

**INTELLECTUAL POLAND: A  
LECTURE DELIVERED AT  
CAMBRIDGE ON MAY 19,  
1916**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649308897

Intellectual Poland: A Lecture Delivered at Cambridge on May 19, 1916 by Léon Litwinski

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**LÉON LITWINSKI**

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# INTELLECTUAL POLAND

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT CAMBRIDGE  
ON MAY 19, 1916

BY  
LEON LITWINSKI

WITH A PREFACE  
BY  
THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

THE POLISH BOOK IMPORTING CO. INC.  
83 SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK

POLISH BOOK IMP. CO., INC.  
35 U.S. ON ST., NEW YORK, N.Y.

*First published in 1916*

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411  
.L78  
cop. 2

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Colonia Literary Club  
Sept. 28-1928

## PREFACE

BY VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

THE fortunes of the Polish people have long engaged the sympathetic interest of the peoples of Britain and France. We have always deplored that First Partition of Poland which was prompted by the unscrupulous ambition of Frederick II of Prussia. We grieve over the subsequent calamities of a gifted and gallant race, many of whose leaders had found a refuge among us. Within the last few years our interest has been rekindled by hope, for the prospect is brighter to-day than it has been for three generations, and we now look forward both to her recovering a united life under institutions calculated to meet her long-cherished aspirations, and to a permanent reconciliation of the Poles with other great branches of the Slavonic stock from which a series of unfortunate events have divided them in feeling. It is natural and proper that we in England should desire to be better informed regarding the history of the Polish People, and especially regarding their intellectual achievements. We know how much they have accomplished in poetry and music, as well as in science and letters. The



*names of Copernicus and Mickiewicz and Chopin are those most familiar to us out of a long and brilliant list. But we need to know much else, and to have a far more complete picture presented of the whole history of the national mind and of its varied efforts in the field of creative literature. It is a history which is all the more interesting because it enables those who apply philosophical methods to history to appreciate the relative importance and the peculiar character of the two external factors which have borne their part in the development of thought and art among the Slavonic peoples; I mean the influence of the Latin and Teutonic West upon the Poles and the Czechs, and the influence upon the Russian races of the East Roman and Hellenic culture of the Ægean countries. We friends of Poland are glad, therefore, to see this book and the series of which it forms a part, brought before the English public, and I cannot doubt that it will not only be welcomed by scholars, but will also find a large circle of readers among those who have honoured the memory of Polish heroes of the older time, from John Sobieski down to Kosciuszko, and who have admired the tenacity with which the nation has clung to its ancient traditions and has preserved its ancient love of liberty.*

## CONTENTS

I	PAGE
THE CONDITIONS OF INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN POLAND	9
II	
THE VITALITY OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL PRO- PENSITIES . . . . .	20
III	
THE ORGANIZATION OF POLISH INTELLECTUAL LIFE	34
IV	
EPILOGUE . . . . .	44
CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE POLISH UNIVERSITIES . . . . .	57

