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presents
the Annotated Popular Edition of

THE BATTLE OF ALCAZAR

by George Peele
First Published 1594

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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THE BATTLE OF ALCAZAR

BY GEORGE PEELE

First Published 1594

The Battell of Alcazar, fougth in Barbarie, betwene Sebastian king of Portugall, and Abdelmelec king of Marocco. With the death of Captaine Stukeley.

An it was sundrie times plaid by the Lord high Admirall his seruants.

Imprinted at London by Edward Allde for Richard Bankworth, and are to be solde at his shoppe in Pauls Churchyard at the signe of the Sunne. 1 5 9 4.

DRAMATIS PERSONS.

The Usurper and His Supporters:

The Moor, Muly Mahamet.
Muly Mahamet, his son.
Calipolis, wife of the Moor.
Pisano, a Captain of the Moor.

The Rightful Ruler and His Supporters:

Abdelmelec, uncle of the Moor, and rightful ruler of Morocco.
Muly Mahamet Seth, younger brother of Abdelmelec.
Rubin Archis, widow of Abdelmunen.
Son of Rubin Archis.
Celybin, a follower of Abdelmelec.
Zareo, a follower of Abdelmelec.
Calsepius Bassa, a Turkish Captain.
Abdil Rayes, a Queen.

The Portuguese:

Sebastian, King of Portugal.
Duke of Avero, a follower of Sebastian.
Duke of Barceles, a follower of Sebastian.
Lord Lodowick, a follower of Sebastian.
Lewes de Silva, a follower of Sebastian.

Introduction to the Play

In The Battle of Alcazar, George Peele recounts one of the oddest military expeditions in European history, the failed 1578 invasion of Morocco by a ragtag army led by Portugal's King Sebastian. Sebastian was a young man with a dream of bringing a Crusade into Africa, but whose combination of obstinacy and lack of experience produced a national catastrophe, matched in its results perhaps only by the Scottish defeat at Flodden.

No one can pretend that Alcazar will ever rank among the greatest of Elizabethan dramas, but the story is intriguing enough to keep the attention of any reader.

NOTE on the TEXT'S SOURCE

The text of the play is taken from Alexander Dyce's 1874 edition of The Battle of Alcazar, cited below at #3, but with some of the original spellings from the 1594 quarto restored.

NOTES on the ANNOTATIONS

Mention of Dyce, Bullen, Yoklavich and Edelman in the annotations refers to the notes provided by each of these editors in their respective editions of this play, each cited fully below.

Mention of Bovill, Bowen and Julien refer to modern
Christophero de Tavera, a follower of Sebastian.  
Don Diego Lopez, Governor of Lisbon.  
Don de Menysis, Governor of Tangier.

Other Christians:

Tom Stukeley, Captain of the Papal fleet.  
Irish Bishop.  
Hercules, an Italian in Stukeley's service.  
Jonas, an Italian in Stukeley's service.

Appearing in the Dumb Shows:

The Presenter.  
Abdelmunen, oldest brother of Abdhomelec.  
Two young Brothers of the Moor, Muly Mahamet.  
Two Murderers.  
Fame.  

Moorish Ambassadors, Spanish Ambassadors and Legate, Boy, Soldiers, Messengers, &c.  
A Queen.  
Ladies.

The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.

1. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online.  
**Prelude I:**

**Sebastian, the Portuguese Crusader King**

On 20 January 1554, a male heir to the Portuguese crown was born in the royal palace at Lisbon; the boy's Portuguese grandfather, John III, was king of Portugal. The father of the boy, the feeble heir apparent João Manuel, aged 16, had died less than three weeks before his son's birth. The boy's mother was Catherine of Austria, sister of the Spanish King and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

The infant was christened Sebastian, and he immediately became the "centre of the hopes of the Portuguese", since, as the only living heir to the throne, he was "the sole life that stood between them and absorption into the fearful power of Spain."

Sebastian's mother, the Hapsburg Catherine, returned to Spain to serve her father, leaving Sebastian to be raised by his grandfather (the king) and his wife, Queen Catalina.

On John III's death in 1557, Sebastian, now aged 3, became King of Portugal, and his grandmother assumed the regency of Portugal. A popular queen, Catalina, after a long power struggle, was forced to retire by the dead king's brother, the Cardinal Henry, who took over both the regency of the nation and the responsibility for raising his grand-nephew Sebastian.

Thanks to Henry, Sebastian was surrounded by Jesuits, which resulted in the young boy, completely deprived of female companionship, developing an unconditional devotion to the church and a thorough distaste for the company of women. Sebastian grew to be a handsome young man, despite the presence of the famous Hapsburg chin, and was physically powerful thanks to a fanatical dedication to physical exercise.

Generous and truthful by nature, and carrying no streak cruelty, Sebastian was nevertheless "obstinate, headstrong and gloomy", living a life of severe austerity.

Once in his majority, Sebastian developed an obsession to go on a Crusade in Africa, and return the continent to its historical belief in Christ. Luckily for him, Portugal still possessed several fortresses on the coast of Morocco, and so, in 1574, he brought a troop of soldiers with him to one of those possessions, Tangiers, to test the waters. After receiving a "triumphal welcome" in this coastal city, and having his imagination fired by the easy capture of some lazy Moroccan ships, Sebastian returned to Lisbon and began preparations to lead a full-blown Crusade into Morocco.

Sebastian's opportunity to fulfill his dream appeared to receive a shot in the arm when, in 1578, he was approached by the recently deposed Sultan of Morocco, who promised the young king wealth, power and influence in Morocco if he would only help the ex-Sultan to regain his throne...

The information in Prelude I was adopted from *Some Essays in Historical Biography*, by Marjorie Bowen (1928).

**Prelude II:**

**Morocco's Saadian Dynasty.**

The actual history of the Saadians' rise to power, as well as the story of the succession of the Moroccan crown, is a little more complicated than Peele has presented.

A combination of two factors led to the rise of Morocco's Saadian dynasty: (1) the Portuguese in the early 16th century controlled a number of coastal fortresses, and (2) Morocco's ruling family - the Wattasids - had only an infirm grip on the land.

The Saadians, a clan which had migrated from Arabia some four centuries prior, were chosen by the people of southern Morocco to lead a holy war against the Portuguese. A Saadian named Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Rahman was appointed commander of the Moroccan forces.

On the death of al-Rahman, command was passed to his son Ahmad al-A'raj, who, helped by his brother Muhammad al-Asghar, successfully drove the Portuguese out of their fortress at Agadir in 1541, which in turn caused the
Portuguese to further abandon Safi and Azenmour.

Around this time, Muhammed defeated his brother (who retired from public life) in a power struggle, and took over the Saadian forces.

The successes over the Portuguese had brought the Saadians great prestige, and it was inevitable that they would begin to seek control of all Morocco; numerous battles spread over many years finally brought them success, and the Saadian Sultanship can be dated to their capture of the Moroccan capital Fez in 1557.

The Saadians, however, established their capital in the pleasant climes of Marrakesh.

The Saadian leader, who had in the meantime changed his name to Muhammad al-Shaik, faced a number of problems in governing Morocco; primary among them were (1) the continued presence of the Portuguese along the coast, and (2) the presence of the Turks in neighbouring Algeria - the Ottomans controlled all of North Africa up to the frontier of Morocco. Indeed, in 1557, the Turks managed to assassinate al-Shaik, even carrying his head back to Constantinople.

Historian E.W. Bovill tells us that that were two customs when it came to the succession to the throne in Morocco: one was that at the death of the current Sultan, the crown should pass to the eldest living male member of the royal family; and the second was that he who became king should murder all his potential rivals.

Muhammad al-Shaik had four sons. Upon his death, rule passed peacefully to the eldest, Mulay al-Ghalib, and historian Charles-André Julien writes that civil war was avoided when his three brothers left Morocco, taking refuge with the Turks; and that in fact, two of the brothers, Abd al-Malik (our play's Abdelmelec) and Ahmed al-Mansur, travelled to Constantinople to serve Suleiman, the Sultan of the Ottomans.

Bovill, however, writing earlier, follows the older tradition, reporting that al-Ghalib did in fact kill off all of his rivals, except for his two half-brothers, Abd al-Malik and Ahmed al-Mansur, who had been raised in Turkey.

In 1574, al-Ghalib died from an illness. His son, Mohammed (our play's Muly Mahamet) also peacefully assumed the throne of Morocco, but his uncles, still serving the Ottomans, and rightly believing the crown belonged to them, petitioned the Ottoman Sultan to give them an army with which to travel to Morocco and oust the usurper Mohammed.

The Sultan gave Abd al-Malik his army. Our play begins in 1576 as Abd al-Malik is re-entering Morocco with a large Turkish contingent to wrest the crown away from Mohammed.

A. Good vs. Evil in Alcazar.

Readers may wish to note that from Alcazar's very first speech, Peele makes it clear that he wants his audience to view Muly Mahamet (Mohammed) as a villain, and his uncle Abdelmelec (Abd al-Malik) as the rightful ruler of Morocco. Sebastian is also treated mostly as a hero, and the Christian characters generally avoid the author's condemnation.

B. Omissions in the Original Text.

Because Alcazar is a relatively short play, many editors have suggested that the only surviving original edition, the 1594 quarto, is a truncated version of the play as it must have first been performed.

Reduced as it may be, it actually does not appear to contain any continuity problems or butchered speeches or lines which are any worse than those that can be found in the quartos of many other plays of the era.

The most significant omissions of Alcazar's quarto are those pertaining to the Dumb Shows - the staged pantomimes performed at the beginning of each Act - which are largely missing stage directions; see Note C below for the important discussion about the Dumb Shows.

Generally, the quarto contains its share of individual lines which may be misprinted, but in general, where obvious emendations were made to the original text by Dyce, we have incorporated those changes without comment; where an emendation suggests an interpolation by Dyce or any other editor, however, we
A smattering of representative examples of other fixes suggested by Dyce, such as those which attempt to repair short lines or lines in which the meter is imperfect, are also incorporated into the annotations.

C. The Miracle Document and the Dumb Shows

The most single obvious set of omissions from the 1594 quarto are those pertaining to the Dumb Shows that take place in the prologue of each Act: specifically, (1) the stage directions that provide the action to be presented in a given Dumb Show, and (2) the spoken narration accompanying each Dumb Show, are largely absent from the quarto.

However, there has survived a miraculous document from the late 16th century that gives a hint as to content of some of these omissions: a piece of paper known as the Plot, or as we shall call it, the Theatrical Plot of The Battle of Alcazar.

The Theatrical Plot is a skeletal outline of the "entrances and exits of the characters, together with any such directions as would require the attention of the prompter of call-boy." The plots hand-written "in two columns on a piece of paper mounted on pasteboard, and have a hole cut near the top to enable their being hung on a peg in the playhouse."

Incredibly, there are in existence fragments of only 7 such Theatrical Plots; and the Plot for Alcazar is the only one in existence for a play whose script is also extant.

Alcazar's Theatrical Plot appears to been written for a revival of the play that took place perhaps in 1598, a few years after the quarto was printed (1594); it is badly decomposed, and in parts only fragments of the instructions remain.

In a few cases, the Theatrical Plot provides specific and unambiguous instructions which helpfully supplement the stage directions of the quarto; where such information has been added to this edition, it is set off by pointed brackets (‹ ›).

D. Settings, Scene Breaks and Stage Directions.

The original 1594 quarto of The Battle of Alcazar was divided into five Acts and multiple scenes, which organization we follow.

As was the usual case in printed plays of the 16th century, no scene settings are provided in the quarto; all scene locations in this edition of Alcazar are the suggestions of the editor.

Finally, as is our normal practice, some stage directions have been added, and some modified, for purposes of clarity. Most of these minor changes are adopted from Dyce.

E. Annotations in Italics.

It may be said that George Peele, in writing Alcazar, remained true to the facts of the battle's history as they were presented in contemporary accounts.

Because the details of this story are so innately fascinating, we have included in the annotations observations which, at appropriate points, present to the curious reader extended historical context and biographical information.

The important thing to note is that these annotations will be italicized, to indicate that they present supplementary information that need not be read to understand the play itself.

Unless otherwise noted, all the historical commentary is adopted from E.W. Bovill's excellent history of The Battle of Alcazar.
ACT I.

Enter the Presenter.

The Presenter:

as was common in the earliest Elizabethan dramas, the play begins with an actor (sometimes called a Chorus) who appears on stage to introduce the story. In The Battle of Alcazar, look for the Presenter to appear at the start of each Act.

1-2: the desire for honour motivates (pricks) kings, or those with ambition to become kings; prick also refers to the kicking of a horse with a spur, making this a fine metaphor with which to "kick off" the play.

stately chair = ie. throne.

3-5: honour has particularly inspired the King of Portugal, Sebastian I, to go to war.

Portingal = Portuguese; Portingal was a common alternate spelling for Portugal.

6-15: The Back-Story: see the note at line 20 for an explanation of this complicated back-story; one wonders if an audience was actually supposed to follow any of this.

The main point to get from this introduction is that the villain Muly Mahamet is the present ruler of Morocco, but his uncle, the good guy Abdelmelec, is the one who should be king.

6-7: Sebastian intends to go to war to overthrow the cruel ruler of Morocco, Muly Mahamet.

barbarous = heathen or cruel.¹

Moor = the term Moor was used to describe those people native to north-west Africa, especially the region corresponding to modern Morocco.

7: negro = Bovill tells us that by tradition, Muly Mahamet was said "to have inherited the dark skin from his slave mother, and was therefore known as El-Mutuakel, the Black Sultan."

The OED notes that in the 16th century, negro was used to describe dark-skinned people in general, which included Moors.

Muly Hamet = Muly is the title assigned to the rulers of Morocco; Hamet is an abbreviation for Mahamet, and refers to our play's villain, Muly Mahamat, the present ruler of Morocco.

8 The kingdom from his uncle Abdelmelec, Whom proud Abdallas wronged,

10 And in his throne installs his cruēl son, That now usurps upon this prince;

12 This brave Barbarian lord, Muly Molocco.

The passage to the crown by murder made, Abdallas dies, and deigns this tyrant king;

Of whom we treat, sprung from th' Arabian Moor,

The negro Muly Hamet, that withholds

8 The kingdom from his uncle Abdelmelec, Whom proud Abdallas wronged,

10 And in his throne installs his cruēl son, That now usurps upon this prince;

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8 The kingdom from his uncle Abdelmelec, Whom proud Abdallas wronged,

10 And in his throne installs his cruēl son, That now usurps upon this prince;

12 This brave Barbarian lord, Muly Molocco.

The passage to the crown by murder made, Abdallas dies, and deigns this tyrant king;

Of whom we treat, sprung from th' Arabian Moor,
progenitor of the present first family of Morocco, a man who, according to the play's genealogy (see Act I.ii), was the great-grandfather of Muly Mahamet, and grandfather to Abdelmelec; see the note at line 20 below.

16: *Black in his look* = dark-skinned, again referring to Muly Mahamet's complexion.

16-17: *bloody...gore* = an allusion to a terrible deed which Muly Mahamet is about to perform.

= ie. both literally and morally stained.

20: ie. the two murderers of lines 44-45.

**Our Play's Moroccan First Family:** in Peele's genealogy, the first member of the present royal family of Morocco was *Muly Xarif*, an immigrant from Arabia, who apparently also became the ruler of Morocco.

His son *Muly Xeque* succeeded him. Xeque had four sons, the eldest of whom was *Abdallas*, who became king at Xeque's death. By prior agreement, on Abdallas' death, his three brothers were supposed to succeed to the throne, the next in line being *Abdelmunen*; the other two brothers were *Abdelmelec* (the third oldest), and *Mahamet Seth*, the youngest.

Abdallas, however, reneged on the compact, installing his own eldest son (it appears he had three), our play's *Muly Mahamet*, on the throne alongside him. Thus, when Abdallas died, Mahamet automatically assumed sole rule of Morocco, depriving Abdallas' brothers of the Sultanship that rightfully belonged in turn to them.

This family history is recounted again by Abdelmelec in Act I.i.

**The Dumb Shows:** early English dramas sometimes began with a brief pantomimed scene, which could present events preceding the action of the play (as here), events that occur between scenes, or even, as in the later scenes, allegorical presentations of events that will be played out fully in the succeeding Act.

= brothers.

**The First Dumb Show:** the Muly Mahamat is Sultan of Morocco, and our play's villain; in the Dumb-Show, he is shown, with his son, graciously offering a place to sleep to two of his (Mahamet's) younger brothers.

Some of the stage directions in this edition of the play are supplemented by instructions adopted from Alcazar's Theatrical Plot; such added directions are set off by pointed brackets (‹ ›); see Note C in the Introduction to the play.
Like those that were by kind of murther mummed.

Sit down and see what heinous stratagems
These damnèd wits contrive; and, lo, alas,

How like poor lambs prepared for sacrifice,
This traitor-king hales to their longest home
These tender lords, his younger brethren both!

THE SECOND DUMB-SHOW.

Enter the Moor [Muly Mahamet], and two Murderers, bringing in his uncle Abdelmumen:
then they draw the curtains,
and smother the young Princes in the bed:
which done in sight of the uncle [Abdelmumen],
they strangle him in his chair, and then go forth.

And then the Presenter saith.

His brethren thus in fatal bed behearsed,
His father's brother, of too light belief,

This negro puts to death by proud command.
Say not these things are feigned, for true they are;

And understand how, eager to enjoy
His father's crown, this unbelieving Moor,
Murthering his uncle and his brethren,

Triumphs in his ambitious tyranny;
Till Nemesis, high mistress of revenge,
That with her scourge keeps all the world in awe,

With thundering drums awakes the God of War,
And calls the Furies from Avernus' crags.

The Second Dumb Show: with the goal of securing his throne from usurping relatives, Muly Mahamet murders first his own two younger brothers, and then his uncle Abdelmumen (who, as the oldest brother of Mahamet's father Abdallas, rightfully should have succeeded to rule on the death of the latter).

go forth = ie. exit the stage.

= a fabulous word, and George Peele original.
= the sense is, Uncle Abdelmumen had been naively tricked into accompanying Muly Mahamet into the bedroom along with the young princes, ignorant of his own imminent death.

feigned = invented, made up.
= ie. Muly Mahamet. = with a negative connotation.

Say not = suppose, understand: an imperative to the audience.

brethren should be pronounced in three syllables here: BRE-ther-en.

Avernus' = Avernus was a lake located in Campania, and is cited here due to the belief that it was situated at the
entrance to Hades; its vapours were so poisonous that any birds that attempted to fly over it quickly fell to their deaths.\(^9\)
The connection of the Furies to Avernus seems to be an invention of Peele's. Edelman suggests that Avernus is used to mean Hades.

\textit{crags} = steep rocks.\(^1\)

\(^9\) To \textit{range} and rage, and vengeance to inflict,

\(^66\) Vengeance on this accursèd Moor for sin.

