Science, Reform, and Politics is a study of the relationship between social thought, social policy and politics in Victorian Britain. Goldman focuses on a remarkable organisation, the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, known as the Social Science Association. For three decades this served as a forum for the discussion of key Victorian social questions and as an influential adviser to governments, and its history discloses how social policy was made in these years. Its participants included many notable figures, among them politicians (for example, Gladstone and Russell), intellectuals (Mill and Ruskin), public administrators (Chadwick and Kay-Shuttleworth), reformers (Brougham and Shaftesbury) and the pioneering feminists of the age (Barbara Bodichon and Bessie Rayner Parkes). The Association had influence over policy and legislation on matters as diverse as public health, crime and punishment, secondary education, class and industrial relations, and women’s legal and social emancipation. The SSA has an important place in the history of social thought and sociology, showing the complex roots of these disciplines in the non-academic milieu of nineteenth-century reform. Its influence in the United States and Europe allows for a comparative approach to political and intellectual development in this period.

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To Madeleine
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I acknowledge the gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen to cite letters from the Royal Archives. Citations and quotations from the Castle Howard Archives have been included by kind permission of the Hon. Simon Howard; from Lord Shaftesbury’s journals by permission of Lord Brabourne and the Trustees of the Broadlands Archives; from the Hampton papers (Sir John Pakington) by permission of Lord Hampton; from the papers of Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth by permission of Lord Shuttleworth; from the Davies and Parkes Papers by permission of the Mistress and Fellows of Girton College, Cambridge; from the Houghton and Whewell papers by permission of the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge; from the papers of Thomas Hare by permission of the President and Fellows of St John’s College, Oxford; from the papers of Caroline Dall by permission of the Massachusetts Historical Society; from the manuscript autobiography of Edward Jarvis by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University; and from Jarvis’ letters by permission of the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, Boston, and the Concord Free Public Library, Concord, Massachusetts.


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A note on citations in the text of papers published in the Transactions and Sessional Proceedings of the Social Science Association

For reasons of space it has been necessary to curtail full referencing of quotations and citations from the publications of the Social Science Association. In most cases reference is to the volume and page only; the author and title of a paper are not given (though the identity of the speaker/writer should be clear from the text). Occasionally, where full details may be helpful to the reader, or the paper is of special importance, a complete citation has been provided in the footnotes. Papers from these sources have not been included in the bibliography as separate items.
Abbreviations

Institutions
ARA Administrative Reform Association
ASSA American Social Science Association
BAAS British Association for the Advancement of Science
BL British Library
BMA British Medical Association
ISSA Association Internationale pour le Progrès des Sciences Sociales
LAS Law Amendment Society
NAPSS National Association for the Promotion of Social Science
NRU National Reformatory Union
SIC Schools Inquiry or Taunton Commission
SSA Social Science Association

Sources
B MSS Brougham Papers, University College, London

Publications
BMJ British Medical Journal
DNB Dictionary of National Biography
JSSL Journal of the Statistical Society of London
JSS Journal of Social Science (New York)
LAJ Law Amendment Journal (1855–8)
PP Parliamentary Papers
SP (year) Sessional Proceedings of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science
List of abbreviations

T.(year)  *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science* (+ year of congress). Volumes were published in London in the year following each annual congress.

TLAS  *Transactions of the Law Amendment Society* (1858–63)

TSS  *Trades’ Societies and Strikes. Report of the Committee on Trades’ Societies, Appointed by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science* (London, 1860)
1. 'Lord Brougham delivering the opening address in the Free-Church Assembly-Hall' (Edinburgh, 1863).
INTRODUCTION

The contexts of the Social Science Association

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, known to contemporaries as the Social Science Association, was founded in London on 29 July 1857 and held its inaugural congress in Birmingham some weeks later in early October. Thereafter, its annual meetings captured national attention for a generation. Held in all the major cities of Britain and attended by thousands, they were a focus for social and institutional reform in mid-Victorian Britain. The Social Science Association was an open forum for the discussion of all aspects of social policy and was variously referred to as an ‘outdoor parliament’, a ‘supplementary parliament’, an ‘unofficial parliament’, an ‘amateur parliament’, and a ‘parliament out of session’, staffed, according to *The Spectator* by the ‘volunteer legislators of Great Britain’.¹ In the words of Lord Brougham, its first president, it was ‘to aid legislation by preparing measures, by explaining them, by recommending them to the community, or, it may be, by stimulating the legislature to adopt them’.² After participating in its first two congresses, Lord John Russell, the mid-Victorian prime minister, described it as ‘a yearly Council for national and local government to go by’.³ According to John Stuart Mill, ‘it really brings together persons of all opinions consistent with the profession of a desire for social improvement’.⁴ *The Times* saw it as ‘a centre for the communication and interchange of ideas on current topics of political and social

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¹ *The Times*, 25 April 1862, 12; *Daily News*, 30 Sept. 1869, 5; 2 Oct. 1873, 5; *Western Daily Press* (Bristol), 1 Oct. 1869, 2; *The Times*, 9 Oct. 1873, 7; *The Spectator*, 14 June 1862, 657.
³ Russell to G. W. Hastings, 23 Oct. 1858, G. W. Hastings papers in the possession of the late Professor Adrian Hastings, Leeds.
interest’. According to the *Daily Telegraph* its function was ‘to take up the raw materials of social legislation, and, by the help of statistics, statements and discussions, to reduce the “hard facts” to the condition of manageable matter’. Thus it had linked itself ‘more and more with the current business of the state’ and become ‘a power in the Imperial System’. One provincial newspaper wrote of it ‘gathering together the experience of the nation’. The pioneer feminist, Bessie Rayner Parkes, described it as a ‘convention of the most weighty men and women in England’. To Edwin Chadwick, speaking for the emergent class of professional men with expert social knowledge on whom the Association came to depend and to represent, the SSA served to bring ‘into personal communication with each other . . . persons who give their attention to special subjects as sanitarians, educationists, law reformers and political economists’. The Social Science Association divided its deliberations into five ‘departments’ on legal reform, penal policy, education, public health, and ‘social economy’ (concerned with industrial, commercial, and welfare questions) and maintained a central organisation in London to coordinate the lobbying of parliament and the administration of the day. It commanded an influential membership: in the process of its formation its three patrons were Russell, twice prime minister; Stanley, who could have inherited the leadership of the Conservative Party from his father, the fourteenth earl of Derby, and so displaced Disraeli, had he sought for the highest office, and who was later to serve in both Conservative and Liberal cabinets; and Brougham, the great champion from the past of anti-slavery, popular education, and parliamentary reform. The SSA’s inaugural council included eighteen peers; twenty-eight MPs; leading representatives from that gifted group of mid-century public administrators including Chadwick, William Farr, John Simon, and James Kay-Shuttleworth; and, from among the intellectuals, Mill, Ruskin, Kingsley, and Maurice. It gathered together leading figures from the political, administrative, and professional classes of mid-Victorian Britain and brought them into communication with the public during a period in which politics were being popularised and beginning to encompass social

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9 *Constitution, Address and List of Members of the American Association for the Promotion of Social Science* (Boston, 1866), 49–50.  
10 *T.1857*, xv–xvi.