



**Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson:**  
**„Good deeds shall save the world.“**  
**A guidance for good Palliative Care and Treatment**

The Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832–1910) was at the time of his death in the spring of 1910, well known in Europe. His works had been translated into many languages, among them Slovak and his relationship to Slovakia and the Slovaks was very strong. He raised the issue of the rights of the Slovaks to their own language, their own identity.

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson was born at Kvikne on 8 December 1832, and he died in Paris on 26 April 1910. Bjørnson was the first Norwegian to be awarded the Nobel Prize in literature. Through the Norwegian national anthem *Ja, vi elsker*, his words are still on everybody's lips.

Bjørnson was fifteen when he published his first text in *Romsdals Budstikke*, a regional paper on the west coast of Norway: „On Freedom to the People of Molde“ featured on the front page on 12 May 1848. It was about developing the concepts of freedom found in the Norwegian Constitution. He was inspired by the February Revolution that took place in France that year. Bjørnson kept on fighting for freedom and justice for the rest of his life, and these ideas are central to his entire authorship. In his opinion should the poet take the side of the weaker and of the new ideas, fighting for the condemned and oppressed, both in Norway and abroad.

In his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize in literature, Bjørnson focused on the literature as part of progress and development by saying that in art, we search for meaning in life. The responsibility of authors is greater than that of others, because writers are at the front of the train of development. He kept up his responsibility until his death. Bjørnson's last written words on his deathbed to factory workers from Poland who had risen in defence of some even less fortunate people, were: „Good deeds shall save the world“. The Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Jonas Gahr Støre, underlined this in his speech at opening of the Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Exhibition Bratislava 27. 10. 2010: „A moral exhortation to his contemporaries – and to us. A guidance, a marching order.“

In his last years Bjørnson was quite ill and he feared the death and dying. Bjørnson wrote in 1909: „The Death is cold, I do not belong to the Death – I belong to Life“. His last six months in hope of a better life, were at Hotel Wagram in Paris where he got electric treatment by dr. Hèbert. In this period Bjørnson had all the classic palliative symptoms with pain, fatigue, altered mental state (delirium) and dyspnea. He was in the strong need of good palliative care and treatment.

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's fighting for the weaker, his relationship to the Slovak people and his experience and attitude at the deathbed, makes him to a strong symbol of the cooperation between Slovakia and Norway in the field of Palliative Care and Treatment.

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