\(^68\) And now behold how Abdelmelec comes,

\(^70\) Uncle to this unhappy traitor-

\(^72\) Armed with great aid that Amurath had sent,

\(^74\) Under whose colours he had served in field,

\(^69\) To \textit{range} and rage, and vengeance to inflict,

\(^68\) Vengeance on this accursèd Moor for sin.

\(^70\) Uncle to this unhappy traitor-

\(^72\) Armed with great aid that Amurath had sent,

\(^74\) Under whose colours he had served in field,

\(^73\) That wronged his brethren to install his son.

\(^76\) Sit you, and see this true and tragic war,

\(^78\) Fell to the earth, contending for a crown;

\(^80\) And call this war \textit{the Battle of Alcazar}.

\(^69\-72\): while the sequence of events is not clear from the text, it appears that Abdelmelec had long ago left Morocco for Turkey (see the note below at line 73), and put himself in the service of the Ottoman Sultan.

Now, Abdelmelec has appealed to Murad III (here called \textit{Amurath}), the present Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, for assistance in his (Abdelmelec’s) project to overthrow Muly Mahamet, and take the crown for himself. The Sultan has agreed to help Abdelmelec, in recognition of the latter’s having served in the army of his father, Selim II (wrongly identified in line 71 as Soliman, i.e. Suleiman, who was actually Amurath’s grandfather).

\(^73\): “fleeing the rage of Mahamet’s father, the Muly Abdallas”; it appears that Abdelmelec left Morocco for Turkey to escape his brother Abdallas upon the latter’s ascending the throne, perhaps out of fear for his life, when it became apparent that Abdallas was not going to honour the agreement by which his (Abdallas’) brothers (Abdelmunen, Abdelmelec and Seth) were supposed to succeed him.

\(^75\-76\): the Presenter again explicitly addresses the audience.

\(^75\) That wronged his brethren to install his son.

\(^76\) Sit you, and see this true and tragic war,

\(^78\) Fell to the earth, contending for a crown;

\(^80\) And call this war \textit{the Battle of Alcazar}.

\(^76\) A modern matter full of blood and \textit{ruth},

\(^78\) Where three bold kings, \textit{confounded in their height},

\(^80\) \textit{The Real Abdelmelec (Abd al-Malik) Serves the Ottomans:}

when the Moroccan king Muhammad al-Shaik died in 1557, the eldest of his four sons, Mulay al-Ghalib (our play’s Abdallas), assumed the throne without a struggle, in part because his three brothers left Morocco to live in Turkey in the Ottoman Empire, which at the time was ruled by the Sultan Suleiman (reigned 1520-1566); two of the brothers (Abd al-Malik and Ahmed al-Mansur), in fact, served in Suleiman’s army, and then stayed to further serve the Sultan’s son, Selim II (reigned 1566-1574), at Suleiman’s death, as well as his grandson Murad III (reigned 1574-
In 1574, al-Ghalib died from an illness. His son, Mohammed (our play’s Muly Mahamet) peacefully assumed the throne of Morocco. Abd al-Malik, however, decided the time was ripe to move in himself and make a bid for the throne, which by tradition rightfully belonged to him as the family’s eldest living male.

Abd al-Malik asked for, and received, the military assistance of the current Ottoman ruler, the Sultan Murad III, to help him with this project (the Sultan, who already controlled all of the North African coast east of Morocco, of course sensed here an opportunity to extend his own zone of influence to the Atlantic Ocean).

Our play’s storyline, in which Muly Mahamet murders his uncle and brothers to secure the throne for himself, is a fiction designed to create for the play a clear villain - Mahamet - and an honourable pretext for Abdelmelec to return to his homeland to restore the crown to its rightful place - on his own head.

The information in this annotation is adopted from Charles-André Julien’s History of North Africa (1952), pp. 223-7).

ACT I, SCENE I.

The Frontier Between Morocco and Algeria.

Sound drums and trumpets, and then enter
Abdelmelec, Calsepius Bassa and his Guard,
Zareo, a Moor, with Soldiers.

Entering Characters: Abdelmelec is the eldest living uncle of Muly Mahamet; Abdelmelec has been in exile in Turkey since his own eldest brother Abdallas assumed the throne of Morocco at the death of their father. Abdelmelec is returning to Morocco at the head of an army of Turkish soldiers, who are commanded by a Turkish military captain, or commander, Calsepius Bassa.

Abdelmelec’s goal is to seize the throne of Morocco from his nephew, Muly Mahamet, who was wrongfully installed as king by his father Abdallas, and who really wrongfully secured his crown by murdering his own two younger brothers and his uncle Abdelmunen, who should by all rights have become king when Abdallas died (this according to the earlier family agreement that Abdallas’ brothers should succeed to the crown on Abdallas’ death).

Note that Calsepius is the Turkish commander’s name; Bassa was an early form of Pasha, the highest official title which could be conferred by the Ottomans, and which was often given to military leaders.1

Zareo is a follower of Abdelmelec, but his exact identity has been a source of confusion (see the note below at line 1). The quarto identifies him as a Moor, and he appears to be Abdelmelec’s highest ranking lieutenant.

1-2: All hail, Argerd Zareo = line 1 actually appears in the quarto as follows:

Allhaile Argerd Zareo and yee Moores,

Dyce assumed that Argerd is Zareo’s given name, and
Cease, rattling drums; and, Abdelmelec, here
Throw up thy trembling hands to heaven's throne, 
That strengthens thee with mighty gracious arms 
Against the proud usurper of thy right, 
The royal seat and crown of Barbary.

Great Amurath, great Emperor of the East:
The world bear witness how I do adore 
The sacred name of Amurath the Great. –
Calsepius Bassa, Bassa Calsepius,
To thee, and to thy trusty band of men 
That carefully attend us in our camp,
Picked soldiers, comparable to the guard 
Of Myrmidons that kept Achilles' tent,

Such thanks we give to thee and to them all,
As may concern a poor distrest king,
In honour and in princely courtesy.

*Cals.* Courteous and honourable Abdelmelec,

We are not come, at Amurath's command,  
As mercenary men, to serve for pay,  
But as sure friends, by our great master sent  
To gratify and to remunerate  
Thy love, thy loyalty, and forwardness,  
Thy service in his father's dangerous war;

*Calsepius Bassa:* the commander of the Ottoman troops was actually a Venetian renegade named Ramdan, and his lieutenant was a Corsican (unless otherwise noted, all italicized annotations, which present the actual facts of our history, are adopted from Bovill).^6

= meaning "as mere".

= repay.

= eagerness.

27: Abdelmelec had long ago fled Morocco for Turkey, serving successive Sultans until the time was ripe for his return to Morocco.

The present Ottoman Sultan Amurath is granting military assistance to Abdelmelec in return for the latter's many years of service to the Ottoman Sultans, beginning with (according to the text) Amurath's father, Selim II (who is mistakenly identified at line 34 below as Soliman, or Suleiman, who was actually Amurath's grandfather), and then Amurath himself.

*his father's dangerous war* = likely a reference to the war fought between the Ottomans and Europe over Cyprus from 1570-3; the war culminated in the Battle of Lepanto, a massive naval engagement in which the Christian alliance crushed the Ottoman fleet. Here Abdelmelec was captured and brought to Spain, from where he escaped and returned to Constantinople.

33-34: *viceroy* = governors or vice-kings who served as rulers of lands which had been conquered by the Ottomans and incorporated into the empire.

*janizaries* = soldiers of an elite body of Turkish infantry, originally formed in the 14th century; the OED's original 1901 entry for *janizary* asserts that the troop "was composed mainly of tributary children of Christians."

34: as noted above, Amurath's father was actually Selim II; Solimon, ie. Suleiman, was his grandfather.

*Abd al-Malik's Army:* Abd al-Malik's invading Ottoman forces consisted of 6000 soldiers armed with an early type of portable firearm called an arquebus or harquebut, 1000 zouaves and 800 spahis or cavalry; this Turkish army was to be supplemented with an additional 6000 native Moorish horsemen who wished to join the rebellion.

**Entering Characters:** *Muly Mahamet Seth* (whom we shall refer to as *Seth*) is the brother of Abdelmelec; Seth has gathered from within Morocco an army of Moors inclined to fight against Muly Mahamet, and brought them to the border to join up with Abdelmelec and his Turkish forces.

Enter Muly Mahamet Seth, Rubin Archis, Abdil Rayes, with others.
Rubin Archis is the widow of Abdelmumen, the slain brother of Abdelmelec and Seth. She is accompanied by other noble women from the capital city of Fesse (ie. Fez).

Abdil Rayes' identity has confused editors. Though assumed by 19th century commentators to be a male, Rayes has been recognized by modern editors Yoklavich and Edelman not only to be female, but in fact to be the same character as the mysterious Queen who appears briefly in a later scene.

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Seth. Our Moors have seen the silver moons to wave
In banners bravely spreading over the plain,
44-45: Seth's arriving Moorish army has noted the countless standards (banners) of the Turks, which are so numerous that they cover the plains they are occupying; Seth is poetically acknowledging the generous assistance of the Turks in his brother's cause.

The silver moons are the crescent moons that were a symbol of the Ottomans, sewn into the banners.

wave = the quarto here prints wane, a word used to describe the diminishing in size of the visible part of the moon, but there is no reason to describe the moons as waning on the Turk's banners; rather, in light of the facts that n's and u's (which were used for v's) were frequently inverted in our old texts, Dyce reasonably emends wane to wave.

over = pronounced in a single syllable: o'er.

= again, the crescent moons. = perceived, seen.

47: the Ottoman flag contained a star within the horns of the crescent moon.

48-49: Seth describes the star in the Ottoman flag as a comet; comets were always viewed as omens, usually bad ones, though here Seth sees it as an affirmative sign, representing the ascendance of Abdelmelec.

happy sorting = a successful outcome.¹

51-55: as the widow of Abdelmumen, Rubin is rightfully bitter over the murder of her husband by Muly Mahamet.

52: in this interesting planting metaphor, Rubin alludes to the return of the throne to the branch of the family that rightfully should rule Morocco.

= therewith.¹

= ie. Abdelmelec.

= "you other high-ranking ladies from Fez"; the ladies are likely refugees whose husbands were opponents of Muly Mahamet.

ye = plural form of you.

dames = wives of nobles lords.

Fesse = alternate spelling for Fez, the capital of Peele's Morocco; the Saadians actually made their capital in
Sprung from the true Arabian Muly Xarif.
The loadstar and the honour of our line,

Now clear your watery eyes, wipe tears away,
And cheerfully give welcome to these arms:

Amurath hath sent scourges by his men,
To whip that tyrant traitor-king from hence.
That hath usurped from us, and maimed you all.
Soldiers, sith rightful quarrels' aid

Successful are, and men that manage them
Fight not in fear as traitors and their feres,
That you may understand what arms we bear,
What lawful arms against our brother's son,
In sight of heaven, even of mine honour's worth,
Truly I will deliver and discourse

The sum of all. Descended from the line
Of Mahomet, our grandsire Muly Xarif

With store of gold and treasure leaves Arabia,
And strongly plants himself in Barbary;
And of the Moors that now with us do wend
Our grandsire Muly Xarif was the first.
From him well wot ye Muly Mahamet Xeque.

Marrakesh.

Sprung = descended.
loadstar = guiding star, one that shows the way.

60: sprung = descended.
loadstar = guiding star, one that shows the way.

61: Amurath hath sent scourges by his men,
To whip that tyrant traitor-king from hence.
That hath usurped from us, and maimed you all.

65-66: sith rightful...are = "since armies that fight for a legitimate cause can expect victory".
sith = common variation of since.

69: sith = common variation of since.

71: Truly...of all = Abdelmelec will summarize his family's history, though more for the audience's sake than the soldiers.

72: Descended...Xarif = Xarif is an alternate spelling for shariff, a name which was applied to the descendants of the prophet Muhammad. We may note here that this family is referred to today as the Saadian dynasty.

Julien notes that the Saadian's alleged lineage from the Prophet is uncertain (p.222); it was common for aspirants to any Islamic throne to add legitimacy to their claims by asserting their descent from Muhammad.

75: the ancestors of Abdelmelec and Muly Mahamet had actually arrived from Arabia in the 12th century, settling in southern Morocco.

8: travel.

78: well wot ye = ie. "as you all know"; wot was an ancient and commonly used word meaning "to know".

78-82: Muly...succeed = Abdelmelec's father, Muly Mahamet Xeque, who was next in line to the Sultanship, had established, with the general agreement of all involved, the succession for the crown upon his death, specifically that his four sons should rule in turn, the eldest one alive of course always at the helm; this way, the Sultanship was to remain
Who in his life-time made a perfect law,
Confirmed with general voice of all his peers,
That in his kingdom should successively

His sons succeed. Abdallas was the first,
Eldest of four, Abdelmunen the second,
And we the rest, my brother and myself.
Abdallas reigned his time: but see the change!

He labours to invest his son in all,
To disannul the law our father made,
And disinherit us his brethren;
And in his life-time wrongfully proclaims
His son for king that now contends with us.
Therefore I crave to re-obtain my right,
That Muly Mahamet the traitor holds,

Traitor and bloody tyrant both at once,
That murtherèd his younger brethren both:

But on this damned wretch, this traitor-king,
The gods shall pour down showers of sharp revenge.
And thus a matter not to you unknown
I have delivered; yet for no distrust
Of loyalty, my well-belovèd friends,
But that th' occasions fresh in memory
Of these encumbers so may move your minds,
As for the lawful true-succeeding prince
Ye neither think your lives nor honours dear,
Spent in a quarrel just and honourable.

Cals. Such and no other we repute the cause
That forwardly for thee we undertake,
Thrice-puissant and renownèd Abdelmelec,

And for thine honour, safety, and crown,
Our lives and honours frankly to expose
To all the daungers that our war attend,
As freely and as resolutely all
As any Moor whom thou commandest most.

Seth. And why is Abdelmelec, then, so slow
with the brothers so long as any of them were alive, before passing on to any of their sons.

= Abdelmelec skips over explaining exactly how either his father or grandfather took over the crown of Morocco.

= the quarto printed faire here; Dyce's emendation to four is accepted by all the later editors.

85-88: initially, Xeque's plan was followed, as on his death the eldest brother Abdallas peacefully became the ruler of Morocco; but Abdallas decided to install his own son, Muly Mahamet, on the throne, rather than follow the agreed-to succession plan.

= brothers, pronounced as a trisyllable: BRE-ther-en.

= while sometimes Mahamet is pronounced as here with three syllables, more often it will be pronounced as a disyllable (MA-'met).

94: Muly Mahamet's assassination of his two younger brothers and uncle Abdelmunen - who should have been next in line to the throne on the death of Abdallas - was described and acted out in the Prologue to the first Act.

= showers is pronounced in one syllable here: show'rs.

97-98: *And thus…delivered* = ie. "but you already knew all that."

= burdens or troubles.

100-4: "I tell you all these things so that you will not feel your lives and honour are too valuable to lose in my cause, which is just and honourable."

= eagerly.

108: *Thrice-puissant* = thrice-powerful; *thrice* was commonly used, as here, as an intensifier.

renoumed = renowned; the word was more frequently spelled with an m in the 16th century.

= security: pronounced in three syllables: SA-fe-ty. 3

= freely, unconditionally. 2

111: daungers = dangers, which was more commonly spelled with an au until late in the 16th century.

our = Dyce emends this to on.

115-8: Abdelmelec's brother Seth is anxious to get moving.
To châstise him with fury of the sword
Whose pride doth swell to sway beyond his reach?

Follow this pride with fury of revenge.

Rubin. Of death, of blood, of wreak, and deep revenge,
Shall Rubin Archis frame her tragic songs:

In blood, in death, in murther, and misdeed,
This heaven's malice did begin and end.

Abdel. Rubin, these rites to Abdelmunen's ghost
Have pierced by this to Pluto's grave below;

The bells of Pluto ring revenge amain,
The Furies and the fiends conspire with thee;
War bids me draw my weapons for revenge
Of my deep wrongs and my dear brother's death.

Seth. Sheath not your swords, you soldiers of Amurath,
Sheath not your swords, you Moors of Barbary,
That fight in right of your anointed king,
But follow to the gates of death and hell,
Pale death and hell, to entertain his soul;
Follow, I say, to burning Phlegethon,
This traitor-tyrant and his companies.

Cals. Heave up your swords against these stony holds,
Wherein these barbarous rebels are enclosed:
Called for is Abdelmelec by the gods
To sit upon the throne of Barbary.

Rayes. Bassa, great thanks, the honour of the Turks.
Forward, brave lords, unto this rightful war!
How can this battle but successful be,
Where courage meeteth with a rightful cause?

Rubin. Go in good time, my best-belovèd lord,
Successful in thy work thou undertakes!

[Exeunt.]

The Real Abdelmelec: historians generally give Abd Al-
Malik high marks for his character and abilities: Bowen
writes that he "was an able statesman, a valiant soldier, an
experienced general, a man of lofty understanding,
remarkable culture, a wise, just and humane spirit."
Bovill writes that though he served as Morocco's king for
only two years, Abd al-Malik "proved himself to be one of
the most enlightened rulers the Moors ever had", that he had
"a diverse and possibly extensive knowledge of European
ACT I, SCENE II.

A Valley North of Fez

Enter, in his chariot, the Moor [Muly Mahamet], [Calipolis.] and their son, a Moors attendant on each side of the chariot. Pisano, his captain, with the Moor's Guard and treasure.

1. Muly. Pisano, take a cornet of our horse.
2. As many argolets and armed pikes.

And with our carriage march away before

4. By Scyras, and those plots of ground

That to Moroccus lead the lower way:

6. Our enemies keep upon the mountain-tops,
And have encamped themselves not far from Fesse. —

Madam,

Gold is the glue, sinews, and strength of war,

And we must see our treasure may go safe. —

Away!

[Exit Pisano with the treasure and some of the Guard.]

affairs", and that he spoke Spanish and "could converse in Italian", even hiring English musicians for his court.

Setting: suggested by Edelman, based on the sources.

Entering Characters: Muly Mahamet is, at least for the moment, the Sultan of Morocco; he has fled Morocco's capital due to the approach of Abdelmelec's superior army.

Calipolis is Mahamet's wife; their son we shall denote as Muly Jr. We note here that the quarto does not list Calipolis as a stage-entrant, but was added by Dyce (see the note at line 8 below).

Pisano is an Italian military commander serving Muly Mahamet.

= a company of cavalry.

2: As many = ie. along with an equal number of".

argolets = light-armed cavalry, perhaps carrying bows and arrows.¹

armed pikes = soldiers armed with pikes; a pike was a weapon comprised of a long pole with a pointed steel head; pikes were the most common form of weapon carried by European soldiers, as the OED notes, until the 18th century.

= ie. the wagon in which Mahamet's treasury is carried.

= Sugden suggests the plain of Azgar is meant here, "on the west coast of Morocco", but no such plains can be found on a map. The context suggests Scyras lies in a valley, surrounded by mountains.

