



Alias J. J. Connington

A. W. Stewart, J. J. Connington

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When he wrote this book, the late Professor A. W. Stewart had already retired from academic life after a long career during which he held various University posts in London, Glasgow, and elsewhere. His chemical research work included, among many other matters, the discovery of the Tesla-luminescence spectra which opened up a new field in spectroscopy, and the recognition of the class of isobaric atoms to which uranium-239, neptunium, and plutonium belong. In addition to a series of books on advanced chemistry, he wrote under the pseudonym J. J. Connington—a scientific thriller, Nordenholt's Million, a financial novel, and numerous detective stories. The present volume of essays shows yet another aspect of his work. From the author: "This is an 'escape' book, intended to divert the reader for a short time from the troubles which daily engross us. It deals with a number of topics: a murder mystery in real life; the germs of the plots of some well-known novels; the curious problem of the Dumbuck crannog; the psychological illusions produced by certain drugs; various methods of getting "easy money"; the value of an honest witness's evidence; the adventurous careers of the translators of the Arabian Nights; the discovery of the black swan; the rather gruesome history of a millionaire mystic; the Loch Arkaig treasure; the strange affair of the Long Man on Ben Macdhui; my own casual encounter with that curious phenomenon which goes by the name of the Loch Ness Monster; and other subjects as well. Part of the material comes from my experiences as a writer, a professor, a technical adviser, and a scientific researcher; but the reader may rely on the assurance that there is no likelihood of him finding himself out of his depth, even if he has no acquaintance with science. Other portions of the volume are the results of a life-long predilection for browsing off the beaten track in my reading. These parts, I hope, may act as finger-posts to direct my readers deeper into some fascinating fields which I have here treated cursorily for lack of elbow-room. My aim has been to provide a wide variety of topics, so that there may be 'something for everybody'; and I may fittingly conclude, in the words of an older writer: 'Choose that which pleaseth thee best. Not to detain thee longer, farewell; and when thou hast considered thy purchase, may'st thou say, that the price of it was but a charity to thyself, not ill spent.'"

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