

HOUR OF DESTINY

might easily come off second best in a conflict in the interior of Asia. So an opportunity had to be found by which this future enemy could be combated at sea. This was found when Russia attempted, in the Turkish War, to increase her power in the Balkans. The Crimean war broke out and we suddenly find England as companion in arms of her former hereditary enemy France, against the new and dangerous opponent. For some time peace seemed to reign between the two sea Powers ; but this state of affairs did not last long. Even if since that date they have not actually come to blows it may well be remembered what embittered diplomatic struggles the partition of Africa and France's renewed colonial expansion in Asia and the Mediterranean in the last quarter of the past century led to between the two Powers. In 1889 England effected a powerful increase of her fleet as against France's sea power, and in 1898 both fleets were actually mobilized in consequence of the Fashoda