= perhaps referring to the imperial city of Maroco (modern Meknes), located about 33 miles west of Fez. Mahamet is trying to escape from Abdelmelec's forces, who are camped near-by (see line 7 below).

= a disyllable here: EN-mies.

8: in the quarto, lines 8 and 9 are printed as a single, 12-syllable line; Dyce assumes that Muly Mahamet is addressing his wife here, and hence adds Calipolis to the list of those who just entered the stage. Bullen, however, wonders if the author's intent was to personify gold as Madam Gold (removing the comma after Madam), a sort-of Anglicized version of Lady Pecunia, the personified praise of money.

= sinews are tendons, suggesting strength; in ancient Rome, Cicero called money the sinews of war, in that no ruler can keep an army going without it.¹

13: stage direction added by Dyce.
Now, boy, what's the news?

*Muly Jr.* The news, my lord, is war, war and revenge;
And, if I shall declare the *circumstance*,
'Tis thus.

Rubin, our uncle's wife, that wrings her hands
For Abdelmunen's death, accompanied
With many *dames* of Fesse in mourning *weeds*,
Near to Argier encountered Abdelmelec,
That bends his force, puffed up with Amurath's aid,
Against your *holds* and castles of defence.

The younger brother, Muly *Mahamet* Seth,
Greets the great Bassa that the King of Turks
Sends to invade your right and royal realm;
And basely beg revenge, arch-rebels all,
To be inflict upon our *progeny*.

*Muly.* Why, boy, is Amurath's Bassa such a *bug*
That he is marked to do this *doughty* deed? –

Then, Bassa, lock the winds in *wards* of brass,

Thunder from heaven, damn wretched men to death,

Bear all the offices of Saturn's *sons*,

Be Pluto, then, in hell, and bar the fiends,
Take Neptune's *force* to thee and calm the seas,
And execute Jove's justice on the world,

Convey Tamburlaine into our Afric here,

To chastise and to menace lawful kings: –

Tamburlaine, triumph not, for thou must die,
As Philip did, Caesar, and Caesar's peers.

44

Muly, Jr. The Bassa grossly flattered to his face,
And Amurath's praise advanced above the sound
Upon the plains, the soldiers being spread,
And that brave guard of sturdy janizaries
That Amurath to Abdelmelec gave,
And had him boldly be with them as safe
As if he slept within a walled town;
Who take them to their weapons, threatening revenge,
Bloody revenge, bloody revengeful war.

Muly. Away, and let me hear no more of this.
Why, boy,
Are we successor to the great Abdallas

57: Are we successor = the quarto prints Are we successors here, but Dyce correctly changes the last word to the singular, as Mahamet is using the royal "we" here, referring only to himself.

Abdallas = the quarto incorrectly prints Abdelmulec here; I have accepted Bullen’s emendation to Abdallas.

= bug-bears: see line 32 above.

60: the two compound words in this line were commonly paired, as here.

raw-head = a bug-bear, comprised of a skull, perhaps with a body whose flesh has been stripped away.1
bloody-bone = another term for a bug-bear.1

= ie. scimitar, the short, curved, pointed sword with a single edge, typically assigned to characters of Turkish or Middle Eastern origin.1 The modern spelling did not become common until the turn of the 17th century.

= since.

= that.

= small ships, which acted, for example, as messenger ships in the company of larger ships.1

= 16th century spelling of Tangier, a major port city held by the Portuguese, located on the northern shore of Morocco at the Strait of Gibraltar.
Muly, Jr.  And of those slaughtered bodies shall thy son
= meaning himself; Elizabethan characters, especially in
Peete’s work, often spoke of themselves in the third
person.

70: huge tower = Dyce emends huge to the two-syllable
word hugy, a common poetic alternative to huge; Dyce
notes that hugy appears elsewhere in the play; tower is
pronounced as a one-syllable word.

Nemrod’s frame = Nimrod, the ”mighty hunter before the
Lord” (Gen. 10:9), ruled a kingdom which included the
city of Babel; Nimrod was said to have instigated the
construction of Babel’s famous tower (frame).\footnote{11}

To threaten those unjust and partial gods
= unfairly biased.
That to Abdallas’ lawful seed deny
= ie. legitimate successors.
A long, a happy, and triumphant reign.

An alarum within, and then enter a Messenger.
= call to arms, as a warning of danger, or disturbance.\footnote{1,2}

Mess. Fly, King of Fesse, King of Moroccus, fly,
= flee.
Fly with thy friends, Emperor of Barbary;

80: That rageth as the ramping lioness
= rearing on her hind legs.
In rescue of her younglings from the bear!

Thy towns and holds by numbers basely yield.
= despicably submit.
Thy land to Abdelmelec’s rule resigns,
= surrenders.

84-85: Pisano, who left Mahamet at line 13 above, was,
along with the treasury, captured by enemy troops.

Thy carriage and thy treasure taken is
= "those who accompany you"; thou and thine was a
common expression.

An alarum within, and then enter a Messenger.

Muly. Villain, what dreadful sound of death and flight
= blighted or cursed wood.
Is this wherewith thou dost afflict our ears?
= an obsolete spelling of yew,\footnote{1} which is deadly because
it is poisonous.\footnote{25}
But if there be no safety to abide
= "carries me off from here": note the extensive alliteration
in the line.

The favour, fortune, and success of war,
Far from the light or comfort of the sun,
Restless till I be safely set in shade
= of some unhaunted place, some blasted grove
Of deadly hue or dismal cypress-tree,

To seek as Envy at Cecropè’s gate,
had been discovered, blamed Agraulos, and hatched the following plot: Mercury, the messenger god, had fallen in love with Agraulos' sister Herse; Minerva ordered the goddess Envy to plant in Agraulos' heart unmitigated jealousy of her sister's good fortune, which Envy did. Agraulos, now bitter, tried to block Mercury from entering Herse's room. Mercury, for Agraulos' trouble, turned her into stone.13

seek = though the myth referred to here is easily identifiable, the exact meaning of line 99 remains unclear; the word in the quarto is seeke, which could mean (1) "pursue with hostile intention" or persecute; (2) resort or pay a visit to; or (3) at a loss, puzzled as how to act;1 Dyce emended seeke to sick, meaning "sicken".

Cecropes = a trisyllable word: Ce-CRO-pè. The name appeared as such in a 1581 translation of Seneca's plays.

And pine with thought and terror of mishaps: Away! = waste away. = the quarto prints the here, emended by Dyce to with.

[Exeunt.] The Battle to Overthrow Muly Mahamet: "Mulai Mohammed and his army rode out from Fez to engage his enemy but the battle was lost before it was joined. By a subtle combination of threats and bribes and a well-organized fifth column, Abd al-Malik had already ensured the betrayal of his adversary. As the two armies met, Mohammed was deserted by his Andalusians, Spanish Moors who had fled to Africa where they had for long provided the Moorish armies with their best troops. In March 1576 Abd al-Malik entered Fez unopposed..." (Bovill, p. 23).
ACT II.

_Alarum within, and then enter the Presenter._

1 Now war begins his rage and ruthless reign,
2 And Nemesis, with bloody whip in hand,

Thunders for vengeance on this Negro-Moor;

4 _DUMB SHOW_
6 _Enter above Nemesis; enter Three Ghosts._

7: Nemesis enters onto the balcony at the back of the stage.

10 Nor may the silence of the speechless night,

12 Dire architect of murthers and misdeeds,
14 Of tragedies and tragic tyrannies,
16 Of this usurper to his progeny.
18 [Three Ghosts cry "Vindicta!"]

Hark, lords, as in a hollow place afar,
20 The dreadful shrieks and clamours that resound.

And sound revenge upon this traitor's soul,

Traitor to kin and kind, to gods and men!

Now Nemesis upon her doubling drum,
22 Moved with this ghastly moan, this sad complaint,

Larums aloud into Alecto's ears,

And with her thundering wakes, whereas they lie
26 In cave as dark as hell and beds of steel.
The Furies, just imps of dire revenge.

"Revenge," cries Abdelmunen's grievèd ghost,

Lying down behind the Curtains, the three Furies,
one with a whip, another with a bloody torch
and the third with a chopping knife.

And rouseth with the terror of this noise
These nymphs of Erebus: "Wreak and revenge"

Ring out the souls of his unhappy brethren.

And now start up these torments of the world,
Waked with the thunder of Rhamnusia's drum
And fearful echoes of these grievèd ghosts, –
Alecto with her brand and bloody torch,

Megaera with her whip and snaky hair,

Tisiphone with her fatal murdering iron:
These three conspire, these three complain and moan. –
Thus, Muly Mahamet, is a council held
To wreak the wrongs and murthers thou hast done. –

By this imagine was this barbarous Moor

Chased from his dignity and his diadem,

And lives forlorn among the mountain-shrubs,
And makes his food the flesh of savage beasts.

Amurath's soldiers have by this installed
Good Abdelmelec in his royal seat.

The dames of Fesse and ladies of the land,
In honour of the son of Solimon,
Erect a statue made of beaten gold,
And sing to Amurath songs of lasting praise.

Muly Mahamet's fury over-ruled,
His cruelty controlled, and pride rebuked,
Now at last when sober thoughts renewed
Care of his kingdom and desired crown,

By messengers he furiously implores

pensers of justice (just), and as the children (imps) of revenge.

beds of steel = Peele has borrowed this phrase from an earlier English work (see the note Act IV.ii), but as Edelman notes, beds of steel is itself a borrowing of the Furies' iron beds mentioned by Virgil in Book VI of the Aeneid.

30: the Furies are presumably lying down on their beds of steel (line 26); curtains at the back of the stage are pulled back to reveal the Furies.24

35: These nymphs of Erebus = ie. the Furies, who reside in Erebus, the dark area below the earth, through which the souls of the dead pass on their way to Hades.10 Later, at Act IV.ii.84, Peele mistakenly describes the Furies as the daughters of the primordial god Erebus.

Wreak = avenge.

= ie. cry or call out. = ie. Mahamet's murdered brothers; unhappy = unfortunate.

= Rhamnusia is an alternate name for Nemesis.

40-42: the Presenter describes the individual attributes of the Furies as they appear on-stage, though these attributes historically actually applied to all three. brand = torch.

41: all three Furies were said to have snakes entwined in their hair and around their arms and waists.14 = ie. chopping knife.

= lament.

= avenge.

46: the Presenter explains how the plot will have advanced before Scene I begins.

By this imagine = "imagine that during this time".

47: Mahamet has lost his dignity and his crown; perhaps the second his should be removed for the sake of the meter.

= ie. "for his".

= ie. "in this intervening time".

= the author goes out of his way to indicate that his sympathies lie with Abdelmelec.

= ie. the Ottoman Sultan Amurath, the (grand)son of Suleiman the Magnificent.

= overcome or overthrown.

= curbed.

58-59: finally, having gotten over his despair, Mahamet is ready to do what he has to do to regain his throne of Portugal, to request the help that, according to the
Sebastian’s aid, brave King of Portugal.

He, forward in all arms and chivalry,
Hearkens to his ambassadors, and grants
What they in letters and by words entreat.
Now listen, lordings, now begins the game.
Sebastian’s tragedy in this tragic war.

[Exit.]

ACT II, SCENE I.

A battlefield Near Fez.

Alarum within, and then enter Abdelmelec, Muly Mahamet Seth, Calsepius Bassa, with Moors and Janizaries.

Abdel. Now hath the sun displayed his golden beams,
And, dusky clouds dispersed, the welkin clears,
Wherein the twenty-coloured rainbow shews.
After this fight happy and fortunate,
And Victory, adorned with Fortune's plumes,
Alights on Abdelmelec's glorious crest,
Here find we time to breathe, and now begin
To pay thy due and duties thou dost owe
To heaven and earth, to gods and Amurath.

[Sound trumpets.]

And now draw near, and heaven and earth give ear,
Give ear and record, heaven and earth, with me;
Ye lords of Barbary, hearken and attend,
Hark to the words I speak, and vow I make
To plant the true succession of the crown:
Lo, lords, in our seat royal to succeed
Our only brother here we do install,
And by the name of Muly Mahamet Seth
Intitle him true heir unto the crown.
Ye gods of heaven gratulate this deed,
That men on earth may therewith stand content!

Entering Characters: the victorious Abdelmelec, with his brother Seth and Turkish guard (the Janizaries), who are led by Calsepius Bassa, enter the stage.

At the end of this stage direction, the quarto prints and the Ladies; we follow Dyce in having the "Ladies" enter at line 35 below.

Alarum = call to arms.

= sky.
= ie. multi- = shows.
= synonym for "fortunate".

6: a common image of personified Victory and Fortune. In the early 17th century, Philip Massinger frequently used the expression plumed Victory.

= lands on. = helmet.
= rest (after the exertions of battle).

= here and in line 14, heaven is pronounced as a mono-syllable (hea’n), but as a disyllable in line 23 below.

= ie. "and listen (hark) to the vow I make".

19-22: Abdelmelec provides for the succession: Seth will inherit the throne after he dies.

23-24: if the gods accept Seth’s appointment as heir, then Morocco's citizens will be less likely to dispute his succession; the two lines hint at the civil violence that normally accompany the death of a ruler as multiple claimants vie for the crown.
Lo, thus my due and duties do I pay
To heaven and earth, to gods and Amurath!

[Sound trumpets.]

Seth. Renownmèd Bassa, to remunerate
Thy worthiness and magnanimity,
Behold, the noblest ladies of the land
Bring present tokens of their gratitude.

Enter Rubin Archis, her Son, Abdil Rayes, and Ladies.

Rubin. Rubin, that breathes but for revenge,
Bassa, by this commends herself to thee;
Receive the token of her thankfulness:
To Amurath the god of earthly kings
Doth Rubin give and sacrifice her son:
Not with sweet smoke of fire or sweet perfume,
But with his father's sword, his mother's thanks,
Doth Rubin give her son to Amurath.

Rayes. As Rubin gives her son, so we ourselves
To Amurath give, and fall before his face.
Bassa, wear thou the gold of Barbary,
And glister like the palace of the Sun,
In honour of the deed that thou hast done.

Cals. Well worthy of the aid of Amurath
Is Abdelmelec, and these noble dames. --
Rubin, thy son I shall ere long bestow,
Where thou dost him bequeath in honour's fee,
On Amurath mighty Emperor of the East,
That shall receive the imp of royal race
With cheerful looks and gleams of princely grace. --
This chosen guard of Amurath's janizaries
I leave to honour and attend on thee,
King of Morocco, conqueror of thy foes,
True King of Fesse, Emperor of Barbary;
Muly Molocco, live and keep thy seat,
In spite of fortune's spite or enemies' threats. --
Ride, Bassa, now, bold Bassa, homeward ride,
As glorious as great Pompey in his pride.

Exeunt.

Mahamet Escapes Abdelmelec's Grasp: though successful in ousting Mohammed, Abd al-Malik was unable to pursue his nephew because his Turkish troops refused to go further until they received their pay. Abd al-Malik had no choice but to borrow the money from the merchants of Fez, but by the time this was accomplished Mohammed had long escaped into the Moroccan hinterland.

After paying off the Ottoman troops, Abd al-Malik sent them speedily on their way home.

ACT II, SCENE II.

Lisbon.

Enter Don Diego Lopez, the Irish Bishop, Stukeley, Jonas, Hercules, and other.

Lopez. Welcome to Lisborne, valiant Catholics,
Welcome, brave Englishmen, to Portugal:
Most reverent primate of the Irish church,
And, noble Stukeley, famous by thy name,
Welcome, thrice welcome to Sebastian's town;
And welcome, English captains, to you all:
It joyeth us to see his Holiness' fleet
Cast anchor happily upon our coast.

Bish. These welcomes, worthy governor of Lisbon,
Argue an honourable mind in thee,
But treat of our misfortune therewithal.

Enter Don Diego Lopez, the Irish Bishop, Stukeley, Jonas, Hercules, and other.
To Ireland by Pope Gregory's command
by bad luck as if it were a voluntary friendly visit.

13-15: the fleet had intended to swoop down on and attack Ireland in an attempt to drive out the English.

Pope Gregory's = Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585, pope from 1572) spent much of his administration attempting to curb the alarming rate at which entire nations were converting to Protestantism; his sponsorship of Stukeley's expedition stemmed from Queen Elizabeth's stringent anti-Catholic policies. The Catholic Encyclopedia suggests that the goal of the Irish invasion was actually to depose Queen Elizabeth!15

Pope Gregory actually gave Stukeley but a single ship, along with 600 soldiers (which some of the sources, and thus Peele, inflate to 6000) and 100,000 ducets.

= by surprise.

Thanks to her extensive network of spies, Elizabeth knew well ahead of time of Stukeley's expedition, but had been misled into thinking the fleet of invaders was much larger than it really was.

= the quarto has simply land here, emended by Dyce.

19: ie. "and we would have captured Ireland by now".

20: in reality, Stukeley's ship, the St. John of Genoa, was so unseaworthy that before venturing far into the Atlantic, he was forced to land at Lisbon, where Stukeley planned to ask King Sebastian for a new one.6

The English Presence in Ireland: the English had long maintained a presence in a small region surrounding Dublin, an area known as the Pale; but by 1542, under Henry VIII, Ireland had been brought more or less under complete English control, and in January of that year Henry was proclaimed "King of Ireland" by Parliament.17

= a polite formula, used to excuse oneself in case one unintentionally misspeaks or offends.

= without.

= unfitting, an understatement.

As a country with its own extensive collection of possessions and protectorates around the world, the Portuguese would naturally not be inclined to approve any attempt to remove a colony from the mother-nation's orbit.

= it is unclear whom Stukeley is referring to here.

= determined.

= strive for.25 = sovereignty, power, control.12

= aimed or directed.

29-36: of all the invaders, Stukeley alone is not particularly concerned with Ireland's, and by extension the Catholic
Church’s, fortunes; rather, the Englishman seeks glory and power for himself wherever he can find it.

= because.
= brought into existence, ie. born.¹
= since.

37-40: Stukeley does not assign any importance or significance to the accident of his birth in England, as he could have been born anywhere; hence his first allegiance is to himself, rather than to England.

43-44: be it far...privilege = having made his point. Lopez retreats; ultimately, the mayor has no reason to really care one way or another about the fate of Stukeley, Ireland, or their fleet.

take exceptions = object to, criticize.
my privilege = ie. what is proper or acceptable.

= love.

= efforts.

50: respect = concern.⁴

effects = Bullen notes the uncertainty over the exact meaning of effects here; Edelman suggests "motives".

48-52: "and if we ever turn away from loving or working for the benefit of our country, it should be over a matter of conscience or religion, and not for purposes of selfish advancement."

54-55: Stukeley is openly disdainful of the Bishop!

55: Yoklavich notes the pun on the name of the 7th century Welsh Saint Asaph.

