bulwarks and if the small gunboat tries to board us, use
them”. Just then the boats returned from the shore, the
men pulling with all their might. The boats were made fast
instantly, the anchor cable cut, and the Three Friends started
ahead full speed on her race for life.

The first streak of light was visible along the eastern
horizon, but overhead hung dark clouds from which a light
mist was falling. The tug was running parallel to the line
of the coast while the gunboat was headed across her bow—
the Three Friends had been discovered. Nearer and nearer
the two steamers approached each other, but the Spaniard
having the shorter course to run held his smaller opponent
an easy prey. Then came the order, “Line all the men up on
the port side and have them ready to get into the boats. We
shall run into the Spaniard as we head and both may be sunk,
but we will have the advantage of having our boats overboard
and our men ready; he will have to lower his and we can get
the start and beat them back to the Cubans we have just
landed”. On getting nearer the Spanish cruiser the wheel of
the Three Friends was put hard a-starboard and she turned
at right angle and headed west. The wind blew her smoke
back upon her track and the Spaniard, thinking she had
doubled, turned his bow toward the rear. In another moment
they were lost to each other in the darkness and rain. The
Three Friends made straight for Key West where she arrived
at noon. Here ended her first trip as a filibuster. Seven
more she made, everyone as hazardous and exciting as the
first, but the Three Friends was marked with a lucky star
and passed through them all unscathed.

Among the other boats well known in these waters that
became famous for their filibuster expeditions to Cuba were
the Dauntless, the Commodore and the Bermuda; these with
the Three Friends were known as the “Cuban fleet”. The
Bermuda made a number of trips to Cuba, but was finally
detained at Jamaica by the British authorities. The Com-
modore foundered under suspicious circumstances off the
Florida east coast January 2, 1897; her cargo of arms and
several of the Cuban patriots aboard were lost. The fame of
the little Dauntless was almost as great as that of the Three
Friends; she was once captured by the U. S. S. Marblehead,
but later got out of the scrape and though under constant