

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

SIR EDWARD GREY'S SPEECH

On the 29th of January last, there came over the cable the announcement of two incidents of material importance to Canada and the Empire. One was the speech just then delivered by Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary. The other was the publication of the long expected book in which Lord Charles Beresford brings the British Admiralty to task.

The former incident, which may justly be called an event, marks a radical change in the foreign policy of Great Britain. It shows that the British Government has determined to allow ample liberty to other powers, or rather, has abandoned all determination to check them, in their predatory enterprises. Great Britain will allow Russia without protest to take hold of Persia and Mongolia, Germany acquire, if she wants it, the Belgian Congo, and tear out from the western coast of Africa the last vestiges of Portuguese power, Italy settle at Tripoli, and France in Morocco.

At first sight, Great Britain's attitude, in these various instances, does not differ sensibly from that which she adopted towards the United States, when they "freed" Cuba and "annexed" the Philippines and Porto Rico, or towards Japan, when she seized Corea. But on closer examination, it will be found that, between the former and latter attitude, there exists a wide difference.

In tolerating the conquests of the United States and Japan, England was favouring friendly nations with the presumable object of gaining for herself particular advantages. To-day, she abandons unprotected nations and wild countries to the free grab of such powers as have an interest in getting hold of them and the means of dominating them. She gives her consent to those conquests with the avowed object of making her foreign relations easier, of appeasing the jealous animosity of nations who long saw in her the "great grabber."