57-58: Hercules adds his own ironic commentary: the Bishop speaks as an automatic mouthpiece for the church, without measuring his words with sober forethought.

You see he hath it made thus large and wide,

Because he may convert it, as he list.
To any form may fit the fashion best.

And cannot answer it in another place.

For why I make it not so great desert
To be begot or born in any place,
Sith that’s a thing of pleasure and of ease
That might have been performed elsewhere as well.

Lopez. Follow what your good pleasure will,
Good Captain Stukeley: be it far from me
To take exceptions beyond my privilege.

Bish. Yet, captain, give me leave to speak;
We must affect our country as our parents,
And if at any time we alienate
Our love or industry from doing it honour,
It must respect effects and touch the soul,

Matter of conscience and religion,
And not desire of rule or benefit.

Stuk. Well said, bishop! spoken like yourself,
The reverent, lordly Bishop of Saint Asses.

Herc. The bishop talks according to his coat,
And takes not measure of it by his mind:

You see he hath it made thus large and wide,

Because he may convert it, as he list.
To any form may fit the fashion best.

Bish. Captain, you do me wrong to déscant thus
Upon my coat or double consciënce.

And cannot answer it in another place.


Lopez. 'Tis but in jest, lord bishop; **put it up:**

And all as friends deign to be entertained
As my ability here can make provision.

Shortly shall I conduct you to the king,
Whose welcomes evermore to **strangers** are
Princely and honourable, **as his state becomes.**

Stuk. Thanks, worthy governor. — Come, bishop, come,
Will you shew fruits of quarrel and of wrath?

Come, **let's in** with my Lord of Lisbon here,

And put all **conscience** into one carouse,

Letting it out again **as we may live.**

[Exeunt all except Stukeley.]

There shall no action pass my hand or sword,

That cannot make a step **to gain** a crown;
No word shall pass the **office** of my tongue,

That sounds not of affection to a crown;
No thought have **being** in my lordly breast,
That works not every way to win a crown:
Deeds, words, and thoughts, shall all be as a king's;
My chiefest company shall be with kings;
And my **deserts** shall **counterpoise** a king's:
Why should not I, then, look to be a king?

I am the Marquis now of Ireland made,

And will be shortly **King of Ireland:**

King of a mole-hill had I rather be,
Than the richest subject of a monarchy. —
Huff it, brave mind, and never cease t'aspire,

Before thou reign sole king of thy desire.

[Exit.]

**ACT II, SCENE III.**

*The Mountains of Northern Morocco.*

*Enter the Moor Muly Mahamet, Calipolis, their Son, Zareo, and another.*

1 Muly. Where art thou, boy? Where is Calipolis?

2 O deadly wound that passeth by mine eye,
The fatal prison of my swelling heart!

4 O fortune constant in unconstancy!

Fight earthquakes in the entrails of the earth,
And eastern whirlwinds in the hellish shades!
Some foul contagion of th' infected heaven
Blast all the trees, and in their cursed tops
The dismal night-raven and tragic owl
Breed, and become fore-tellers of my fall,
The fatal ruin of my name and me!

Adders and serpents hiss at my disgrace,
And wound the earth with anguish of their stings!
Now, Abdelmelec, now triumphant in Fesse;
Fortune hath made thee King of Barbary.

Calip. Alas, my lord, what boot these huge exclamings
To advantage us in this distressed estate?

96: **Huff it** = swell with pride.1
   **brave** = excellent or worthy; Stukeley addresses his own mental faculties.

94-97: the scene unusually ends with a pair of rhyming couplets, as opposed to the more common single rhyming couplet.

**The Setting:** Muly Mahamet, having escaped Fez and Abdelmelec with his family and remaining loyal troops, finds himself hiding in the mountains of Morocco, probably the Middle Atlas Range, about 50 miles south of Fez.6

**Entering Characters:** Calipolis, we remember, is the wife of Muly Mahamet; Zareo is one of the deposed Sultan's military commanders.

**Zareo, and another** = the quarto says simply here, with two others; the Theatrical Plot states & two Moors.

1f: lines 1 and 5-10 are recited in a play-within-a-play in Ben Jonson's 1601 *Poetaster*, except that fore-tellers (line 10) becomes, in Jonson's play, fore-runners.

2-3: an earlier editor notes that these lines make no sense;
   Dyce suggests emending prison to poison, but this does not really help much.

4: Fortune, who is often personified as a fickle deity, can only be relied upon to be unreliable.

5-13: in a series of imperatives, Muly Mahamet calls on various natural phenomena to express themselves.

5: note the unusual alliteration of e- words in this line.

9-11: the croaking of the raven and the screeching of the owl were considered ominous. The pair of birds are mentioned together frequently in the era's literature, including in Peele's own play *David and Bathsabe*, which appeared around the same time as our present play: Night-ravens and owls shall ring his fatal knel, etc.

**dismal** (line 9) = unpropitious.1
   **name** (line 11) = reputation and fame.

17-18: ie. "alas, how do these outcries benefit us (advantage us) while we are in these dire straits (distressed estate)?"
   **what boot** = "what use are".
   **exclamings** = outcries, an unusual but not unique use
O, pity our perplexed estate, my lord,  
And turn all curses to submiss complaints,  
And those complaints to actions of relief!

I faint, my lord; and naught may cursing plaints  
Refresh the fading substance of my life.

Muly. Faint all the world, consume and be accursed,  
Since my state faints and is accursed.

Calip. Yet patience, lord, to conquer sorrows so.

Muly. What patience is for him that lacks his crown?  
There is no patience where the loss is such:  
The shame of my disgrace hath put on wings,  
And swiftly flies about this earthly ball.

Car'st thou to live, then, fond Calipolis,  
When he that should give essence to thy soul,  
He on whose glory all thy joy should stay,  
Is soul-less, glory-less, and desperate,  
Crying for battle, famine, sword, and fire,  
Rather than calling for relief or life?  
But be content, thy hunger shall have end;  
Famine shall pine to death, and thou shalt live:

I will go hunt these cursèd solitaries,  
And make the sword and target here my hound[s]  
To pull down lions and untamèd beasts.

[Exit.]

Muly, Jr. Tush, mother, cherish your unhearty soul,  
And feed with hope of happiness and ease;  
For if by valour or by policy  
My kingly father can be fortunate,  
We shall be Jove’s commanders once again,  
And flourish in a three-fold happiness.

Zareo. His majesty hath sent Sebastián,  
The good and harmless King of Portugal,  
A promise to resign the royalty of exclaim as a noun.¹

19-21: Calipolis begs her husband to think of his people,  
rather than to paralyzedly bemoan his own personal misfortune, and act to help them all.  
perplexed estate = distressed condition.  
submiss complaints = humble or subdued laments.¹

22-23: naught…my life = ie. "your curses and lamentations (plaints) are doing nothing to help me, who am starving to death."  
= rot or waste away.¹  
= greatness, power.¹

32-33: ie. news of Muly Mahamet's fall has surely spread throughout the world.  
Peele was fond of the image of news of one's disgrace making its way around the world; in his David and Bathsheba, for example, the rape of Thamar was passed on to the clouds "To bear this wonder round about the world."  
= foolish.  
= attend.

38: famine, sword and fire were frequently mentioned as attributes of war; sickness was also sometimes included in this list in the era's literature.  
= personified Famine herself will starve to death, ie. Muly Mahamet is ready to act to relieve his wife’s hunger.  
= lonely places: according to the OED, a unique use of the word; Dyce suggests "deserts".  
43: Mahamet’s sword and shield will play the role of hunting hounds, as he goes in search of game to kill.  
= disheartened.²  
= strategy.  
= English authors had no compunction in having Islamic characters allude to Roman deities.  
= triple, an intensifier.

55-58: Muly Mahamet has sent an ambassador to the King of Portugal to offer him sovereignty over all of Morocco if Sebastian helps him regain his crown.
And kingdom of Morocco to his hands;
And when this haughty offer takes effect.
And works affiance in Sebastián,
My gracious lord, warned wisely to advise.
I doubt not but will watch occasion,
And take her fore-top by the slenderest hair,
To rid us of this miserable life.

Muly, Jr. Good madam, cheer yourself: my father's wise;
He can submit himself and live below,
Make shew of friendship, promise, vow, and swear,
Till, by the virtue of his fair pretence,
Sebastian trusting his integrity,
He makes himself possessor of such fruits
As grow upon such great advantages.

Calip. But more dishonour hangs on such misdeeds
Than all the profit their return can bear:
Such secret judgments have the heavens imposed
Upon the drooping state of Barbary,
As public merits in such lewd attempts
Have drawn with violence upon our heads.

Re-enter Muly Mahamet, with a piece of flesh
upon his sword.

Muly. Hold thee, Calipolis, feed, and faint no more;
This flesh I forc'd from a lioness,
Meat of a princess, for a princess meet:

His majesty = Muly Mahamet.
harmless = innocent. 25

59: ie. "and when Sebastian realizes what he is being offered".
haughty = lofty or high-minded, though Bullen suggests "magnanimous".

62-63: "Muly Mahamet will no doubt seize the opportunity (occasion) when it presents itself".

To grab Occasion (or Opportunity) by the foretop (or forelock) = a common expression meaning to proactively take advantage of an opportunity when it appears; personified Occasion or Opportunity was usually imagined to be an old and bald woman, excepting a lock of hair which grew from her forehead.

66: wise = likely correctly emended by the old editors from wife.

66-72: Junior assures his mother that Mahamet will be able to dissemble, feigning modesty and submission to the degree necessary, in order to convince Sebastian to help him remove Abdelmelec from Morocco's throne.

74-75: the dishonour inherent in behaving so deceptively will outweigh any benefit one might gain by doing so; Calipolis is the sole voice of conscience in our play.

76-79: Providence is already punishing them for Mahamet's crimes.

78-79: the sense seems to be, "we have deserved the destructive punishment that heaven has imposed on us for performing such wicked (lewd) deeds."

86: a neat bit of word-play: the meat intended for a lioness - the queen (princess) of beasts - is appropriate (meet) for a real queen.

This line comprises an example of a figure of speech known as an antimetabole, in which the same words are repeated in reverse order, but with a clever twist here in that meet / meat have two different meanings. Keep your eyes open for several other antimetaboles in the play.
Learn by her noble stomach to esteem
Penury plenty in extremest dearth;

Who, when she saw her foragement bereft,
Pined not in melancholy or childish fear,
But as brave minds are strongest in extremes,
So she, redoubling her former force,
Ranged through the woods, and rent the breeding vaults
Of proudest savages to save herself.

Feed, then, and faint not, fair Calipolis;
For rather than fierce famine shall prevail
To gnaw thy entrails with her thorny teeth,
The conquering lioness shall attend on thee.
And lay huge heaps of slaughtered carcasses,
As bulwarks in her way, to keep her back.

I will provide thee of a princely osprey,
That as she flieth over fish in pools,
The fish shall turn their glistering bellies up,
And thou shalt take thy liberal choice of all:
Jove's stately bird with wide-commanding wings
Shall hover still about thy princely head.
And beat down fowl by shoals into thy lap.
Feed, then, and faint not, fair Calipolis.

Calip. Thanks, good my lord, and though my stomach be
Too queasy to digest such bloody meat,
Yet, strength I it with virtue of my mind,
I doubt no whit but I shall live, my lord.

Muly. Into the shades, then, fair Calipolis,
And make thy son and negroes here good cheer:
Feed and be fat, that we may meet the foe
With strength and terror, to revenge our wrong.

[Exeunt.]
ACT II, SCENE IV.

Lisbon, the Royal Palace.

Enter King Sebastian, the Duke of Avero, the Duke of Barceles, Lewes de Silva, Christophero de Tavera, and Attendants.

K. Seb. Call forth those Moors, those men of Barbary, That came with letters from the King of Fesse.

Exit one, who brings in the Moorish Ambassadors with two Moorish Attendants.

Ye warlike lords, and men of chivalry, Honourable ambassadors of this high regent, Hark to Sebastian King of Portugal. These letters sent from your distrested lord, Torn from his throne by Abdalmelec's hand, Strengthened and raised by furious Amurath, Import a kingly favour at our hands.

For aid to re-obtain his royal seat, And place his fortunes in their former height.

For quital of which honourable arms, By these his letters he doth firmly vow Wholly to yield and to surrender up The kingdom of Moroccus to our hands, And to become to us contributary;

And to content himself with the realm of Fesse.

These lines, my lords, writ in extremity, Contain therefore but during fortune's date; How shall Sebastian, then, believe the same?

1st Amb. Vicerows, and most Christian king of Portugal,

To satisfy thy doubtful mind herein,

Command forthwith a blazing brand of fire

Entering Characters: we finally meet Portugal's King Sebastian. The other named characters are nobles and followers of his.

1-2: Sebastian refers to Muly Mahamet's envoys.

= sovereign, meaning Muly Mahamet.²
= listen.
= ie. "who was torn".
= cruel.²

13: Import = the sense is "ask or beg for", a truncated version of importune.

at our hands = ie. "from me"; Sebastian employs the royal "we".

15: ie. and raise his fortune to the levels they had formerly occupied.

= requital, ie. repayment.

17-20: Mahamet promises to grant overlordship of Morocco to Sebastian if the latter helps him regain his Sultanship.

= as a viceroy - a subordinate king - of Sebastian's, Mahamet promises to pay tribute to his new master.

21: ie. Mahamet agrees to rule directly only over the northern portion of Morocco, the region corresponding perhaps to the ancient Kingdom of Fez.

himself = Dyce posits reducing himself to him for the sake of the meter.

the realm = on the other hand, Bullen suggests keeping himself, and pronouncing the realm in one syllable: th' realm.

= ie. written as they are during a crisis.

23-24: since Mahamet's letters were written in such a desperate moment, Sebastian suspects the Moor is not likely to keep his promises when his fortune is reversed.

= governors. = the title Most Christian King had been granted to and used by French monarchs, but Peele here uniquely applies it to the Portuguese King Sebastian.

= torch.
Be brought in presence of thy majesty:
Then shalt thou see, by our religious vows
And ceremonies most inviolate,
How firm our sovereign's protestations are.

A brand is brought in by an Attendant.

Behold, my lord, this binds our faith to thee:
In token that great Muly Mahamet's hand
Hath writ no more than his stout heart allows,
And will perform to thee and to thine heirs,

We offer here our hands into this flame;
And as this flame doth fasten on this flesh,
So from our souls we wish it may consume
The heart of our great lord and sovereign,
Muly Mahamet King of Barbary,
If his intent agree not with his words!

K. Seb. These ceremonies and protestations
Sufficeth us, ye lords of Barbary,
Therefore return this answer to your king:
Assure him by the honour of my crown,
And by Sebastian's true unfeignèd faith,
He shall have aid and succour to recover,
And seat him in, his former empery,
Let him rely upon our princely word:
Tell him by August we will come to him
With such a power of brave impatient minds,
As Abdelenec and great Amurath
Shall tremble at the strength of Portugal.

1st Amb. Thanks to the renownèd King of Portugal,
On whose stout promises our state depend.

K. Seb. Barbarians, go glad your distressed king,
And say Sebastian lives to right his wrong.

[Exeunt Ambassadors and their Attendants.]

Duke of Avero, call in those Englishmen,
Don Stukeley, and those captains of the fleet,
That lately landed in our bay of Lisbon.

Now breathe, Sebastian, and in breathing blow
Some gentle gale of thy new-formèd joys.

26-32: the ambassador will perform a dangerous act of self-mutilation to prove to Sebastian that Mahamet's promise is so sacred that he would not dare break it.

= signifying.

= brave. = ie. intends to fulfill.

39: "and will indeed do all he promises, not just for Sebastian but even for those who succeed him".

40-41: wow! a great bit of stage business, as the ambassadors each sacrifice a limb to convince Sebastian of their truthfulness!

= formal and solemn affirmations or declarations.¹
= "satisfy me". = plural form of you.

= dominion.¹
= kingly, royal.

= an army.

= renowned.

= bold.²

= men of Barbary. = make glad, raise the spirits of.
= a play on words meaning "make correct or rectify the wrongs done to him."

Mahamet's Offer to Sebastian: in return for Sebastian's helping him regain his throne, Mohammed promised the Portuguese monarch, in Bowen's words, "considerable portions of the dominion he no longer possessed, and notably the fortress of Larache", a Moroccan-held port on the Atlantic coast.

68: ie. Aveiro, a Portuguese seaport.

69: a Spanish title, usually fixed as here to a man's name;¹ the Portuguese equivalent is actually Dom.

= recently.

71-72: a likely aside, as Sebastian freely admits to the audience his joy in his good fortune: he had been wanting to lead a crusade in Africa for a long time, and the appearance
Duke of Avero, it shall be your **charge**

To take the muster of the Portugals,
And bravest bloods of all our **country**. −

[Exit Duke of Avero.]

---

Lewes de Silva, you shall be despatched
With letters unto Philip King of Spain:

Tell him we crave his aid in this behalf;
I know our **brother** Philip **nill** deny
His futherance in this holy Christian war. −

Duke of **Barceles**, as thy ancestors
Have always loyal been to Portugal,
So now, in honour of thy **toward** youth,

Thy **charge** shall be to **Antwerp** speedily,

To hire us mercenary men-at-arms:
Promise them princely pay; and **be thou sure**

Thy word is ours. − Sebastian speaks the word.

---

**Chris.** I beseech your majesty, employ me in this war.
K. Seb. Christopher de Tavares, next unto myself, My good Hephaestion, and my bedfellow, Thy cares and mine shall be alike in this, And thou and I will live and die together.

Re-enter the Duke of Avero, with the Irish Bishop, Stukeley, Jonas, Hercules, and others.

And now, brave Englishmen, to you Whom angry storms have put into our bay; Hold not your fortune e’er the worse in this: We hold our strangers’ honours in our hand, And for distressèd frank and free relief.

Tell me, then, Stukeley, for that’s thy name I trow, Wilt thou, in honour of thy country’s fame, Hazard thy person in this brave exploit, And follow us to fruitful Barbary, With these six thousand soldiers thou hast brought, And choicely picked through wanton Italy?

Thou art a man of gallant personage, Proud in thy looks, and famous every way: Frankly tell me, wilt thou go with me?

Stuk. Courageous king, the wonder of my thoughts, And yet, my lord, with pardon understand, Myself and these whom weather hath enforced To lie at road upon thy gracious coast, Did bend our course and made amain for Ireland.

K. Seb. For Ireland, Stukeley, (thou mistak’st me wonderous much.)

With seven ships, two pinnaces, and six thousand men? I tell thee, Stukeley, they are far too weak To violate the Queen of Ireland’s right;

state, and chief chamberlain. De Távora would command the Portuguese nobility at Alcazar.\textsuperscript{22,25}

94-97: Sebastian describes the Duke of Tavera as a bosom-buddy.

Hephaestion = famous closest and life-long friend of Alexander the Great. The name is written Efestian in the quarto.

bedfellow = we may note that it was not uncommon in this era for members of the same sex to share a bed for a night; Dyce observes that a male member of royalty might admit a favourite to share his bed as a way to honour him.


