

"The Ox". The day passed without incident and night came on. While off Canaveral at 9 p. m. the lights of three vessels were seen ahead; it proved to be a tug boat with a tow, but it was sufficient to cause a scare. Onward the Three Friends sped; the night passed and the greater portion of the following day. That afternoon she anchored behind one of the Florida keys, near the Stephen R. Mallory, a filibuster from Cedar Keys, likewise loaded with arms and patriots for the Cubans.

At daylight the Three Friends started south for safer anchorage among the keys. Near Turtle Harbor a strange steamer put out to sea fleeing like a startled bird. It was the famous filibuster Commodore, which, mistaking the Three Friends for a revenue cutter, headed for the Bahama Banks. The crew of the Three Friends was likewise frightened at the strange event and believed for a time that it was a Spanish gunboat bent on capture. Near Indian Key the schooner Ardnell transferred her Cuban patriots to the Three Friends and the latter headed for the open sea, passing out over Alligator Reef just as the sun was rising. At 9 o'clock that night the light at Cardenas was sighted. It soon clouded up, became very dark and began to rain. The Cuban pilot, who had now taken charge, missed the place previously agreed upon as a landing place by two miles and before anyone was aware of it the Three Friends was among the breakers. With great difficulty the filibuster backed into deeper water, threw out her cable and began landing her cargo of Cubans and munitions of war, unaware that she was off a Spanish town and not more than a few hundred yards from a Spanish fort.

The last boatload of Cubans had scarcely been launched when the searchlight of a small Spanish gunboat was thrown on the beach, revealing the presence of those on shore engaged in burying their arms and ammunition. The Spaniards opened fire on the Cubans on the beach and they in turn fired at the searchlight on the gunboat and the light went out. All of this was exceedingly interesting to the crew of the Three Friends lying close by awaiting the return of the last boat from shore. The crew had their guns ready to repel boarders from the gunboat, when by the aid of a spy-glass a large Spanish warship was detected less than a mile away. The captain of the Three Friends gave the order, "Do not use your guns as it will attract the attention of the large gunboat on our port side. Get your axes and lie under the