

**THE FLORENTINE  
CHAIR: A  
COMIC IDYLL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649388417

The Florentine chair: a comic idyll by St. John Lucas

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ST. JOHN LUCAS**

**THE FLORENTINE  
CHAIR: A  
COMIC IDYLL**



THE FLORENTINE CHAIR

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

**THE ABSURD REPENTANCE**

**THE VINTAGE OF DREAMS**

**POEMS**

THE  
FLORENTINE CHAIR

A COMIC IDYLL

BY  
ST. JOHN LUCAS

LONDON  
SIDNEY APPLETON  

---

FREDERICK WARNE & CO.  
15, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND  
1904

TO  
DESMOND F. T. COKE  
IN AFFECTION



## I

“AH!” said the sexton, with a grim chuckle, “they all go along the churchyard path one time or another, every man and maid of ’em, every wife and widder. Ain’t many as get through the world without baptism or burial. Ain’t many, even, as get through without marriage.”

“Which is the second death,” said Raymond, without removing his pipe from his profane lips. “Shakespeare said something the same, with a slightly stronger literary flavour. Every man of your profession should know *Hamlet* by heart.”

The sexton laid down his scythe, and mopped his brow with an azure hand-

kerchief. He was mowing the small meadow that intervened between Raymond's cottage and the churchyard. The sun was at the apex of the cloudless, clear blue dome of the sky, and the sexton's face, like a round red moon, reflected its glory.

Raymond lay in the shade and watched him. Raymond was a hedonist.

"I don't know no tongues," said the sexton: "in my young days there weren't all these new-fangled tricks o' teachin',—piano-playin' and the like. I was brought up to my trade, and to my trade I've stuck."

"Adam's profession—the oldest in the world," murmured Raymond.

"I believe yer," said the sexton solemnly.

"Except Eve's," Raymond added.

"Eh?" queried the sexton.

"Being tempted, and tempting," Raymond explained.

The sexton began to mow again. Far above him a lark sang its wonderful lyric. The bees boomed among the roses, and in the tall sweet-scented grass small creatures rustled mysteriously.

"It is possible," went on the philosopher beneath the hedge, "that you have never thought very much about the female sex. Only a married man can take women seriously. Have you ever been married, O man of bones?"

"Not I!" replied the sexton with a snort. "Women's a luxury. Not for me, I reckon."

"Your point of view is usually original," said Raymond. "It is obvious that you neither read nor write modern literature. But I think you are wrong, though the error is a kindly one. To pronounce woman a luxury is to excuse—nay, to praise her. The history of humanity proves, however, with distressing logic, that she is as