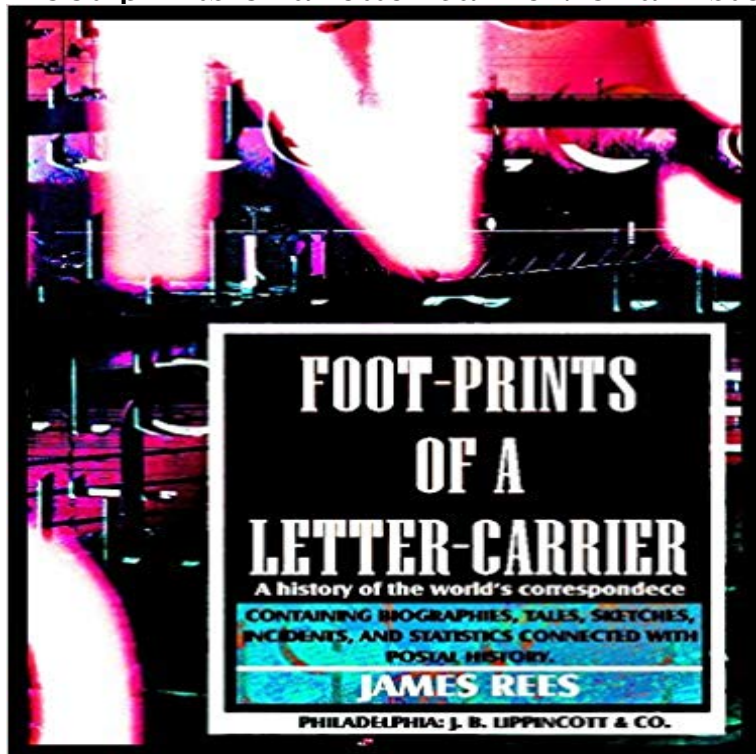


Foot-prints of a letter carrier: or a history of the worlds correspondece



Example in this ebook There are few institutions in this or in any other country the history of which is so little known as is that of the post-office. The very name, in the opinion of the masses, is sufficient to enlighten them; and beyond this little or no interest is manifested. Yet the history, if fairly written, would surprise that very portion who consider the name alone an index to its unwritten pages. Indeed, it seems strange that so important a branch of our government should have been so slighted by those who constituted themselves historic writers. Our school-books contain no allusion to it, nor are its officers mentioned with any marks of commendation in any of our national works. And yet there are names identified with this department, both as regards mind, intellect, and character, unequalled by those of any other in the country. Perhaps it is looked upon as being merely an appliance to the wheels of government and not essential to its general movements. Is this so? is the department a mere workshop and its officers and employees simply workers? We have endeavored in this workperhaps feeblyto place the post before our readers as one of the most important branches of the General Government. We have thrown around its social and political history an interest by connecting with it incidents, facts, and local matter more immediately identified with events which have marked our countrys history from its earliest period to that of the present. Much has transpired during all these years to render such a work both instructive and interesting; and although we do not claim for ours any such pretension, yet we may safely term it a pioneer in the cause of our postal history. We have also endeavored, without any aid from the postal department at Washington, to furnish a somewhat desultory history of the post in this country, while at the same time we have given some account of those of other nations. Ours is

not a mere statistic history, but one that blends with it a certain amount of information upon every subject more or less connected with it. Aiming at no high literary attainments, or attempting to excel others in language, beauty of sentiment, or construction of sentences, he has written a work in his own style, and in a manner which he flatters himself will be received favorably by the masses. The American language given in its plainest style will be far more appreciated by them than if clothed in the classic garb scholastic and academical tailoring has thrown around it. The primitive style in which our forefathers wrote has been materially changed by the introduction of foreign and learned words. This, it is true, as Blair says, gives an appearance of elevation and dignity to style; but often, also, they render it stiff and forced; and, in general, a plain native style, as it is more intelligible to all readers, so, by a proper management of words, it may be made equally strong and expressive with this Latinized English. Barren languages may need such assistance, but ours is not one of these. The author is also aware that in the general arrangement of his subject there may seem a want of connection; but, as the postal chain is linked to dates, he may be excused if other portions of the work fly off in tangents. This, however, is owing more to the variety of postal matter introduced than to any neglect on his part to bring them into harmonic action. To be continue in this ebook.....

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