

Boston Society for Encouraging Industry and Employing the Poor in 1758 that establishing manufacturing was the best way of providing alternative employment for the colony's growing class of landless poor. Alas, in order to develop such employment know-how was needed that was scarce on this side of the Atlantic. Bernard pointed out that it had "been found advantageous, to invite in industrious strangers" and called on the colony's leaders to encourage the immigration of skilled "*foreign Protestants*."²²

The most effective strategy available to colonial authorities was awarding patents of importation to introducers of new technologies. The colonies never adopted the practice of issuing patents exclusively to inventors and innovators. Pennsylvania, the center of colonial manufacturing in the eighteenth century, did not award patents to inventors before the Revolution. It did, however, award a £150 prize to two Englishmen who introduced a new secret method of manufacturing lead glass to the colony. There is little evidence that the colonists assigned the qualities of property to any kind of knowledge. Massachusetts was the only American province that gave some recognition to the principle of copyright. Colonial monopolies were generally designed to protect newly emerging industries and technologies, showing little regard to the intellectual property of inventors. Legislatures granted patents to men who introduced rather than invented technologies that could help struggling local industries. Connecticut, for example, ruled in 1715 that anyone who introduced previously unknown technology should be treated as an inventor. In 1728 the colony issued a ten-year patent grant to Samuel Higley and Joseph Dewey for introducing a process to "convert, change, or transmute common iron into good steel" because Higley was "the first that ever performed such an operation in America," and for "having obtained the perfect knowledge" and bringing it over. In 1753 the state awarded a fifteen-year patent monopoly to Jabez Hamelin and Elihu Chauncey for introducing a water-

powered flax-dressing machine from Scotland and Ireland. The General Court of Massachusetts did not check into the validity of patentees' claim for originality, but rather formed committees that examined the usefulness of machines and processes to the colony. In 1750, for example, Benjamin Crabb received a ten-year patent monopoly for the production of candles out of crude spermaceti oil. Crabb, who imported the technique, promised to teach it to five local artisans, though he successfully concealed the process for over twenty years even from the center of North American whaling, the neighboring Nantucket. Rhode Island awarded its only colonial patent not to an inventor, but to James Lucena of Portugal for importing the technique of making Castile soap.²³

The British colonies of North America underwent a profound transformation in the eighteenth century. In 1700 they were small outposts totaling about 250,000 people; half a century later there were 1,170,000 residents in the territory that was going to become the United States. And yet, while the economic and demographic boom generated optimism and confidence among the colonists, labor shortages continued to plague the economy of British North America. Colonial reliance on manufactured imports from England grew in spite of a concerted effort by private entrepreneurs and public agencies to develop American industries. Imperial authorities, for their part, feared that the economic boom in the colonies would undermine British industries' exclusive control of colonial markets. In 1756 the Board of Trade, in an effort to stem the rise of colonial manufacturing, banned the export of machines to the colonies. In the second half of the eighteenth century prominent Imperial officials grew alarmed by the "Numbers of our manufacturers [who] are shipping themselves off for the regions of America." February 1767 alone saw over a hundred skilled weavers emigrate to Boston and New York. From 1760 to 1775, 125,000 new immigrants came to North America from the British Isles. Finally, in 1774, a year