Entering Characters: the Duke of Avero returns with the leaders of the papal fleet of ships that had put into Lisbon harbour. The overall commander of the group, we remember, is Thomas Stukeley. Jonas and Hercules are Italian commanders serving under Stukeley.

= as the governor of Lisbon did before him, Sebastian assumes the entire party is English.

104: "don’t think this was a stroke of bad luck."
= ie. "I". = foreigners'.

= generous, unrestricted: frank and free are essentially synonyms;\textsuperscript{1} frank and free was a common collocation. = believe.

= risk.

= Sebastian employs an epithet for Italy that reflects the contemporary English view that Italy was a land of loose and corrupted morals.

= appearance.\textsuperscript{2}
= to the English, at least, Stukeley was more infamous than famous.

117: Dyce notes that the line after this one has erroneously been omitted.

= forced.
= to lie at anchor, especially due to an unforeseen delay. = direct. = "were heading straight".

123: mistak’st me wonderous much = since this clause, as it stands in the quarto, makes no sense, Dyce emends it to "thou mak’st me wonder much," and Bullen to "mistak’st wondrous much".

= meaning Elizabeth I; the title of King (or in this case Queen) of Ireland had been granted to Henry VIII in 1542.
For Ireland's Queen commandeth England's force.

Were every ship ten thousand on the seas,
Manned with the strength of all the eastern kings,
Conveying all the monarchs of the world,
To invade the island where her highness reigns,
'Twere all in vain, for heavens and destinies.
Attend and wait upon her majesty.
Sacred, imperial, and holy is her seat,
Shining with wisdom, love, and mightiness:
Nature that every thing imperfect made,
Fortune that never yet was constant found,
Time that defaceth every golden show,
Dare not decay, remove, or her impair:
Both nature, time, and fortune, all agree,
To bless and serve her royal majesty.
The wallowing ocean hems her round about;
Whose raging floods do swallow up her foes,
And on the rocks their ships in pieces split,
And even in Spain, where all the traitors dance
And play themselves upon a sunny day,
Securely guard the west part of her isle;
The south the narrow Britain-sea begirts,
Where Neptune sits in triumph to direct
Their course to hell that aim at her disgrace;
The German seas alongst the east do run,
Where Venus banquets all her water-nymphs,
That with her beauty glancing on the waves
Disdains the check of fair Proserpina.

Advise thee, then, proud Stukeley, ere thou pass
To wrong the wonder of the highest God:
Sith danger, death, and hell do follow thee,
Thee, and them all, that seek to danger her.

If honour be the mark whereat thou aim'st,
Then follow me in holy Christian wars,
And leave to seek thy country's overthrow.

Stuk. Rather, my lord, let me admire these words
Than answer to your firm objections.
His Holiness Pope Gregory the Seventh
Hath made us four the leaders of the rest:
Amongst the rest, my lord, I am but one;
If they agree, Stukeley will be the first
To die with honour for Sebastián.

K. Seb. Tell me, lord bishop, captains, tell me, all,
Are you content to leave this enterprise
Against your country and your countrymen,
To aid Mahamet King of Barbary?

Bish. To aid Mahamet King of Barbary,
'Tis 'gainst our vows, great King of Portugal.

K. Seb. Then, captains, what say you?

Jonas. I say, my lord, as the bishop said,
We may not turn from conquering Ireland.

Herc. Our country and our countrymen will condemn
Us worthy of death, if we neglect our vows.

K. Seb. Consider, lords, you are now in Portugal,
And I may now dispose of you and yours:
Hath not the wind and weather given you up,
And made you captives at our royal will?

Jonas. It hath, my lord, and willingly we yield
To be commanded by your majesty;
But if you make us voluntary men,
Our course is then direct for Ireland.

K. Seb. That course will we direct for Barbary. —
Follow me, lords: Sebastian leads the way
To plant the Christian faith in Africa.

Stuk. Saint George for England! and Ireland now adieu,
For here Tom Stukeley shapes his course anew.

= endanger.
159: Sebastian employs a common metaphor from archery.
= cease.
165: an error: this was the thirteenth Gregory.
176-7: the Bishop naturally opposes any changes to the army's plan.
= lord is a disyllable here: lo-erd.
= conquering is likely a disyllable, and Ireland a trisyllable: CON-qu'ring I-er-land.
= a reflection of the view that the mission of the small papal fleet was in the nature of a Crusade, complete with inviolable oaths taken by each participant to see the objective through.
188: Sebastian politely points out that Stukeley and his men are completely within his control and he may dispose of them as he wishes.
= a monosyllable here: g'ен.
194: ie. "but if you allow us to have our wish"; Edelman, however, interprets the line to mean “if you make us volunteers, instead of conscripts”.
201-2: Stukeley frankly doesn't care who he is fighting: his duty is more to himself and his own potential gain than to any specific sovereign or principled caused.
Saint George for England = old English battle-cry.
201-2: the scene ends with a rhyming couplet.
Sebastian Absorbs Stukeley's Expedition: Bovill reveals that Stukeley's men actually preferred to remain in Portugal with Sebastian, due to the awful condition of their ship,
which naturally Sebastian refused to replace. Bowen notes that the adventurers were further encouraged to join Sebastian by being paid in advance for their services!

END OF ACT II.
ACT III.

Enter the Presenter.

Act III's Dumb Show: the quarto provides not a single hint as to the nature of this Act's Dumb Show. The Theatrical Plot, of which only a small portion remains (the greater part of it having disintegrated or worn away) provides some clues, though:

"Enter Nemesis above...[to] her, three Furies bringing in the Scales...to them...them 3 ghosts...& Carr[y] him out...Fe[t] in Stukely...bring in the Mo[or]..."

The Plot also calls for the use of some stage props to be used in the Dumb Show, specifically "3 violls of blood & a sheeps gather" - whatever that means!

W.W. Greg, a scholar who studied the play extensively, carefully recreated the instructions that might have appeared here:

"The Third dumbe shew. Enter Nemesis above. Enter to her three Furies bringing in the scales. To them enter three dwell. Then enter to them three ghosts. The Furies first fech in Sebastian and carrie him out againe, which done they fech in Stukeley and carrie him out, then bring in the Moore and carrie him out. Exeunt shew."20

Lo, thus into a lake of blood and gore
The brave courageous King of Portugal
Hath drenched himself, and now prepares amain
With sails and oars to cross the swelling seas,
With men and ships, courage and cannon-shot,
To plant this cursèd Moor in fatal hour;

And in this Catholic case the King of Spain
Is called upon by sweet Sebastián,

Who surfeiting in prime time of his youth
Upon ambitious poison, dies thereon.
By this time is the Moor to Tanger come,
A city 'longing to the Portugal:

And now doth Spain promise with holy face,
As favouring the honour of the cause,
His aid of arms, and levies men apace:
But nothing less than King Sebastian's good
He means; yet at Sucor de Tupeá

1 Lo, thus into a lake of blood and gore
2 The brave courageous King of Portugal
Hath drenched himself, and now prepares amain
4 With sails and oars to cross the swelling seas,
With men and ships, courage and cannon-shot,
6 To plant this cursèd Moor in fatal hour;
8 And in this Catholic case the King of Spain
Is called upon by sweet Sebastián,
10 Who surfeiting in prime time of his youth
12 Upon ambitious poison, dies thereon.
14 By this time is the Moor to Tanger come,
A city 'longing to the Portugal:
16 And now doth Spain promise with holy face,
As favouring the honour of the cause,
18 His aid of arms, and levies men apace:
20 But nothing less than King Sebastian's good
He means; yet at Sucor de Tupeá

= in full haste.2

= set or fix.

7-8: Sebastian appeals to Philip II of Spain to lend aid for his intended attack on Morocco.

= ie. cause.

9: surfeiting = satiating himself, ie. overdoing it.

prime time = less frequently used alternative to "the prime".

= ie. the poison of ambition.

11-12: by 1578, Portugal had reduced the number of ports it controlled in Morocco to three: Tangier, Azila and Ceuta.18

'longing = belonging.

Portugal = Portuguese.

= solemn face, ie. the appearance of meaning it.

= quickly, right away.

17-19: yet at...the king = Sugden tells us that Sucor de Tupea is the modern Cullera, a town on the east coast of Spain, but there is no good reason to suppose this; as Yoklavich points out, the name Sucor de Tupea does not appear on any ancient map with which he is familiar.

Previous editors consider whether the transcriber of the play simply misread Guadalupe (which is where Philip and
He met, some say, in person with the Portugal,  
And treateth of a marriage with the king:  

But 'ware ambitious wiles and poisoned eyes!  

There was nor aid of arms nor marriage,  
For on his way without those Spaniards King Sebastian went.  

[Exit.]

Sebastian actually met) for Sucor de Tupea.  
As a way to charm his nephew, Philip agreed to meet Sebastian at Guadalupe, a city in Spain which is halfway between Lisbon and Madrid.  

Philip also supposedly offered his daughter to Sebastian to marry; see the note at line 52 in the next scene.  
= ie. beware.  

= neither.  

Philip and Sebastian Meet: Sebastian had originally sent an ambassador (a part played by Lewes de Silva in our play) to Spain to ask Philip to contribute 5000 infantry and 50 galleys to the Crusade to Morocco. Hoping to dissuade his nephew from the enterprise, Philip convinced Sebastian to meet in person to discuss the matter. The meeting took place on Christmas day, 1576, at Guadalupe, in Spain, and continued into the first weeks of the new year.  

At a minimum, Philip hoped to persuade Sebastian to allow Spain’s great general, the Duke of Alva, to lead the army, but Sebastian rebuffed him, declaring he himself would lead all troops. Philip despaired, expecting that an army of Europe’s worst soldiers - the Portuguese - led by an inexperienced young sovereign, would certainly result in disaster, and even possibly the death of Sebastian.  

A loss to Abdelmelec could expect to have even more serious consequences: Philip greatly feared a Turkish invasion of Spain; after all, the Ottomans had conquered all of North Africa as far as Morocco, and European wars with the Ottomans were ongoing.  

In an additional twist to the international situation, Philip had to consider how to respond to an unexpected offer of alliance delivered from Abdelmelec himself, received by the Spanish monarch a few weeks before Philip’s meeting with Sebastian. Philip, wily as ever, decided to delay responding to the Moroccan Sultan, and in the end, agreed to his nephew’s request to provide 5000 men and 50 galleons, but was able to attach to their agreement several conditions which, if any one of them was broken, would release Philip from his commitment; these included the requirements that:  
(1) the expedition would be limited to a naval attack on the port city of Larache,  
(2) Sebastian not travel inland with his army once he was in Morocco, and  
(3) that the expedition should take place in 1577.

ACT III, SCENE I.  

Lisbon, the Royal Palace.  

Enter King Sebastian, Lords, Lewes de Silva, and the Ambassadors and Legate of Spain.

Entering Characters: Lewes de Silva has returned from Spain, where he had been sent by Sebastian in Act II.iv with letters requesting aid from Philip for the Moroccan crusade.
K. Seb. Honourable lords, ambassadors of Spain,
The many favours by our meetings done
From our belovèd and renownèd brother,
Philip the Catholic King of Spain,
Say therefore, good my lord ambassador,
Say how your mighty master minded is
To propagate the fame of Portugal.

1st Amb. To propagate the fame of Portugal,
And plant religious truth in Africa,
Philip the great and puissant king of Spain,
For love and honour of Sebastian's name,
Promiseth aid of arms, and swears by us
To do your majesty all the good he can,
With men, munition, and supply of war,
Of Spaniards proud, in king Sebastian's aid,
To spend their bloods in honour of their Christ.

Legate. And farther, to manifest unto your majesty
How much the Catholic king of Spain affects
This war with Moors and men of little faith,
The honour of your everlasting praise,
Behold, to honour and enlarge thy name,
He maketh offer of his daughter Isabel
To link in marriage with the brave Sebastian;
And to enrich Sebastian's noble wife,
His majesty doth promise to resign
The titles of the Islands of Moloccus,

That by his royalty in India he commands.

These favours with unfeignèd love and zeal
Voweth King Philip to King Sebastian.

K. Seb. And God so deal with King Sebastian's soul
As justly he intends to fight for Christ!

Nobles of Spain, sith our renownèd brother,
Philip the king of honour and of zeal,
By you the chosen orators of Spain

= ie. fellow-king.
4: Dyce thinks a line has dropped out after this one.
= a common form of address.

10: ie. "and spread Christianity to Africa".
= powerful.

= ie. "and of proud Spanish soldiers".
= shed or spill.
= favours.
= meaning non-Christians, ie. Muslims.
= fame.

27-28: as a dowry, Philip promises to turn over to Portuguese control the Molocceus (properly Moluccas) Islands (also known as the Spice Islands, an archipelago located in eastern Indonesia, west of New Guinea).

doth = the quarto has with here, emended by Dyce.

29: ie. "that Philip controls", though as a historical matter Sebastian might have argued with this characterization. The Portuguese settled the Moluccas in 1512, but the Spanish soon followed in 1529, when Emperor Charles V claimed the islands for Spain. The Portuguese eventually paid Charles off to relinquish any claim to the Moluccas. The Dutch eventually wrested control of the archipelago in the early 17th century.

royalty = sovereignty.
India = ie. the East Indies; the quarto reads Iudah (ie. Judah), emended by Dyce.

33-34: ie. if Philip does not really intend to fight in the crusade - which, after all, is taking place ostensibly in order to spread Christianity - God should punish the Spanish sovereign accordingly.
= since.
36-37: Dyce notes that something has dropped out between these lines, as By you makes no particular sense.
= envoys or ambassadors.
The offer of the holds he makes
Are not so precious in our account,
As is the peerless dame whom we adore,
His daughter, in whose loyalty consists
The life and honour of Sebastián.
As for the aid of arms he promiseth,
We will expect and thankfully receive,
At Cardis, as we sail along the coast.

Sebastian, clap thy hands for joy,
Honoured by this meeting and this match.

Go, lords, and follow to the famous war
Your king; and be his fortune such in all
As he intends to manage arms in right.

[Exeunt all except Stukeley and Another.]

Stuk. Sit fast, Sebastián, and in this work
God and good men labour for Portugal!
For Spain, disguising with a double face,
Flatters thy youth and forwardness, good king.

Philip, whom some call the Catholic king,
I fear me much thy faith will not be firm,
But disagree with thy profession.

The Other. What, then, shall of those men of war become,
Those numbers that do multiply in Spain?

Stuk. Spain hath a vent for them and their supplies:
The Spaniard ready to embark himself,

44-45: as he sails towards Morocco, Sebastian plans to stop in Cadiz (Cardis), where he expects to pick up Philip's promised reinforcements.

Cadiz was an important port city on the south-west coast of Spain, about 50 miles north of the Strait of Gibraltar.

46-47: Sebastian once again speaks in a likely aside, unable to contain his joy at his good fortune.

match = marriage.

52: this strangely vague stage direction appears in the original quarto. The Theatrical Plot calls for the Duke of Avero to remain on-stage with Stukeley.

Philip Proposes Marriage: Bowen describes how Philip had at one time or another tried to arrange a marriage between Sebastian and his daughter Isabella (aged 10 in early 1577) on the one hand, and Margaret of Valois, a member of the French royal family, on the other.

Sebastian never married, nor did he seem to have ever developed any relationships with any women at all in his brief life, according to Bowen.

56: Philip is lying to Sebastian.

double face = interestingly, this use of the noun double face precedes the OED's earliest citation - 1873 - by almost three centuries.

= eagerness.

58-60: Stukeley addresses the absent Spanish king in this apostrophe.

59: I fear me = "I fear": an example of the grammatical form known as the ethical dative; the superfluous me after the verb gives adds emphasis, as well as a useful extra syllable.

faith = quality of fulfilling of a trust.¹

60: ie. "but will belie or contradict what you have promised to Sebastian."

62-63: Stukeley and his companion are aware that Spain has been building up its army.

= an outlet, a passage of escape.¹
Here gathers to a head; but all too sure
Flanders, I fear, shall feel the force of Spain.

Let Portugal fare as he may or can,
Spain means to spend no powder on the Moors.

The Other. If kings do dally so with holy oaths,
The heavens will right the wrongs that they sustain. –
Philip, if these forgeries be in thee,
Assure thee, king, twill light on thee at last;
And when proud Spain hopes soundly to prevail,
The time may come that thou and thine shall fail.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE II.
Fez, the Moroccan Capital.

Enter Abdelmelec, Muly Mahamet Seth, Zareo, and train.

Abdel. The Portugal, led with deceiving hope,
Hath raised his power, and received our foe
With honourable welcomes and regard,
And left his country-bounds, and hether bends
In hope to help Mahamet to a crown,
And chase us hence, and plant this Negro-Moor.

That clads himself in coat of hammered steel
To heave us from the honour we possess.
But, for I have myself a soldier been,
I have, in pity to the Portugal,
Sent secret messengers to counsel him.
As for the aid of Spain, whereof they hoped,
We have despatched our letters to their prince.
To crave that in a quarrel so unjust,
He that entitled is the Catholic king,
Would not assist a careless Christian prince.
And, as by letters we are let to know,
Our offer of the seven holds we made
He thankfully receives with all conditions,
Differing in mind [as] far from all his words
And promises to King Sebastián,
As we would wish, or you, my lords, desire.

Zareo. What resteth, then, but Abdelmelec may 
Beat back this proud invading Portugal,
And chastise this ambitious Negro-Moor
With thousand deaths for thousand damnèd deeds!

Abdel. Forward, Zareo, and ye manly Moors! –
Sebastian, see in time unto thyself:
If thou and thine misled do thrive amiss,
Guiltless is Abdelmelec of thy blood.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE III.

The Portuguese-held Fortress at Tangier.

Enter Don de Menysis, with Captains and others.

Menys. Captain[s],
We have receivèd letters from the king.

17-22: Abdelmelec has successfully bribed Philip to 
withhold assistance to Sebastian by promising to turn over to 
him coastal fortresses now held by the Moroccans.

= remains, ie. "else is left to do".

= Zareo is always stressed on its second syllable: za-RE-o.

26-27: ie. "if you and your army continue to pursue this 
unjust goal of overthrowing me, I refuse to take responsi-
bility for the blood that will be spilled."

Abdelmelec Courts Philip: upon taking power in 1576, Abd
al-Malik sent an envoy to Philip, proposing a treaty of 
friendship, in which he proactively offered a number of 
concessions - all in an effort to ensure the Spanish stayed 
away from Sebastian’s invasion - including the immediate 
ransom of all slaves (Christian and Muslim), free trade 
between the two countries, and, more importantly to Philip, 
a number of terms relating to the Ottomans, including:
(1) a ban on Turkish ships entering the ports to which 
Spain had free access,
(2) a promise to warn Philip if Abd al-Malik learned of 
Turkish plans to invade Spain, and
(3) a mutual defensive pact between Morocco and Spain, 
in which each promised to come to the aid of the other if 
either was attacked by the Ottomans.

