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Britain Pleased at Choice of Rydz-Smigley to Fill Pilsudski Shoes in Poland

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SPECIAL CABLE
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London, England, May 14.—The bulk of informed British opinion greets with great relief the news that Gen. Edward Rydz-Smigley has become inspector-general of the Polish army as successor to Marshal Josef Pilsudski, dictator of Poland, who died Sunday night.

Rydz-Smigley, it is thought, has a good chance of establishing himself as the most powerful man in Poland and even of rivaling the position of Pilsudski himself, if he gets an even break of luck.

Reported as Pro-Russian.

The British are particularly pleased because Rydz-Smigley is reputed to be definitely pro-Russian rather than pro-German. He will, it is forecast, get rid of Col. Josef Beck, the "best hated man in Europe," the present foreign minister and chief proponent, under Pilsudski, of the current pro-German orientation of Polish affairs.

Pilsudski had great confidence in Rydz-Smigley, who although one of the youngest generals of the Polish army, has had a long insurrectionary and military career and was in fact the organizer of Pilsudski's Polish legion in 1914.

Rydz-Smigley began life as an art

student, but he turned out to be one of the hardest boiled and most competent military men in Poland and won the old marshal's esteem as the best junior officer to be found in the country.

Fear Possible German Putsch.

One of the most critical problems following the death of Pilsudski, as the British see it, is what would happen in the event of a German putsch in Memel. Lithuania, which has a fifteen-year history of bitter antagonism with Poland, has counted, nevertheless, on Polish support if the Germans tried to grab Memel. This is because Pilsudski was himself a Lithuanian and had always let it be known privately that he would never let the Germans or anyone (except himself) try any monkey business in what he called his fatherland.

The only well-informed British source of opinion which doubts Rydz-Smigley's ability to consolidate his position in Poland and succeed Pilsudski in fact as well as in name is the Manchester Guardian, which says today:

"Poland will pass into the hands not of one person but of a clique. This clique, the so-called 'colonels,' will rule Poland for a time, but the colonels have all the weaknesses of their master and few of his virtues."