

Andrew Lang (1844-1912)

8 *The Queen o' Spain and the Bauld McLean*

A Ballad of the Sound of Mull. 1588.

The Queen o' Spain had an ill gude-man.
The carle was auld and grey.
She has keeked in the glass at Hallow-eeen
A better chance to spae.

She's kaimit out her lang black hair, 5
That fell below her knee.
She's ta'en the apple in her hand,
To see what she might see.

Then first she saw her ain fair face,
And then the glass grew white, 10
And syne as black as the mouth o' Hell
Or the sky on a winter night.

But last she saw the bonniest man
That ever her eyes had seen,
His hair was gold, and his eyes were grey, 15
And his plaid was red and green.

"Oh! the Spanish men are unco black
"And unco blate," she said;
And they wear their mantles swart and side,
No the bonny green and red." 20

"Oh! where shall *I* find sic a man?
That is the man for me!"
She has filled a ship wi' the gude red gold,
And she has ta'en the sea.

And she's sailed west and she's sailed east, 25
And mony a man she's seen;
But never the man wi' the hair o' gold,
And the plaid o' red and green.

And she's sailed east and she's sailed west,
Till she cam' to a narrow sea, 30
The water ran like a river in spate,
And the hills were wondrous hie.

And there she spied a bonny bay,
And houses on the strand,
And there the man in the green and red 35
Came rowing frae the land.

Says "Welcome here, ye bonny maid,
Ye're welcome here for me.
Are ye the Lady o' merry Elfland,
Or the Queen o' some far countrie?" 40

"I am na the Lady o' fair Elfland,
But I am the Queen o' Spain."
He's lowted low, and kissed her hand,
Says "They ca' me the McLean!"

"Then it's a' for the aefold love o' thee 45
That I hae sailed the faem!"
"But, out and alas!" he has answered her,
"For I hae a wife at hame."

"Ye maun cast her into a massymore,
Or away on a tide-swept isle;" 50
"But, out and alas!" he's answered her,
"For my wife's o' the bluid o' Argyll!"

Oh! they twa sat, and they twa grat,
And made their weary maen,
Till McLean has ridden to Dowart Castle, 55
And left the Queen her lane.

His wife was a Campbell, fair and fause,
Says "Lachlan, where hae ye been?"
"Oh! I hae been at Tobermory,
And kissed the hand o' a Queen!" 60

“Oh! we maun send the Queen a stag,
And grouse for her propine,
And we’ll send her a cask o’ the usquebaugh,
And a butt o’ the red French wine!”

She has put a bomb in the claret butt, 65
And eke a burning lowe,
She has sent them away wi’ her little foot-page
That cam’ frae the black Lochow.

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The morn McLean rade forth to see
The last blink o’ his Queen, 70
There stude her ship in the harbour gude,
Upon the water green.

But there cam’ a crash like a thunder-clap,
And a cloud on the water green.
The bonny ship in flinders flew, 75
And drooned was the bonny Queen.

McLean he speirit nor gude nor bad,
His skian dubh he’s ta’en,
And he’s cuttit the throat o’ that fause foot-page,
And sundered his white hausebane. 80

(From *New Collected Rhymes*. London: Longmans,
Green, and Co., 1905)