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978-0-521-06048-6 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon,
Volume III

Edited by Fredson Bowers

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THE DRAMATIC WORKS IN THE BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER CANON

This is the eighth volume under Fredson Bowers' general editorship of the definitive series of critical, old-spelling texts of the plays in the Beaumont and Fletcher canon, in which the texts are established on modern bibliographical principles. This volume contains the text of five plays and one composite *Four Plays in One*, written by Fletcher and his collaborators, Nathan Field and Philip Massinger. Each play is introduced by a discussion of the text and authorship, and is accompanied by detailed textual notes, lists of press variants, emendations of accidentals and historical collations.

The plays are *The Queen of Corinth* and *The False One*, edited by Robert Kean Turner; *Four Plays, or Moral Representations, in One*, and *The Custom of the Country*, edited by Cyrus Hoy; *The Knight of Malta*, edited by George Walton Williams; and *The Tragedy of Sir John Van Olden Barnavelt*, edited by Fredson Bowers.

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THE
DRAMATIC WORKS IN
THE BEAUMONT AND
FLETCHER CANON

GENERAL EDITOR
FREDSON BOWERS

*formerly Linden Kent Professor of English Literature,
University of Virginia*

VOLUME VIII

THE QUEEN OF CORINTH THE FALSE ONE
FOUR PLAYS, OR MORAL REPRESENTATIONS, IN ONE
THE KNIGHT OF MALTA
THE TRAGEDY OF SIR JOHN VAN OLDEN BARNAVELT
THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY



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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	page vi
<i>Afterword</i>	vii
THE QUEEN OF CORINTH	I
<i>Edited by Robert Kean Turner, Professor of English, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee</i>	
THE FALSE ONE	113
<i>Edited by Robert Kean Turner</i>	
FOUR PLAYS, OR MORAL REPRESENTATIONS, IN ONE	223
<i>Edited by Cyrus Hoy, John B. Trevor Professor of English, University of Rochester</i>	
THE KNIGHT OF MALTA	345
<i>Edited by George Walton Williams, Professor of English, Duke University</i>	
THE TRAGEDY OF SIR JOHN VAN OLDEN BARNAVELT	483
<i>Edited by Fredson Bowers, Linden Kent Professor Emeritus of English Literature, University of Virginia</i>	
THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY	633
<i>Edited by Cyrus Hoy</i>	

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Edited by Fredson Bowers

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

FOREWORD

These volumes contain the text and apparatus for the plays conventionally assigned to the Beaumont and Fletcher canon, although in fact Fletcher collaborated with dramatists other than Beaumont in numerous plays of the canon and some of the preserved texts also represent revision at a later date by various hands. The plays have been grouped chiefly by authors; this arrangement makes for an order that conveniently approximates the probable date of composition for most of the works.

The texts of the several plays have been edited by a group of scholars according to editorial procedures set by the general editor, who closely supervised in matters of substance as well as of detail the initially contrived form of the texts. Otherwise the individual editors have been left free to develop their concepts of the plays according to their own views. We hope that the intimate connection of one individual, in this manner, with all the different editorial processes will lend to the results some uniformity not ordinarily found when diverse editors approach texts of such complexity. At the same time, the peculiar abilities of the several editors have had sufficient free play to ensure individuality of point of view in its proper role; and thus, we hope, the deadness of compromise that may fasten on collaborative effort has been avoided, even at the risk of occasional internal disagreement.

The principles on which each text has been edited have been set forth in detail in 'The Text of this Edition' prefixed to volume 1, pp. ix–xxv, followed by an account on pp. xxvii–xxxv of the Folio of 1647. Necessary acknowledgements will be found in the present volume in each Textual Introduction.

F.B.

Charlottesville, Virginia

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AFTERWORD

Professor Bowers died on 11 April 1991, a few days before his eighty-sixth birthday. At that time volume VIII of this series was in the final stages of being printed, and volume IX had just been submitted to the Press. Professor Bowers' supervision of the edition had continued with undiminished acuity through the preparation of copy for that volume but, as his strength had begun to fail, he asked me to take charge of the edition in the event of his death before it was concluded. I will therefore handle the administrative details of the last two volumes, which will be continued, as he requested, by his former students, Messrs Hoy, Williams, and me. We shall be supported, as we have been for many years, by the impeccable copyediting of Miss Jane Hodgart of Cambridge. The assignment of plays for volume X Professor Bowers made some time ago, and he had finished work on his own play for that volume; there remains for us the additional task only of proofreading his share of volumes IX and X.

Professor Bowers was to us – as he was to many – example, mentor, and staunch friend. The conclusion of this series as he had planned it is a part of our tribute to his memory.

R. K. Turner