Philip seems to have tentatively accepted the Sultan’s 
offer, but he remained unsure to the last minute regarding 
how to escape his promise of men and ships to Sebastian. 
Edelman notes that Philip’s ultimate failure to meaningfully 
support Sebastian’s scheme demonstrates the success of 
Abdelmelec’s wooing of the Spanish monarch.

Entering Characters: Don de Menysis is the Portuguese 
Governor of Tangier; the other entering characters represent 
the Portuguese commanders of the fortress at Tangier, on the 
northern coast of Morocco. They have been notified to:
(1) expect the arrival of Muly Mahamet and his forces, 
and are to offer them hospitality;
(2) expect Sebastian to arrive by sea soon with his own 
army; and
(3) prepare to go to battle against Abdelmelec.

The play’s governor is based on the real life Governor of 
Tangier, Duarte de Menesis, who was to become King 
Sebastian’s second-in-command in the upcoming Moroccan 
campaign.

= ie. Sebastian.
That with such signs and arguments of love
We entertain the King of Barbary,
That marcheth toward Tanger with his men,
The poor remainders of those that fled from Fesse,
When Abdelmelec got the glorious day,
And stalled himself in his imperial throne.

1st Capt. Lord governor, we are in readiness
To welcome and receive this hapless king,
Chased from his land by angry Amurath;
And if the right rest in this lusty Moor,
Bearing a princely heart unvanquishable,
A noble resolution then it is
In brave Sebastián our Christian king,
To aid this Moor with his victorious arms,
Thereby to propagate religious truth,
And plant his springing praise in Africa.

2nd Capt. But when arrives this brave Sebastián,
To knit his forces with this manly Moor,
That both in one, and one in both, may join
In this attempt of noble consequence?
Our men of Tanger long to see their king,
Whose princely face, that like the summer's sun,
Glads all these hether parts of Barbary.

Menys. Captains, he cometh hetherward amain,
Top and top-gallant, all in brave array:
The sixth-and-twentieth day of June he left
The bay of Lisborne, and with all his fleet
At Cardis happily he arrived in Spain
The eighth of July, tarrying for the aid
That Philip King of Spain had promised:
And fifteen days he there remained aboard,
Nor stept ashore, as he were going still.
But Spain, that meant and minded nothing less,
Pretends a sudden fear and care to keep
His own from Amurath's fierce invasion,
And to excuse his promise to our king;
For which he storms as great Achilles erst

3-4: ie. "(with instructions) that we should welcome Muly Mahamet with a show of friendship".
arguments = evidence.

= ie. installed.
= unfortunate.
= vigorous.
= gladdens. = alternate spelling of hither, meaning nearest or closest.¹
= "towards here in full force",¹
18: ie. to thereby spread the Christian faith.
= adjective commonly used to describe sprouting or growing vegetation, used in a metaphor with plant.¹
= unite.
30: Top and top-gallant = common expression meaning "with all sails set"; the terms are shortened forms of topsail and topgallant sail, which refer to the highest sails on a ship.¹
= the quarto prints "26." here; the emendation is Bullen's.
= ie. Lisbon.
= ie. Cadiz; for the historical context of lines 33-45, see the note below at line 52.
= waiting.
= as if the ship was all this time still at sea.
= intended.²
= anxiety.

Philip's Fear: Philip lived with a genuine and ever-present worry that the Ottomans would one day invade Spain; he knew that if the Turks were to attack in earnest, there was nothing the Spanish could do to effectively repel them.
43-44: another allusion to the Trojan War: the Greek fleet
Lying for want of wind in Aulis' gulf,
collected at the port of Aulis before setting sail for Troy, but an unusual and ongoing calm prevented the ships from leaving the port; de Menysis compares the impatient Sebastian, who fruitlessly waited for Spanish reinforcements at Cadiz, to Achilles, whom he imagines chafing as the Greek ships sit paralyzed. (In the ancient Greek play Iphigeneia at Aulis by Euripides, we find Achilles given a speaking part in which he complains about the delay in leaving Aulis). 

as = ie. as did.
erst = in an earlier time.
Aulis' gulf = a good example demonstrating the extent to which our dramatists paid close attention to each other's work, and borrowed appealing words and phrases: Aulis' gulf appears in Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage, which was likely written in the mid-1580's (though not published until 1594), as well as in Peele's own A farewell Entituled to the famous and fortunate generalls of our English forces: Sir John Norris & Syr Frauncis Drake Knights, which was printed in 1589.

And hoiseth up his sails and anchors weighs, empended from the quarto's rescue by Dyce, so that the line's last four words match to welcome and receive in line 11 above.

And hetherward he comes, and looks to meet
This manly Moor whose case he undertakes.

Therefore go we to welcome and receive.

With cannon-shot and shouts of young and old,
This fleet of Portugals and troop of Moors.

Sebastian Waits for Philip's Soldiers: an English-language history of Portugal published in 1585 tells how King Phillip "of Castile" promised to give Sebastian 50 galleys and 4000 armed soldiers for the expedition to Morocco; Sebastian waited in Cadiz for a "certayne" number of days for Philip's promised aid to arrive, but to no avail, as the Spanish monarch, "under pretence that the greate Turke, ...not only denied to performe his promise, but also (that is farre worse) caused a proclamation to be made and published throughout Spayne...whereby all his subjects were commanded upon greate penalties that none of them shoulde accompanye Kinge Sebastian in that Voyage." (spelling slightly modernized for clarity).

ACT III, SCENE IV.
Tangier.

Trumpets sound, and chambers are discharged.

Then enter King Sebastian, the Duke or Avero,
Lord Lodowick, Stukeley, &c.;
the Moor Muly Mahamet, Calipolis, their Son, &c.

[Exeunt.]

= small cannons.

Entering Characters: Sebastian's invading force has arrived at Tangier on the northern Moroccan coast.

Muly Mahamet on the Run: after being deposed, Mohammed spent two years evading capture by Abd al-Malik; at one point he had entered the Spanish fortress of
K. Seb. Muly Mahamet, King of Barbary,
Well met, and welcome to our town of Tanger,
After this sudden shock and hapless war. —
Welcome, brave Queen of Moors: repose thee here,
Thou and thy noble son. — And, soldiers all,
Repose you here in King Sebastian's town. —
Thus far in honour of thy name and aid,
Lord Mahamet, we have adventured,
To win for thee a kingdom, for ourselves
Fame, and performance of those promises
That in thy faith and royalty thou hast
Sworn to Sebastian King of Portugal;
And thrive it so with thee as thou dost mean,
And mean thou so as thou dost wish to thrive!
And if our Christ, for whom in chief we fight,
Hereby t' enlarge the bounds of Christendom,
Favour this war, and, as I do not doubt,
Send victory to light upon my crest,
Brave Moor, I will advance thy kingly son,
And with a diadem of pearl and gold
Adorn thy temples and enrich thy head.

Muly. O brave Sebastian, noble Portugal,
Renowned and honoured ever mayst thou be,
Triumphant over those that menace thee!
The hellish prince, grim Pluto, with his mace
Ding down my soul to hell, and with this soul
This son of mine, the honour of my house,
But I perform religiously to thee
That I have holily erst underta'en!
And that thy lords and captains may perceive
My mind in this single and pure to be, —
Penon-de-los-Valex, and begged Philip to help him, but was met instead with an order to leave the port city.
With only 600 supporters left to accompany him, Mohammed next sent a letter of appeal to Sebastian - for which he never he received an answer; desperate, the ex-Sultan scuttled to the port city of Arzila, which the Portuguese had abandoned more than two decades before; this time he appealed directly to Duarte de Menesis, the Portuguese governor of Tangier, offering to return Arzila to Portugal in return for any assistance De Menesis might render him.
De Menesis immediately sent ships to take control of the port, and Mohammed moved on to Cueta, another Portuguese-controlled fortress, to await developments. Sebastian was pleased to learn of the recovery of Arzila, which further raised his expectations that he would be warmly received in Morocco.

= unlucky.

= ventured.

10-12: performance...Portugal = Sebastian reminds Muly Mahamet of the latter's promise to turn overlordship of Morocco to the Portuguese monarch should they successfully restore Mahamet to his throne.

13: poetically, "may this mission achieve a level of success commensurate with the level of honesty and genuine intention contained in your promise".

14: "and may you intend to keep your promises to me to the same degree as you hope to succeed in your goal!"

= "land or settle on my helmet".
= promote.
= crown.

= violently drive.¹ = ie. "and along with my soul also drive the soul of".

29-30: "unless (But) I fulfill completely the promises I have sworn to perform."

= ie. so that. = observe, ie. "satisfy themselves that".
= free from duplicity,¹ essentially a synonym of pure.
As pure as is the water of the brook, −
   My dearest son to thee I do engage:

Receive him, lord, in hostage of my vow;
   For even my mind presageth to myself,
That in some slavish sort I shall behold
   Him dragged along this running river shore,
A spectacle to daunt the pride of those
   That climb aloft by force, and not by right.

Muly, Jr.  Nor can it otherwise befall the man
That keeps his seat and sceptre all in fear:
   That wears his crown in eye of all the world,
Reputed theft and not inheritance.

What title, then, hath Abdelmelec here
To bar our father or his progeny?
   Right royal prince, hereof you make no doubt,
Agreeing with your wholesome Christian laws:
Help, then, courageous lord, with hand and sword,
   To clear his way, whose letts are lawless men;
And for this deed ye all shall be renowned,

Renowned and chronicled in books of fame,
   In books of fame, and characters of brass,
Of brass, nay, beaten gold: fight, then, for fame,
   And find th' Arabian Muly Hamet here
Adventurous, bold, and full of rich reward.

Stuk.  Brave boy, how plain this princely mind in thee
   Argues the height and honour of thy birth!
And well have I observed thy forwardness;
Which being tendered by your majesty,

No doubt the quarrel, opened by the mouth
   Of this young prince unpartially to us,
May animate and hearten all the host
   To fight against the de'il for Lord Mahamet.

K. Seb.  True, Stukeley; and so freshly to my mind
   Hath this young prince reduced his father's wrong.

= pledge, ie. "hand over as a guarantee of my good
   behaviour;" n2 it has historically been a common practice for
   high-ranking individuals to send their children to live or be
   raised by their overlords, domestic or foreign, as a guarantee
   of their fidelity to their masters.

= a monosyllable: e'en.

= ie. Abdelmelec; see the note at line 40 below.

36-40: "even now I have a presentiment (line 36) that I will
   see Abdelmelec (who will be captured) and made part of a
   gang of slaves (37) dragged along the river shore (38), the
   sight of which will daunt the pride of those (like
   Abdelmelec) (39) who rise to the top through violence,
   rather than legitimate succession (40)."

= a monosyllable: e'en.

= ie. Abdelmelec.

= afriad.

45: ie. Abdelmelec is known by all to have taken the Sultan-
   ship by stealing it instead of inheriting it.

47: "to keep my father and his descendants from the throne?"
   = young Mahamet addresses Sebastian.

= ie. Muly Mahamet's.  = obstacles (to the throne).

52-55: in successive lines, Peele uses a figure of speech
called anadiplosis, in which a word or words appearing
at the end of one line are repeated at the beginning of the
next.

= written about.

= abbreviated form of Mahamet.

= gives evidence of.
= eagerness.

= offered; Yoklavich suggests a line is missing between 61-
   62, and that Which must surely refers to something other
   than the prince's forwardness.

64: Yoklavich notes that Stukeley has suddenly switched
from addressing Muly Mahamet's son directly to speaking of
him in the third person.

= army.
= a monosyllable here: de'il.

= recalled the outrages done to his father.
That in good time I hope this honour's fire,
Kindled already with regard of right,
Bursts into open flames, and calls for wars,
Wars, wars, to plant the true-succeeding prince. −
Lord Mahamet, I take thy noble son
A pledge of honour, and shall use him so. −
Lord Lodowick, and my good Lord of Avero,
See this young prince conveyed safe to Messegon,
And there accompanied as him fitteth best:
And to this war prepare ye more and less,
This rightful war, that Christians' God will bless.

[Exeunt.]

Sebastian Departs from Tangier: after adding the experienced men-at-arms, as well as Mohammed and his adherents, from Tangier, Sebastian's fleet sailed down Morocco's Atlantic coast; the plan, at Philip's insistence, was to be limited to a sea-based attack on the fortress at Larache.

The armada put in, first, at the newly-reacquired port of Arzila, to take on water. Unfortunately, Sebastian let the entire expedition disembark here, and the men, once on land, refused to get back on the ships, even though the objective - Larache - was only 15 miles south of Arzila!

Declining to once again experience the headache of trying to re-embark 20,000 people, Sebastian made a fateful decision: the army would march to Larache instead.

The topography of this part of Morocco made this also a fatal decision: Larache lay on the south side of a large river known as the Lixus, and the closest ford of the river lay about a dozen miles east of the port; this meant that the army would have to march inland, away from the supply ships, in the dead of summer, for about 20 miles, before it could cross the ford and turn west to approach the fort.

END OF ACT III.
ACT IV.

Enter the Presenter.

Now hardened is this hapless heathen prince.

And strengthened by the arms of Portugal,
This Moor, this murtherer of his progeny;
And war and weapons now, and blood and death,
Wait on the counsels of this cursèd king;
And to a bloody banquet he invites

The brave Sebastian and his noble peers.

DUMB-SHOW.

Enter to the bloody banquet.

In fatal hour arrived this peerless prince,
To lose his life, his life, and many lives
Of lusty men, courageous Portugals,

Drawen by ambitious golden looks.

Let fame of him no wrongful censure sound;
Honour was object of his thoughts, ambition was his ground.

ACT IV, SCENE I.

Town of Alcazar.

The Setting: the town of Alcazar lies about 20 miles south-east of Larache; here Abdelmelec has gathered his great army to repel the invading Christians.
Enter Abdelmelec, Celybin, Zareo, and others.

Abdel. Now tell me, Celybin, what doth the enemy?

Cely. The enemy, dread lord, hath left the town
Of Arzil with a thousand soldiers armed,
To guard his fleet of thirteen hundred sail;

And mustering of his men before the walls,
He found he had two thousand armèd horse,
And fourteen thousand men that serve on foot,
Three thousand pioners, and a thousand coachmen.

Besides a number almost numberless
Of drudges, negroes, slaves, and muleters.

Horse-boys, landresses, and courtezans.

And fifteen hundred wagons full of stuff
For noblemen brought up in delicate.

Abdel. Alas, good king, thy foresight hath been small,
To come with women into Barbary,
With landresses, with baggage, and with trash,
Numbers unfit to multiply thy host.

Cely. Their payment in the camp is passing slow,
And victuals scarce, that many faint and die.

Abdel. But whether marcheth he in all this haste?

Cely. Some thinks he marcheth hetherward,
And means to take this city of Alcazar.

Abdel. Unto Alcazar? O unconstant chance!
"fickle!", ie. "what bad luck!"

Is Abdelmelec genuinely unhappy to have to face Sebastian's army? We know that the Sultan much preferred to not have to fight a battle than to fight one; Bovill describes him as an enlightened man who wished to avoid bloodshed - and who also was not sure he could trust his own conscripted troops to not turn on him.

32: "has divided his army into four divisions".

= in front of which. = with.

= ie. cannon.

= ie. the first division. = cavalry carrying light arms, usually bow and arrow.

37: Alvaro Pires de Tavora was the brother of Christopher de Tavora; this Tavora would command the Portuguese nobles at Alcázar.

= battalion or division.

42: the sources state that one Alonzo Aquilar commanded a token force of 2000 Castilians which Philip ultimately provided to Sebastian.

45: Lodevico Caesar = presumably Celybin means Lord Lodowick, who appeared in Act III.iv, but spoke no lines.

= perhaps meaning "offer battle" or "challenge us"; in a military context, as a verb, brave was usually used transitively, with the object being the enemy itself, and meant "challenge" or "defy"; according to OED, the sense in which brave seems to be used here - "to face something with courage" - did not appear for another two centuries; hence it is hard to escape the conclusion that some words have dropped out: Dyce logically suggests emending the end of this short line to brave us in the fight.

Edelman suggests the line is fine the ways it is, and that brave the fight could mean "array his army's formation".

Thus have I told your royal majesty How he is placed to brave the fight.

46 Besides there stand six thousand horse Bravely attirèd, prest where need requires.

= in addition. = cavalry.

= exquisitely outfitted. = to be used, ready.2,3

= perhaps meaning "offer battle" or "challenge us"; in a military context, as a verb, brave was usually used transitively, with the object being the enemy itself, and meant "challenge" or "defy"; according to OED, the sense in which brave seems to be used here - "to face something with courage" - did not appear for another two centuries; hence it is hard to escape the conclusion that some words have dropped out: Dyce logically suggests emending the end of this short line to brave us in the fight.

Edelman suggests the line is fine the ways it is, and that brave the fight could mean "array his army's formation".

Abdel. But where's our nephew, Muly Mahamet?

52 Cely. He marcheth in the middle, guarded about With full five hundred hargubuze on foot,

= ie. foot-soldiers carrying arquebuses, an early portable firearm.

= useless. = soldiers carrying pikes, long poles with spikes on the ends; Celybin describes these soldiers as useless, because the Moroccans have firearms against which pikes are of little value.

Bullen, however, argues that Sebastian's pikes are actually a very useful weapon against cavalry, which made up at least half of Abdelmelec's army; the problem for
Sebastian would be the poor quality of his soldiers, rather than the army's arms or disposition.

"pleasent let me say something".
"my advice".
"while time is available", ie. "while he still has time".
standards, banners.

61-62: Zareo advises a quick strike and enveloping movement, in which Abdelmelec's forces, which are triple the size of the enemy's, surround the Christian army and annihilate it.

68: Hamet = ie. our play's Seth.
68-69: a thousand...all = 1000 cavalry carrying firearms.

shot = a soldier carrying a firearm.¹

70: these are foot-soldiers; I have adapted Dyce's suggestion to insert foot after thousand.

= light-armed horsemen, perhaps with bow and arrow.¹

74: main battle = ie. primary division, here the center of the army.
of = ie. made up of.

75-76: Yoklavich observes that something has dropped out here, and that Abdelmelec likely means that he himself will command the main body of the army.
environed with = surrounded by.

78: Abdelmelec plans to march his forces directly towards the oncoming army of the Portuguese.

= likely meaning "refuses battle", or "is able to avoid confronting our army".

= ie. "the best thing for him."

= aims at, ie. attacks.

= regret. = the sense is "recklessness"¹

Sebastian's Army: Bovill's summary regarding the composition of the invading army generally agrees with Peele's: the invading forces consisted of 10,000 Portuguese infantry, of which 2500 were nobles, and the remainder untrained, unskilled conscripts; 2000 cavalry, commanded by the Duke of Avero; 3000 German mercenaries, who had been hired in the Low Countries; Philip's token donation of 2000 Castilians; Mohammed's 450 Moors; and Stukeley's 600 papal troops. In addition, the army had 36 pieces of artillery.

