

unhurt the batteries at its mouth, and at daybreak swept in proud array past the city front, seeking the Spanish fleet, which lay in the little bay of Cavité, opening into the larger bay.

The Spanish ships consisted of five cruisers and three gunboats, inferior in weight and armament to their enemy, but flanked by shore batteries on each end of the line, and with an exact knowledge of the harbor, while the Americans were ignorant of distances and soundings. These advantages on the side of the Spanish made the two fleets practically equal in strength. The battle about to be fought was one of leading importance in naval affairs. It was the second time in history in which two fleets built under the new ideas in naval architecture and armament had met in battle. The result was looked for with intense interest by the world.

Commodore Dewey, the commander of the American squadron, remained fully exposed on the bridge of his flag-ship, the *Olympia*, as she stood daringly in, followed in line by the *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, *Petrel*, *Concord*, and *Boston*. As they came up, the shore batteries opened fire, followed by the Spanish ships, while two submarine mines, exploded before the *Olympia*, tossed a shower of water uselessly into the air.

Heedless of all this, the ships continued their course, their guns remaining silent, while the Spanish fire grew continuous. Plunging shells tore up the waters of the bay to right and left, but not a ship was struck, and not a shot came in return from the frowning muzzles of the American guns. The