Why is "_common_" an expression of contempt? And why are _"uncommon,"
"extraordinary," "distinguished,"_ expressions of approbation? Why is
everything that is common contemptible?

Common, in its original sense, means that which is peculiar and common
to the whole species, that is to say that which is innate in the
species. Accordingly, a man who has no more qualities than those of the
human species in general is a "_common man_" "Ordinary man" is a much
milder expression, and is used more in reference to what is
intellectual, while _common_ is used more in a moral sense.

What value can a being have that is nothing more than like millions of
its kind? Millions? Nay, an infinitude, an endless number of beings,
which Nature in _secula seculorum_ unceasingly sends bubbling forth from
her inexhaustible source; as generous with them as the smith with the
dross that flies round his anvil.