

**POLITICAL THOUGHT IN
ENGLAND: THE
UTILITARIANS FROM
BENTHAM TO J.S. MILL**

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Political thought in England: the Utilitarians from Bentham to J.S. Mill by William L. Davidson

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WILLIAM L. DAVIDSON

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POLITICAL THOUGHT
IN ENGLAND

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THE UTILITARIANS
FROM BENTHAM TO J. S. MILL

By

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POLITICAL THOUGHT IN ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE UTILITARIAN POSITION

NOT infrequently we find writers, men of letters and philosophers alike, referring to Utilitarianism as they might to Epicureanism of old, as a rounded and completed thing delivered once for all by a master, and handed down full-formed from the beginning, with little or no modification by succeeding generations. But Utilitarianism, like most other philosophical systems, is a growth, beginning with a clear but restricted view, and needing experience and the critical sympathetic insight of others later on to widen its outlook, to tone down its dogmatism, to lop off excrescences, and to adjust it to fresh light and new situations. There is a school or succession of utilitarians, in the same sense as there