Sebastian's army waited two weeks at Arzila before finally commencing its indirect march to Larache. The insanity of the enterprise becomes apparent when we
consider the number of non-combatants who travelled with
the army rather than remain on the ships - Bovill suggests
they may have very well equaled the number of fighting men!
Beyond the prostitutes, drivers and pioneers, the nobles were
accompanied by their personal servants and retainers, and
many of them even brought along their entire families!
The nobles had no concept of what it meant to "travel light"; the lords instead made sure to bring along as many of
their personal effects as they deemed necessary, "each in
proportion to his rank and precedence, pavilions and
chapels, sumptuous vestments and costly apparel...silver and
gold plate for its service. Well over a thousand wagons had
to be embarked to carry this impedimenta." (Bovill, p.87).
The final bit of stupidity was the heavy armour the
Portuguese wore, which would have made the already
intolerable 115° temperature that much more unbearable.
The caravan barely made three miles a day, and ran out
of food and water within three days. The army finally
reached and crossed the ford at the river Lixus on the
march's sixth day. Now, Sebastian would have a relatively
easy two-day march to Larache.

While crossing the Lixus, however, the Christian soldiers
noticed that Abdelmelec's command, which numbered perhaps
70,000 men, was nearby in force (about half infantry and
half cavalry).

Sebastian's army would never make it to Larache.

ACT IV, SCENE II.

*The Portuguese Camp North of the Town of Alcazar.*

*Enter King Sebastian, the Duke of Avero,
Stukeley, and others.*

1. **K. Seb.** Why, tell me, lords, why left ye Portugal,
And crossed the seas with us to Barbary?
Was it to see the country and no more,
Or else to fly before ye were assailed?
I am ashamed to think that such as you,
Whose deeds have been renownèd heretofore,
Should slack in such an act of consequence:
We come to fight, and fighting vow to die,
Or else to win the thing for which we came.
Because Abdelmelec, as pitying us,
Sends messages to counsel quietness,
You stand amazed, and think it sound advice,
As if our enemy would wish us any good:
No, let him know we scorn his courtesy,
And will resist his forces whate'er.
Cast fear aside: myself will lead the way,
And make a passage with my conquering sword,
Knee-deep in blood of these accursèd Moors;
And they that love my honour, follow me.
Were you as resolute as is your king,
Alcazar walls should fall before your face,
And all the force of this Barbarian lord
Should be confounded, were it ten times more.

**Avero.** So well become these words a kingly mouth,
That are of force to make a coward fight;
But when advice and prudent foresight
Is joined with such magnanimity,

Trophes of victory and kingly spoils
Adorn his crown, his kingdom, and his fame.

---

**Enter Christopher de Tavora, Don de Menysis**

and Hercules.

---

**Herc.** We have descried upon the mountain-tops
A hugy company of invading Moors;
And they, my lord, as thick as winter's hail,
Will fall upon our heads at unawares:
Best, then, betimes t' avoid this gloomy storm;
It is in vain to strive with such a stream.

**Enter the Moor.**

**Muly.** Behold, thrice-noble lord, uncalled I come
To counsel where necessity commands;
And honour of undoubted victory
Makes me exclaim upon this dastard flight.
Why, King Sebastian, wilt thou now foreslow,
And let so great a glory slip thy hands?
Say you do march unto Larissa now,
The forces of the foe are come so nigh,
That he will let the passage of the river;

= stunned.
= meant sarcastically, of course.
= destroyed.
= ie. fitting (are).  = ie. for a.
= persuasive enough.

27-30: Avero is inspired: "when a king joins his own wisdom with good advice and fortitude (magnanimity), victory is inevitable."

Edelman observes that what foresight Avero is referring to is unclear.

= ie. trophies (trophes was a common alternate spelling), referring to the spoils of war.

In the quarto, Troupes appears here, emended by Yoklavich.

32: I have accepted Yoklavich's stage directions here; the characters would logically be rushing in to announce the approach of Abdelmelec's army, which changes the whole strategic situation.

= observed.
= large body.
= ie. in a surprise attack.
= ie. it would be best.  = at once, immediately.²

= Muly Mahamet is addressing Sebastian; thrice-noble is another expression Peele has borrowed from Tamburlaine.

47: "force me to speak out regarding your army's cowardly retreat (or shirking of its duty)."
= delay or slacken,¹ ie. hesitate to engage in battle.

50-52: Larissa = the quarto prints Tarissa, but Yoklavich notes that one of Peele's sources calls the port town of Larache, which lies on the Atlantic coast about a dozen miles directly west of the army's current position, by the name "Larissa".

Mahamet's point is that Sebastian has no choice now but to fight; even if they tried to march away, Abdelmelec's
So unawares you will be forced to fight.
But know, O king, and you, thrice-valiant lords,
Few blows will serve: I ask but only this,
That with your power you march into the field;
For now is all the army resolute
To leave the traitor helpless in the fight,
And fly to me as to their rightful prince.
Some horsemen have already led the way,
And vow the like for their companions:
The host is full of tumult and of fear.
Then as you come to plant me in my seat,
And to enlarge your fame in Africa,
Now, now or never, bravely execute
Your resolution sound and honourable,
And end this war together with his life
That doth usurp the crown with tyranny.

K. Seb. Captains, you hear the reasons of the king,
Which so effectually have pierced mine ears,
That I am fully resolute to fight;
And who refuseth now to follow me,
Let him be ever counted cowardly.

Avero. Shame be his share that flies when kings do fight!
Avero lays his life before your feet.

Stuk. For my part, lords, I cannot sell my blood
Dearer than in the company of kings.

Muly. Now have I set these Portugals a'work
To hew a way for me unto the crown,
Or with their weapons here to dig their graves.

You bastards of the Night and Erebus,
Fiends, Furies, hags that fight in beds of steel.
“sinister creatures” (p.367), would not be out of place here.

fight in beds of steel = at line 20 of the Presenter’s speech of Act II, we are told that the Furies lie in beds of steel, but how they fight in such beds is unclear.

Yoklavich notes that a long search on his part revealed no source or explanation anywhere that he could find for this curious allusion; however, I have discovered that the phrase fight in beds of steel appeared in an English translation of the Roman poet Seneca’s ten plays which was published in 1581, specifically from Act V.iv of the play Thyestes: "Where furies fight in beds of steele, and heares (ie. hairs) of crazing snakes." The problem is, there is no Act V, Scene iv in the original Latin play; the scene was added by the 1581 translator, Jasper Heywood; thus we cannot turn to the Latin text for a clue as to what the phrase’s intended meaning was.

Range through this army with your iron whips,
Drive forward to this deed this Christian crew,
And let me triumph in the tragedy,
Though it be sealed and honoured with the blood
Both of the Portugal and barbarous Moor.

Ride, Nemesis, ride in thy fiery cart,
And sprinkle gore amongst these men of war,
That either party, eager of revenge,
May honour thee with sacrifice of death;
And having bathed thy chariot-wheels in blood,
To travel the world, seeking injustices to punish.

Pined let him be with Tantalus’ endless thirst,
Pitted let him be to Tityus’ greedy bird,
Racked let him be in proud Ixion’s wheel,
Wearied with Sisyphus' immortal toil:

And lastly for revenge, for deep revenge, Whereof thou goddess and deviser art, Damned let him be, damned, and condemned to bear All torments, tortures, plagues, and pains of hell.

[Exit.]

Sebastian's Army Prepares for Battle: with Abd al-Malik's superior army arrayed before him, Sebastian had no choice but to meet the Sultan in battle; the Portuguese leaders conferred, and agreed on a plan which Bovill goes out of his way to compliment: rather than lining up his soldiers in long ranks, which would have made them vulnerable to being rolled up on the flanks by the enemy's numerous cavalry, Sebastian's army was formed into an enormous square, perhaps a half-mile in length along each side, and 5-10 rows of soldiers deep.

The benefit of this formation was that it would resemble a large, rectilinear hedgehog, with pikes facing outward in all directions, which in capable hands could be very effective against Abd al-Malik's horse-soldiers.

In addition, the most experienced troops - the Germans, Italians, and Castilians, as well as the nobility of Portugal - were placed at the front of the square to directly face the infantry of the enemy. The artillery was initially placed directly in front of the troops, and the 2000 cavalry - vastly outnumbered by the enemy - were placed on the wings, spreading out from either flank of the square. The non-combatants were contained within the square's perimeter. Stakeley and Hercules commanded some of the troops in the front.

Had Sebastian's starving, exhausted and demoralized Portuguese recruits - which made up the majority of his army - been battle-hardened veterans, or at least well-trained rookies, his army might have had a chance.

somewhere in deep hell, where a vulture unceasingly gnawed on his liver. His prostrate body was said to cover nine acres.\(^9\)

107: Sisyphus' immortal toil = Sisyphus was a king of Corinth and a shady character; for any of a number of offenses (including attacking and killing travelers with a large stone), Sisyphus was condemned to eternally push an enormous block of marble up a hill, after which the block always slid or rolled back down the hill.\(^10\)

109: Mahamet describes Nemesis as a planner or architect (deviser) of revenge.
ACT V.

Enter the Presenter.

Ill be to him that so much ill bethinks;
And ill betide this foul ambitious Moor,
Whose wily trains with smoothest course of speech
Have tied and tangled in a dangerous war
The fierce and manly King of Portugal.

[Lightning and thunder.]

Now throw the heavens forth their lightning-flames,
And thunder over Afric’s fatal fields:
Blood will have blood, foul murther scape no scourge.

Enter Fame, like an angel,
and hangs the crowns upon a tree.

At last descendeth Fame, as Iris
To finish fainting Dido's dying life;

Fame from her stately bower doth descend,
And on the tree, as fruit new-ripe to fall,
Placeth the crowns of these unhappy kings,
That erst she kept in eye of all the world.

[Here the blazing star.]

Now fiery stars, and streaming comets blaze,
That threat the earth and princes of the same.

[Fireworks.]

Fire, fire about the axletree of heaven

---

1: may misfortune or calamity fall on him who thinks so wickedly.
= betide.
3: "whose cunning schemes (trains) combined with flattery".

= deadly.
= cannot escape the whip of retribution.

13-14: personified Fame, appearing as an angel, enters the stage and hangs two crowns on a tree.

16-17: as Iris…life = Fame now comes down to release the souls of the kings from their mortal selves, just as Iris did for Dido in the Aeneid.

Dido, the founder and queen of the North African city of Carthage, fell in love with the Trojan prince Aeneas after he landed at Carthage with his fleet of Trojan survivors who had escaped the destruction of Troy by the Greeks. Her love rejected, Dido fell on her sword, and according to the Aeneid, Iris, the messenger goddess, flew to earth to release Dido's soul from her dying body.

= like.
= earlier, till now. = view.

23: a special-effects comet appears.

Interestingly, over the previous winter, while Sebastian was fully engaged in preparing for his invasion of Morocco, an enormous comet appeared in the skies over Europe and North Africa. Comets had ever been considered omens, and Sebastian is reported to have - no surprise here - interpreted the heavenly vision as a sure sign of victory to come.

The website space.com describes the Comet of 1577 as the greatest comet of the 16th century; it was visible for three full months, from early November till the end of January 1578.

= threaten: comets were viewed as ominous signs of tragedy.

28: a display of small explosions was a popular special effect on the Elizabethan stage.

= in the Ptolemaic conception of the universe, to which all of our playwrights subscribed, the heavens and the celestial bodies contained therein were imagined to exist within a series of concentric spheres, all of which rotated around the earth, which sits in the middle of the universe.

axletree = axle.
Whirls round, and from the foot of Cassiope. In fatal hour, consumes these fatal crowns.

[One crown falls.]

Down falls the diadem of Portugal.

[The other crown falls.]

The crowns of Barbary and kingdoms fall;

Ay me, that kingdoms may not stable stand!
The fallen diadem of Portugal.

And now approaching near the dismal day, The bloody day wherein the battles join,
Monday the fourth of August, seventy-eight.
The sun shines wholly on the parchèd earth,
The brightest planet in the highest heaven.
The heathens, eager bent against their foe,
Give onset with great ordnance to the war;

The Christians with great noise of cannon-shot
Send angry onsets to the enemy.
Give ear, and hear how war begins his song
With dreadful clamours, noise, and trumpets’ sound.

[Exit.]

ACT V, SCENE I.
The Battlefield at Alcazar.

Alarums, and chambers discharged, within;

axletree of heaven = another phrase Peele borrowed from Tamburlaine.

= ie. Cassiopeia, a constellation in the northern sky.

34-38: the falling crowns represent the deaths of all of our play's kings in the upcoming battle.

40: Dyce wonders if kingdoms “crept in here from the next line”, ie. did the eye of the copier or type-setter subconsciously pick up the appearance of the word kingdoms in the next line, and accidentally place it in this line as well, substituting whatever word was originally here?

= ie. the year 1578.

45: a reference to the scorching heat of the Moroccan battlefield. Sebastian insisted on meeting the enemy in the middle of the day - as Bovill writes, "At the hottest time of day at the hottest time of the year, Sebastian ordered his army to advance." (p.126).

= ie. the sun; both the sun and the moon were considered planets in Elizabethan drama's cosmology.

= eagerly directed.

48: begin the battle with a spirited demonstration of cannon fire.

    Edelman notes the irony that the Moroccan's artillery had been obtained from England in return for the saltpetre, or potassium nitrate, that England needed to make its own gunpowder.

    onset = military attack.¹

    = ie. attacks on, ie. cannon blasts at.

    = listen, pay attention. = ie. personified War's.

The Battle of Alcazar Begins: Abd al-Malik's cavalry quickly surrounded Sebastian's army as the king ordered his troops to advance. The Moors fired off their cannon, and the Christians responded in kind. The two front lines moved quickly to engage, and the van of Sebastian's square crashed into the front lines of Moorish infantry.

= calls to arms. = cannons. = from off-stage.
then enter to the battle; and the Moors, who form Abdelmelec's army, fly.

Skirmish still; then enter Abdelmelec in his chair, Zareo, and train.

Abdel. Say on, Zareo, tell me all the news,
Tell me what Fury rangeth in our camp,
That hath enforced our Moors to turn their backs;
Zareo, say what chance did bode this ill,
What ill enforced this dastard cowardice?
Zareo. My lord, such chance as wilful war affords;
Such chances and misfortunes as attend
On him, the god of battle and of arms.
My lord, when with our ordnance fierce we sent
Our Moors with smaller shot, as thick as hail
Follows apace, to charge the Portugal;
The valiant duke, the devil of Avero,
The bane of Barbary, fraughted full of ire,
Breaks through the ranks, and with five hundred horse,
All men-at-arms, forward and full of might,
Assaults the middle wing, and puts to flight
Eight thousand harquebuze that served on foot,
And twenty thousand Moors with spear and shield,
And therewithal the honour of the day.

Abdel. Ah, Abdelmelec, dost thou live to hear
This bitter process of this first attempt?—
Labour, my lords, to renew our force

The Battle: soldiers from both armies enter the stage and fight. Abdelmelec's Morocan soldiers run away.

The Battle Continues: Abdelmelec is carried on-stage as he sits on his chair of state; he was very sick, indeed near death, on this fateful day.

train = retinue.

1-5: Abdelmelec is horrified to see his own soldiers flee from the battlefield.
= is wandering around.
= compelled. = ie. run away.

4: "Zareo, tell me what event predicted this calamitous development?"
= cowardly.

7: Zareo reminds Abdelmelec that war is unpredictable. Note that War is personified, described by Zareo as perversely obstinate (wilful).

affords = provides.

= along or in tandem with. = cannon.
= ie. the infantry armed with arquebuses.

10-12: Bullen suggests these lines are corrupt, as they suggest the Moors were sent into the fight at the same time the cannon were firing, when in reality the soldiers would be sent in after the bombardment had ceased.

Opening Phase of the Battle: as the prime soldiers of the two armies collided, hand-to-hand combat ensued; as described in the first part of the scene, the Christians gained the early advantage, their foes in the Muslim center breaking and retreating.

14: Zareo describes the Duke of Avero as a destroyer or dealer of death (bane), fighting furiously against Abdelmelec's forces.¹

fraughted = loaded, as with freight, ie. filled with.
ire = wrath, ie. blood-lust.

= cavalry.
= eager.
= ie. Abdelmelec's foot-soldiers who carried firearms.
19: Dyce notes a line is probably missing after this one.

13-20: the Duke of Avero, leading the right-wing of the cavalry, followed the infantry with his own charge, and he too put the enemy in front of him - mixed cavalry and infantry which were assailing the weak right side of the square - to flight. So successful was Avero that he captured two of Abd al-Malik's five green standards.

= account.² = wave or attack.
= a disyllable here: lo-erds.
Of fainting Moors, and fight it to the last. −
My horse, Zareo! − O, the goal is lost,
The goal is lost! − Thou King of Portugal,
Thrice-happy chance it is for thee and thine
That heaven abates my strength and calls me hence. −
My sight doth fail; my soul, my feeble soul
Shall be released from prison on this earth:
Farewell, vain world! for I have played my part.

[Dies.]

A long skirmish;
and then enter Muly Mahamet Seth.

Seth. Brave Abdelmelec, thou thrice-noble lord!
Not such a wound was given to Barbary,
Had twenty hosts of men been put to sword,
As death, pale death, with fatal shaft hath given.

Lo, dead is he, my brother and my king,
Whom I might have revived with news I bring.

Zareo. His honours and his types he hath resigned
Unto the world, and of a manly man,
Lo, in a twinkling, a senseless stock we see!

Seth. You trusty soldiers of this warlike king,
Be counselled now by us in this advice;
Let not his death be bruited in the camp,
Lest with the sudden sorrow of the news
The army wholly be discomfited. −
My Lord Zareo, thus I comfort you;
Our Moors have bravely borne themselves in fight,
Likely to get the honour of the day,
If aught may gotten be where loss is such.
Therefore, in this apparel as he died,
My noble brother will we here advance,
And set him in his chair with cunning props,
That our Barbarians may behold their king,
And think he doth repose him in his tent.

Abdelmelec wants to appear on horseback before his troops in order to rally them.

28: ie. "it is your great fortune".
thrice-happy = three-times lucky; thrice was commonly used, as here and in line 39 below, as an intensifier.

= Elizabethan dramatists frequently placed such delightful self-referential clauses into their characters' speeches.

Abdelmelec's Death: hoping to stem the retreat of his forces by inspiring them with his presence, Abd al-Malik rode furiously into the melee which was drawing nearer to him; as he raised his sword, however, he fainted, and was helped off his horse: he was dead within a half-hour.

= on-stage battle.

Entering Character: we remember that Seth is Abdelmelec's brother and greatest supporter.

= ie. "would have been dealt".
= armies.

