescript animal, as well as the ultra radical. Neither have the same objects or the same principles with those in the mother country, whose names they assume. It is difficult to say which does most injury. The violence of the radical defeats his own views; the violence of his opponent defeats those of the government, while both incite each other to greater extremes. It is not easy to define the principles of either of these ultra political parties in the colonies. An unnatural, and, it would appear, a personal, and therefore a contemptible jealousy, influences the one, and a ridiculous assumption the other, the smallest possible amount of salary being held as sufficient for a public officer by the former, and the greater part of the revenues inadequate for the purpose by the latter, while patriotism and loyalty are severally claimed as the exclusive attributes of each. As usual, extremes meet; the same emptiness distinguishes both, the same loud professions, the same violent invectives, and the same selfishness. They are carnivorous animals, having a strong appetite to devour their enemies, and occasionally showing no repugnance to sacrifice a friend. Amidst the clamours of these noisy disputants, the voice of the thinking and moderate portion of the community is drowned, and government but too often seems to forget the existence of this more numerous, more respectable, and more valuable class. He who adopts extreme radical doctrines in order to carry numbers by flattering their prejudices, or he who assumes the tone of the ultra tory of England, because he