

The following year, he caused a vessel of sixty tons to be launched on Lake Erie.

The buccaneers began to commit depredations in the American seas, about the year 1666; and piracies on a smaller scale, were not unfrequent at a much earlier day. These buccaneers originally were more outlaws in the West India Islands. Compelled at length to unite, they assembled at the Tortugas, and began to plunder such vessels as approached the shore; most of their robberies being committed by means of open boats. The Spanish vessels, in particular, became the objects of their assaults; and encouraged by success, they began to cruise farther from the land. Their numbers rapidly increased, and ere long they ventured to make descents on the coasts, more especially on those of the Spanish settlements, in quest of plunder. It is a mark of the peculiar character of the age, that these freebooters often commenced their enterprises with prayer!—They spent their ill-gotten wealth as profligately as it had been obtained, and like more powerful bodies of men, were finally destroyed by the excesses engendered by their own prosperity.

In consequence of the great number of privateers that sailed out of Acadie, the general court of Massachusetts sent an expedition against Port Royal, in 1690. The forces were commanded by Sir William Phipps, and amounted to between 700 and 800 men, who were embarked in eight small vessels. This expedition sailed on the 29th of April, and returned on the 30th of May, having been successful. The good fortune that attended this enterprise, induced the government of Massachusetts to attempt another against a place as important as Quebec. Sir William Phipps again commanded, having between thirty and forty vessels, the largest of which was of 44 guns and 200 men, and the whole number of the troops and seamen employed was about 2000. These forces reached Quebec, October the 5th, 1690, and landed, October the 8th. The force disembarked was about 12 or 1300 men, but it was repulsed without much fighting. On their return to Boston, the ships were dispersed by a gale, and little credit was gained by the undertaking.

The *Falkland*, a fourth-rate, was launched in the Piscataqua, in 1690, and was the first ship-of-the-line ever built in America.

Much alarm existed along the coast, about this time, from an apprehension of the French, who were understood to be