

and which a few years ago caused a great political earthquake in the "land of the midnight sun," is again threatening to break out, owing, no doubt, to the persistent efforts of Bjornstjerne Bjornson, Norway's great man of letters, whose mastery of discord in politics seems to be even greater than of concord in rhymes. A few years ago, he pushed his personal sentiments on monarchical matters so far as to provoke the King into issuing an order for his arrest. The monarch's reward for his pains came in a reply of insulting defiance from Bjornson.

The King on one occasion spoke sneeringly of his family connections. His rejoinder was to the effect that his fathers, as far back as he could trace the line, were honorable men; and he would be pleased if the King could say the same of his own progenitors, the house of Bernadotte. This is a good index of the man and his political tactics.

Norway never has taken kindly to its union with Sweden. Its people submitted to the arrangement in the beginning because they were not prepared to help themselves. The union of the two countries was brought about through pressure from the powers of Europe, who wanted to give Norway to Sweden as a payment for services rendered in the war that crushed Napoleon, and also as a plaster on the wound caused by the Russian Bear's tearing Finland away. And it was only the brave spirit of the humiliated Norwegians that saved their country from becoming a province of Sweden.

Under the circumstances, the union has never been of any particular benefit to Sweden. It has indeed thus far returned nothing in particular save a small amount of personal glory to the King. Norway has always retained a separate parliament, but the diplomatic system has been and is now an institution of the common government, which means virtually that it is Swedish to the core.

The nominal contention of Norway now is for separate representation at foreign courts. And with this as the apology in chief for agitation, through slurs and discordant mutterings, the feeling for disunion is being worked into the hearts of the people.

It is significant that the leaders in the agitation are outspoken in their republicanism. This is perfectly understood at headquarters, and among the people of Sweden itself disunion is being discussed. The King's party, of course, are bitterly opposed to the idea, the minister of state on one occasion so far forgetting himself as to threaten Christiania with Swedish bayonets, for

which he afterwards almost apologized.

While liberal opinion there is yet feeble, comparatively, it takes the advanced ground that if the Norwegians want a separation they should have it. The storthing election in Norway is now on. Several startling features have already been developed. Johan Sverdrup enters the parliament as a Conservative member. Lars Oltedal, the noted Stavanger priest, also a convert to the Conservative ranks, has disgraced his sacerdotal robes as well as his political party. The Radicals are gaining ground, and lack only a few more seats to have the absolute control of the storthing. All this foreshadows the possibility of a disunion and the formation of a republican form of government in Norway.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF WEALTH.

THE accumulation of vast fortunes and the abuse of power which comes from the possession of great wealth occasion some confusion of mind among superficial thinkers as to the morality of money-making.

Acquisitiveness, or the desire to gain property, is as natural as any other faculty or aspiration of man. When it is dormant, energy is lacking and poverty is often the result. When it is excessive it develops into greed and cupidity which often lead to crime. Properly balanced it is right and beneficial, and an incentive to human effort which is conducive not only to individual good but to the welfare and progress of society. Where would be the personal or national prosperity that marks the growth of the world if this inherent quality were eliminated from human nature.

Acquisitiveness is natural because it is inherited from the Great Progenitor of the race. God, the Father of us all, is continually increasing his dominions, and as each new world and system rolls into visible and organized existence his acquisitions accumulate. What are called temporalities are as essential as the spiritual things that men should strive after. The elements of each are eternal and both are requisite for the perfect happiness of immortal beings.

It is the inordinate desire for and worship of wealth that lead to wrong and misery. It is not money but the lust after it which is "the root of all evil." There is nothing in property itself which is debasing or antagonistic to the highest spirituality in the universe. Therefore the abundance of it is not an evil, the acquirement of it is not wrong, and the use of it can be good proportionate to its volume.

Money, property in any form, can be used for evil, of course, like every other means for good. And the greed for it will prompt those who foster it to the very worst of sins to accomplish its gratification. Here is where the wrong begins, and the use of that which is acquired, for evil ends, is equal in its evil effects to the lust after it. Both of these must be guarded against by all who desire present or eternal happiness.

The danger of riches lies in these two things, and also in this: The eager pursuit or great possession of wealth engrosses the mind and hinders if it does not prevent the devotion of the soul to higher and more important matters. "As a man thinketh so is he." If he is abnormally intent on earthly riches and worldly pursuits, he can only occasionally ponder upon and be exercised in spiritualities, and he will therefore necessarily be small in spiritual development if he is great in temporal acquisitiveness and the management of perishable things.

Riches and religion are not essentially discordant, as some people suppose. It is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven, because worship of wealth so often debars the worship of the Divine. But it is not necessarily so. The highest devotion, the humblest obedience to God, the sublimest charity for mankind are compatible with the possession of the most magnificent riches. When justice, mercy, faith, benevolence, honor, truth and humility are in the soul, the wealth of the universe is not too much for their possessor, for his power to do good will be commensurate with his property, and the righteousness of riches will be made manifest wherever his power extends.

PALESTINE IS PROSPERING.

ACCORDING to recent news from Palestine, the effects of modern ways and latter-day influences are perceptible in the Holy Land. Jerusalem has now a population of 50,000, and about 30,000 of these are Israelites. Nazareth contains 6,500 people. Scientific farming is practiced on the plains of Esdraelon, and wine-growers on the slopes of Lebanon are making claret for the market. Where goatskins once were used by the water carriers, petroleum cans are utilized, and railways and the electric light are doing their part in changing the face and ways of the country.

There is one thing connected with these tokens of civilization that causes regret and inquiry. Why is it that wherever civilized improvements find their way, strong drink is an inevitable accompaniment? It is