

A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,  
To keep the cold away."—

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"O Richard, if my brother died,  
'Twas but a fatal chance,  
For darkling was the battle tried,  
And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair<sup>1</sup> no more I wear,  
Nor thou the crimson sheen,<sup>2</sup>  
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,  
As gay the forest green.

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"And Richard, if our lot be hard  
And lost thy native land,  
Still Alice has her own Richard,  
And he his Alice Brand."

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'Tis merry, 'tis merry in good greenwood,  
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;  
On the beech's pride and oak's brown side,  
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

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Up spoke the moody Elfin King,  
Who woned within the hill,—  
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,  
His voice was ghostly shrill:

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"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,  
Our moonlight circle's<sup>3</sup> screen?  
Or who comes here to chase the deer  
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?

<sup>1</sup> **Vair**—A very costly fur.

<sup>2</sup> **Crimson sheen**—Beautiful crimson cloth.

<sup>3</sup> **Circle**—Peculiar circles of dark green grass often found in meadows. The superstition of the country accounts for these by saying that they are formed by the feet of the fairies while dancing.