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The greater part of the colonists, being proprietors and cultivators of land, lived continually upon their farms; merchants, artificers, and mechanics, composed scarcely a fifth part of the total population. Cultivators of the earth depend only on Providence and their own industry, while the artisan, on the contrary, to render himself agreeable to the consumers, is obliged to pay a certain deference to their caprices. It resulted, from the great superiority of the first class, that the colonies abounded in men of independent minds, who, knowing no insurmountable obstacles but those presented by the very nature of things, could not fail to resent with animation, and oppose with indignant energy, every curb which human authority might attempt to impose.

The inhabitants of the colonies were exempt, and almost out of danger, from ministerial seductions, the seat of government being at such a distance, that far from having proved, they had never even heard of, its *secret baits*.

It was not therefore customary among them to corrupt and be corrupted; the offices were few, and so little lucrative, that they were far from supplying the means of corruption to those who were invested with them.

The love of the sovereign, and their ancient country, which the first colonists might have retained in their new establishment, gradually diminished in the hearts of their descendants, as successive generations removed them further from their original stock; and when the revolution commenced, of which we purpose to write the history, the inhabitants of the English colonies were, in general, but the third, fourth, and even the fifth generation from the original colonists, who had left England to establish themselves in the new regions of America. At such a distance, the affections of consanguinity became feeble, or extinct; and the remembrance of their ancestors lived more in their memories, than in their hearts.

Commerce, which has power to unite and conciliate a sort of friendship between the inhabitants of the most distant countries, was not, in the early periods of the colonies, so active as to produce these effects between the inhabitants of England and America. The greater part of the colonists had heard nothing of Great Britain, excepting that it was a distant kingdom, from which their ancestors had been barbarously expelled, or hunted away, as they had been forced to take refuge in the deserts and forests of wild America, inhabited only by savage men, and prowling beasts, or venomous and horrible serpents.