42: "as personified Death had dealt Barbary by shooting Abdelmelec with his death-dealing arrow;" Death has been imagined to shoot arrows that kill just as Cupid shoots arrows that cause individuals to fall in love.

= ie. good news.
= insignias or distinguishing marks.²
= from.

48: Lo = behold.

twinkling = Dyce posits shortening the word to twink, a common alternative for twinkling, for the sake of the meter.
senseless = literally without possession of any of the senses.
stock = trunk.

= reported, spread.
= discouraged and defeated.²
= anything.

= ie. bring forward onto the battlefield.

61: cleverly support Abdelmelec's body on the throne in such a way that he will appear to still be alive.
= men of Barbary.
= believe. = "is resting".
Zareo. Right politic and good is your advice.

Seth. Go, then, to see it speedily performed. —

[The body of Abd el Melec is propped up in his chair.]

Brave lord, if Barbary recover this,
Thy soul with joy will sit and see the fight.

[Exeunt.]

Alarums within: enter to the battle;
and the Christians fly: the Duke of Avero is slain.

Enter King Sebastian and Stukeley.

K. Seb. Seest thou not, Stukeley, O Stukeley, seest thou not
The great dishonour done to Christendom?
Our cheerful onset crossed in springing hope;
The brave and mighty prince, Duke of Avero,
Slain in my sight: now joy betide his ghost,
For like a lion did he bear himself!
Our battles are all now disorderèd,
And by our horses' strange retiring-back
Our middle wing of foot-men over- rode.

Stukeley, alas, I see my oversight!
False-hearted Mahamet, now, to my cost,
I see thy treachery, warned to beware
A face so full of fraud and villany.

Alarums within, and they run out,
and two set upon Stukeley, and he drives them in.

Then enter the Moor and his Boy, flying.

Muly. Villain, a horse!

Abd el Melec's Death is Concealed: Bovill assures us that had news of the Sultan's death become known throughout the army, the majority of the soldiers would have deserted without a second's thought.

To prevent this from happening, Abd al-Malik's body was placed in his tent, and his Jewish doctor pretended to carry on a continuous conversation with the dead man through the tent's flaps; in the meanwhile, orders continued to be disseminated in the Sultan's name to the army.

76-77: the battle is renewed.

The Tide Turns: despite the best efforts of his best soldiers in the front ranks, Sebastian and his army were too far outnumbered to prevail; as the Moors replaced their tired troops with fresh ones, and the numerous enemy cavalry broke the flanks of the Portuguese square, the battle turned in the Moroccan's favour, and soon enough a general slaughter of the Christian army began.
Boy. O, my lord, if you return, you die!

Muly. Villain, I say, give me a horse to fly,
To swim the river, villain, and to fly.

[Exit Boy.]

Where shall I find some unfrequented place,
Some uncouth walk, where I may curse my fill,
My stars, my dam, my planets, and my nurse,
The fire, the air, the water, and the earth,
All causes that have thus conspired in one,
To nourish and preserve me to this shame?

Thou that wert at my birth predominate,
Thou fatal star, what planet e'er thou be,
Spit out thy poison bad, and all the ill
That fortune, fate, or heaven, may bode a man.
Thou nurse unfortunate, guilty of all,
Thou mother of my life, that brought'st me forth,
Cursed mayst thou be for such a cursed son!
Cursed be thy son with every curse thou hast!
Ye elements of whom consists this clay,
This mass of flesh, this cursed crazed corpse,
Destroy, dissolve, disturb, and dissipate,
What water, [fire,] earth, and air congealed.

Alarums within, and re-enter the Boy.

Boy. O, my lord,
These ruthless Moors pursue you at the heels,
And come amain to put you to the sword!

Muly. A horse, a horse, villain, a horse!
That I may take the river straight and fly.

Boy. Here is a horse, my lord,
As swiftly paced as Pegasus;
Mount thee thereon, and save thyself by flight.

= flee.

= ie. new and unfamiliar land.

= mother. = ie. "my (unlucky) stars": the alignment of the heavenly bodies at one's birth was said to determine one's fortune in life.

112: Mahamet names the four elements from which the universe was believed to be constituted.

114: "to save me from premature death only to see this happen to me?"

115-8: Mahamet addresses the star that had the most influence over his life's path.

124-5: note the intense alliteration in each of these two lines.

126: fire is missing from this line in the quarto, and is properly inserted by Dyce; it is also disyllabic here: fi-er.

134-5: 1594 saw the publication of both our present play and The True Tragedy of Richard III, an anonymous alternate version of Shakespeare's Richard III. In Tragedy, Richard exclaims as he flees the Bosworth battlefield, "A horse, a horse, a fresh horse." His page relies, "Ah, fly my Lord, and save your life."

Shakespeare's Richard III, in which the king most famously exclaimed to Catesby, "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!", was not published until 1597, though it was likely written earlier, perhaps in 1593-4.

It is not known, nor is it knowable, which of these three plays was written first, or the degree to which any of them influenced or borrowed from the others.

= famed winged horse of myth, which was frequently described as swift in the era's literature.
Muly. Mount me I will: but may I never pass
The river, till I be revenged
Upon thy soul, accursèd Abdelmelec!
If not on earth, yet when we meet in hell,
Before grim Minos, Rhadamanth, and Æacus,
The combat will I crave upon thy ghost,
And drag thee through the loathsome pools
Of Lethès, Styx, and fiery Phlegethon.

[Exeunt.]

Alarums within: re-enter Stukeley wounded,
followed by Hercules and Jonas.

Herc. Stand, traitor, stand, ambitious English-man,
Proud Stukeley, stand, and stir not ere thou die.
Thy forwardness to follow wrongful arms,
And leave our famous expedition erst
Intended by his Holiness for Ireland,
Fouly hath here betrayed and tied us all
To ruthless fury of our heathen foe;
For which, as we are sure to die,
Thou shalt pay satisfaction with thy blood.

Stuk. Avaunt, base villains! twit ye me with shame
Or infamy of this injurious war?
When he that is the judge of right and wrong
Determines battle as him pleaseth best.

But sith my stars bode me this tragic end,
That I must perish by these barbarous Moors,
Whose weapons have made passage for my soul
That breaks from out the prison of my breast;
Ye proud malicious dogs of Italy,
Strike on, strike down this body to the earth,
Whose mounting mind stoops to no feeble stroke.

Jonas. Why suffer we this Englishman to live –

[They stab Stukeley.]

Villain, bleed on; thy blood in channels run,
And meet with those whom thou to death hast done.

[Exeunt Hercules and Jonas.]

Stuk. Thus Stukeley, slain with many a deadly stab,
Dies in these desert fields of Africa.
Hark, friends; and with the story of my life
Let me *beguile* the torment of my death.

In England's London, *lordings*, was I born,
On that brave bridge, the bar that thwarts the Thames.

My golden days, my younger careless years,
Were when I touched the height of Fortune's wheel,
And lived in affluence of wealth and ease.
Thus in my country carried long aloft,
A discontented humour *drave me thence*
To cross the seas to Ireland, then to Spain.

There had I welcome and right royal pay
Of Philip, whom some call the Catholic King:
There did Tom Stukeley glitter all in gold,
Mounted upon his *jennet* white as snow,
Shining as Phoebus in King Philip's court:
There, like a lord, famous Don Stukeley lived,
For so they called me in the court of Spain,
Till, for a blow I gave a bishop's *man*,
A strife *gan rise* between his lord and me,
For which we both were banished by the king.

From thence to Rome rides Stukeley all *aflaunt*:
Received with royal welcomes of the Pope,
There was I graced by Gregory the Great.

That then created me Marquis of Ireland.
Short be my tale, because *my life is short*.
The coast of Italy and Rome I left:
Then was I made lieutenant general
Of those small forces that for Ireland went,
And with my companies embarked at *Ostia*.

My sails I spread, and with these men of war
In *fatal* hour at Lisbon we arrived.
From thence to this, to this hard *exigent*,
Was Stukeley *driven*, to fight or else to die,
Dared to the field, that never could endure
To hear God Mars his drum but he must march.
Ah, sweet Sebastian, hadst thou been well advised,
Thou mightst have managed arms successfully!
But from our cradles we were marked all
And *destinate* to die in Afric here.
Stukeley, the story of thy life is told;
Here breathe thy last, and bid thy friends farewell:
And if thy country's kindness be so much,
Then let thy country kindly ring thy knell.
Now go and in that bed of honour die,
Where brave Sebastian's breathless corse doth lie.

Here endeth Fortune, rule, and bitter rage;
Here ends Tom Stukeley's pilgrimage.

[Dies.]

Re-enter Muly Mahamet Seth, Zareo, and train, with drums and trumpets.

Seth. Retreat is sounded through our camp, and now
From battle's fury cease our conquering Moors.
Pay thanks to heaven with sacrificing fire,
Alcazar, and ye towns of Barbary. –
Now hast thou sit as in a trance, and seen,
To thy soul's joy and honour of thy house,
The trophies and the triumphs of thy men,
Great Abdelmelec; and the god of kings
Hath made thy war successful by thy right,
Lo, this was he that was the people's pride,
And cheerful sunshine to his subjects all!
Now have him hence, that royally he may
Be buried and embalmèd as is meet. –
Zareo, have you through the camp proclaimed
As erst we gave in charge?

Zareo. We have, my lord, and rich rewards proposed
For them that find the body of the king:
For by those guard[s] that had him in their charge
We understand that he was done to death,
And for his search two prisoners, Portugals,
Are set at large to find their royal king.

Seth. But of the traitorous Moor you hear no news
That fled the field and sought to swim the ford?

Zareo. Not yet, my lord; but doubtless God will tell
And with his finger point out where he hunts.

Stukeley's Death: Thomas Stukeley fought bravely till the last moment, struck down by Moorish scimitars. There is no reason to think he was killed by his own men. Hercules, Stukeley's second-in-command, was captured alive by the Moors, but died in captivity before he could be ransomed.

Entering Characters: with Abdelmelec dead, his brother Seth is the new ruler of Morocco.

Re-enter Muly Mahamet Seth, Zareo, and train, with drums and trumpets.

Seth. Retreat is sounded through our camp, and now
From battle's fury cease our conquering Moors.
Pay thanks to heaven with sacrificing fire,
Alcazar, and ye towns of Barbary. –
Now hast thou sit as in a trance, and seen,
To thy soul's joy and honour of thy house,
The trophies and the triumphs of thy men,
Great Abdelmelec; and the god of kings
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And for his search two prisoners, Portugals,
Are set at large to find their royal king.

Seth. But of the traitorous Moor you hear no news
That fled the field and sought to swim the ford?

Zareo. Not yet, my lord; but doubtless God will tell
And with his finger point out where he hunts.
Seth. So let it rest, and on this earth bestow
This princely corse,
Till further for his funerals we provide.

Zareo. From him to thee as true-succeeding prince,
With all allegiance and with honour’s types,
In name of all thy people and thy land,
We give this kingly crown and diadem.

Seth. We thank you all, and as my lawful right,
With God’s defence and yours, shall I [it] keep.

Enter two Portugals with the body of King Sebastian.

1st Port. As gave your grace in charge, right royal prince,
The fields and sandy plains we have surveyed,
And even among the thickest of his lords
The noble King of Portugal we found,
Wrapt in his colours coldly on the earth,
And done to death with many a mortal wound.

Seth. Lo, here, my lords, this is the earth and clay
Of him that erst was mighty King of Portugal! —
There let him lie, and you for this be free
To make return from hence to Christendom.

Enter two, with the body of the Moor.

1st Person. Long live the mighty King of Barbary!

Seth. Welcome, my friend: what body hast thou there?

1st Person. The body of th’ ambitious enemy
That squandered all this blood in Africa,
Whose malice sent so many souls to hell,
The traitor Muly Mahamet do I bring,
And for thy slave I throw him at thy feet.

Seth. Zareo, give this man a rich reward;
And thankèd be the god of just revenge,
That he hath given our foe into our hands,
Beastly, unarmed, slavish, full of shame. —
But say, how came this traitor to his end?

1st Person. Seeking to save his life by shameful flight,
He mounteth on a hot Barbarian horse.

And so in purpose to have passed the stream, His headstrong steed throws him from out his seat; Where, diving oft for lack of skill to swim, It was my chance alone to see him drowned, Whom by the heels I dragged from out the pool, And hether have him brought thus filed with mud.

Death of Muly Mahamet: with the demise of Mohammed, the third of the kings who had participated in this fight has died on this same day; it is for this reason that the Battle of Alcazar is also known as the Battle of the Three Kings.

Seth. A death too good for such a damnèd wretch: But sith our rage and rigour of revenge By violence of his end prevented is, That all the world may learn by him t' avoid To hale on princes to injurious war, His skin we will be parted from his flesh, And being stiffened out and stuffed with straw, So to deter and fear the lookers-on From any such foul fact or bad attempt: Away with him!

[Exeunt some with the body of the Moor.]

And now, my lords, for this Christian king: My Lord Zareo, let it be your charge To see the soldiers tread a solemn march, Trailing their pikes and ensigns on the ground, So to perform the prince's funerals.

Here endeth the tragical battle of Alcazar.

Postscript I: Casualties and Aftermath.

Once Christian resistance had ended, the Moroccans ceased their slaughter, and rounded up the survivors to ransom off at a later date; indeed, ransoming white slaves and captives produced a regular and sizeable income to the Moors and Ottomans.

It is estimated that about 3000 men were killed on each side, though it is possible the Christians lost more; accurate numbers are impossible to state with any degree of confidence. The Portuguese dead comprised mainly of the nobles and foreign mercenaries who fought in the cavalry or in the van of the square.

Among those killed were the Duke of Avero, the brothers Alvaro and Cristopher de Tavora, and Thomas Stukeley. The Duke of Barcelles was captured alive, and Bovill reports that the Moors mistook him for the king and "twice threw [him] in the air for joy."

Postscript II: the Fate of Portugal and Cult of Sebastian.
Rule of Portugal fell to Sebastian's grandfather, Cardinal Henry; when he died two years later in 1580, a succession crisis occurred, with numerous pretenders to the throne appearing; Philip of Spain settled the issue by invading Portugal and assuming the kingship for himself. Thus began a period of benign Spanish rule over Portugal, a period known as the Iberian Union, which lasted for 60 years.

Meanwhile, as survivors and ransomed Portuguese returned home, a rumour began to circulate that Sebastian was still alive - after all, as far as the Europeans knew, his body had never been found. A strange but intense cult, whose adherents believed that Sebastian was still alive, developed that lasted for several centuries.

In Morocco, meanwhile, Abd al-Malik's brother Ahmed al-Mansur went on to reign until 1603.

**Postscript III: Stukeley's Life.**

Thomas Stukeley was born in about 1525 in Devonshire. Stukeley served as a soldier in France and Scotland until 1551, when his patron, the Duke of Somerset, was arrested. When an order for his own arrest was issued, Stukeley escaped to France. Then began several years of cat-and-mouse spying for and against the French king, until he was finally caught and arrested and sent to the Tower, where he remained until the death of King Edward VI in 1553.

Stukeley left England and served the Holy Roman Emperor in the Spanish wars in northern Europe until 1554, when, short of money as usual, he returned to England and married the daughter - and sole heir - of a wealthy English alderman.

In 1555, Stukeley once again was forced to flee England when he was charged with counterfeiting; after another brief fling fighting on behalf of the Emperor, he turned to piracy, preying largely on Spanish ships.

Stukeley returned to favour under Queen Mary, and served on the Scottish border in 1560-1, but after squandering his wife's fortune, he began a grander deception: having convinced the queen that he intended to colonize Florida, Mary provided him with six ships, 300 men, and artillery, but Stukeley's intention all along had been to use this force to engage in piracy, which he did for the next two years, preying on Portuguese, French and Spanish ships, to the great embarrassment of the English government.

Mary sent a squadron to capture Stukeley, which task was accomplished in Cork harbour in 1565, but thanks to the influence of some high-placed friends, Stukeley was improbably released. Incredibly, the government next sent him on a mission to Ireland to negotiate with the Irish rebel Shane O'Neill; in the Emerald Isle, Stukeley purchased several offices, including that of Marshal of Ireland, as well as several large estates.

Skipping some tedious details, we can next report Mary stripping Stukeley of all his Irish titles in 1568, and in 1569, accused of treason, he was imprisoned in Dublin Castle. With the help of the Archbishop of Armagh and the Spanish Ambassador in London, he escaped and sailed to Spain, where he was, in the words of the National Biography,
received by the court "with a consideration that astonished
the English ambassador."

Stukeley spent the early 1570's in the service of King
Philip in Spain, where, the National Biography writes, "he
was generally styled Marquis or Duke of Ireland, and the
king was reported to have allowed him five hundred reals a
day and a residence at Las Rozas, a village nine miles from
Madrid."

Stukeley, however, remained attracted to the idea of an
invasion of Ireland. His developing plans were interrupted
when he was forced to leave Spain after feuding with
Maurice Gibbon, the Archbishop of Cashel. After engaging
in some mercenary fighting - he was in command of three
galleys at the Spanish victory over the Turks at Lepanto (7
October 1571) - he was rehabilitated by Philip, and spent the
next two years back in Spain, plotting further military
campaigns against England.

During a second trip to Rome in as many years, he
convinced Pope Gregory to provide him with the means to
invade Ireland. Leaving Italy with 600 men, the invasion
seemed destined to take place, until Stukeley was forced to
put in at Lisbon due to the unseaworthiness of his ship.

The rest, as they say, was history.

The information in this postscript was adopted from the National
Biography (1885-1900).
George Peele's Invented Words.

Like all writers of the era, George Peele made up words when he felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word in a way not yet used before. The following is a list of words and expressions from The Battle of Alcazar that research suggests may have been first used, or used in a certain way, by Peele in this play.

**a. Words.**

behearse  
Cardis (for Cadiz)  
doubling (meaning echoing or resounding)  
foragement  
larum (meaning to sound an alarm)  
misbeseem  
Moloccus (for Moluccas)

**b. Compound Words.**

double conscience  
mountain shrub  
Negro-Moor  
river shore  
roaring piece (referring to artillery)  
traitor-tyrant (revived, previous appearance 1490's)  
true-succeeding  
twenty-coloured (first use of this compound word, and first use to describe a rainbow)  
wide-commanding

**c. Expressions and Collocations.**

angry storm(s)  
basely yield  
blasted grove  
bloody torch  
the collocation of bow and groan (describing a people or land that bows and groans beneath a burden).  
the collocation of drag and heels (as in "dragged by the heels").  
knee-deep in blood (though we find "vp to the knees in bloud" printed in 1587).  
rattling drums  
step ashore  
voluntary man / men.  
to work affiance

**d. Words and Expressions**  
Incorrectly Credited By the OED to Peele.  

argolet  
muly  
solitary (meaning a lonely place)  
the collocation of number and numberless
Footnotes in the text correspond as follows:
1. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online.