

CHAPTER X

THE SPIRIT OF COMBINED ACTION, 1848-1878

77. National Affairs from 1848 to 1878. — The long period of peace, which had lasted except for a few small conflicts since 1815, came to an end in 1854. In that year England joined with France to support Turkey and their own national interests in the eastern Mediterranean regions against what they considered the dangerous power of Russia. The war consisted for the most part of a long siege of Sebastopol, a fortified Russian city in the Crimea, the long promontory jutting out into the Black Sea, and is therefore known as the Crimean War. The losses and suffering were intense and but little was accomplished. Russia was forced to agree to respect the independence of Turkey, to promise not to keep arsenals or ships of war on the Black Sea, and to submit to the appointment of an international commission to control the navigation of the Danube. These and a number of general agreements in international affairs were made at the Peace of Paris in 1856. After this there were several wars of greater or less importance. In 1857 the Sepoys or native troops in the British service in India mutinied against their officers and led in a native uprising that seemed for a while likely to sweep all the British out of India. But here and there troops held fast, reënforcements were sent, the tide of warfare soon turned and native resistance was put down with great severity. But the government took this opportunity to abolish by act of Parliament the old political powers of the British East India Company, which had been the real government of India, and in 1858 made that country a direct dependency of the British crown. The government took more and more