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# A HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

BY

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## CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	7
II REASON FREE (GREECE AND ROME) . . . . .	21
III REASON IN PRISON (THE MIDDLE AGES) . . . . .	51
IV PROSPECT OF DELIVERANCE (THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION) . . . . .	71
V RELIGIOUS TOLERATION . . . . .	92
VI THE GROWTH OF RATIONALISM (SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES) . . . . .	127
VII THE PROGRESS OF RATIONALISM (NINETEENTH CENTURY) . . . . .	176
VIII THE JUSTIFICATION OF LIBERTY OF THOUGHT . . . . .	233
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	253
INDEX . . . . .	254



# A HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

## CHAPTER I

### FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND THE FORCES AGAINST IT

#### (INTRODUCTORY)

It is a common saying that thought is free. A man can never be hindered from thinking whatever he chooses so long as he conceals what he thinks. The working of his mind is limited only by the bounds of his experience and the power of his imagination. But this natural liberty of private thinking is of little value. It is unsatisfactory and even painful to the thinker himself, if he is not permitted to communicate his thoughts to others, and it is obviously of no value to his neighbours. Moreover it is extremely difficult to hide thoughts that have any power over the mind. If a man's thinking leads him to call in question ideas and customs which regulate the behaviour of those about him, to reject beliefs which they hold, to see better ways of life than those they follow, it is almost