

9009

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9009 by James Hopper & Fred. R. Bechdolt

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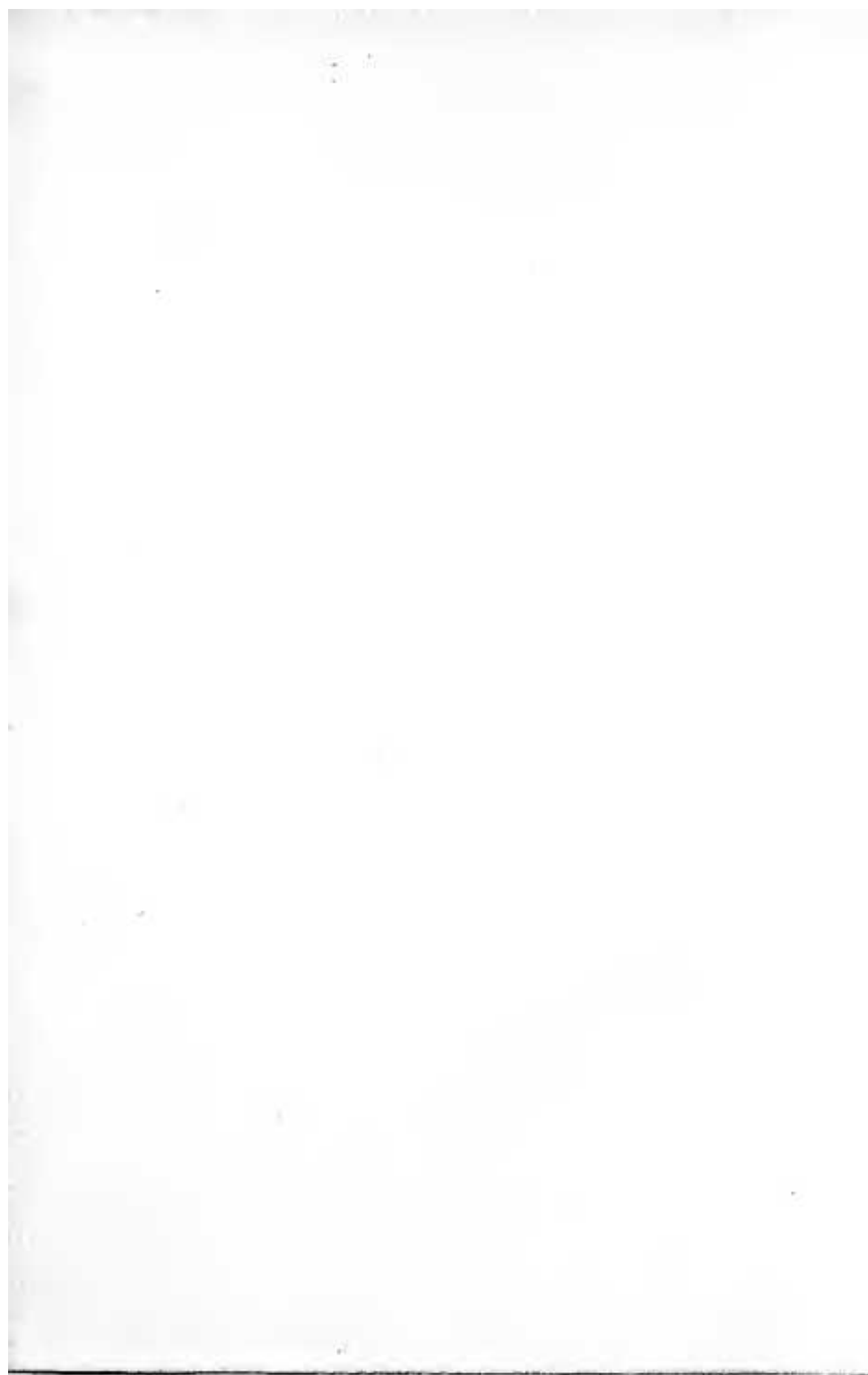
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PREFACE

THE impulse which moved us to write this book was primarily indignation—indignation at facts. At facts learned slowly and gradually by one of us through years of patient investigation, and then told, all in one mass, to the other, who thus came to them with an abruptness giving intense vision. A work written in the fervor of indignation is apt to be violent, unbalanced, and unjust. We were alive to this danger; after some thought, we saw how we could best avoid it. It was by using in the story facts only. 9009 is a story made of facts—a Fact-Story.

By this we do not mean that 9009 is a biography. Convict 9009—John Collins—exists only in our imagination. But everything that happens to 9009 within the prison is something which has happened to some convict in some

PREFACE

prison (American prison) some time. And much worse things could have happened to 9009. By which we mean that much worse things have happened to some convicts in some prisons sometimes—and we know of these things.

So that, besides sticking to truth in writing the story of 9009, we have done more. We have eliminated what was too terrible about this truth, and in the expression of that which we have divulged we have used repression. The result, we think, is a simple, clear, compressed story, all of action, which shows how Society creates a Monster. How Society through sheer, crass stupidity, creates a Monster, which then it has to destroy (stupidly) at the cost of labor, blood, and (which may concern it more) of much gold.

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