have been criticized by humanists as well as statisticians, his work is a testament to our tremendous appetite for progress narratives, one that certainly exceeds in quantity and differs in quality from the modest claims of Macaulay or Acton. As we strive to understand historical change that has a more ambivalent direction and as we fight for the future that we want, we need to acknowledge the way that the Victorian theorization of progress went hand-in-hand with its others—regress, cyclicality, stasis, and rupture.

NOTES

1. Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1963), 4; Michael Bentley, "Shape and Pattern in British Historical Writing, 1815–1945," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing, 1800–1945,* Vol. 4, ed. Stuart Macintyre, Juan Maiguashca, and Attila Pók (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 208.
2. John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive, Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence and the Methods of Scientific Investigation,* in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill,* ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 8: 938 [VI. xi. 3].
3. Thomas Babington Macaulay, "History," in *Critical, Historical, and Miscellaneous Essays* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1878), 1: 393.
4. Macaulay, "History," 416, 417.
5. John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, "The Study of History," in *Selected Writings of Lord Acton,* ed. J. Rufus Fears (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985): 2: 517 (emphasis added).
6. Dalberg-Acton, "Study," 507.
7. Dalberg-Acton, "Study," 508–10.
8. Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined* (New York: Viking, 2011).

Progress

SUE ZEMKA

A belief in progress was so deeply embedded in nineteenth-century Britain that it was one of those beliefs for which there was no

outside. Scientific knowledge was advancing; so, too, was technology, capitalism, and culture. Their development was part of the progress of history itself. Where Giambattista Vico's influential model of history traced the rise and fall of civilizations, Immanuel Kant's 1784 *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan View* replaced the cycles of "man" with his telos—a one-way street. The subsequent metanarratives of the nineteenth century followed a similarly linear movement of accretion, complexification, and sophistication. Auguste Comte imagined social history moving towards perfection through the human application of science; he called this Positivism. Charles Darwin theorized evolutionary mechanisms that governed biological life independently of human control. Darwin tried to purge evolutionary theory of the theological and secular baggage of design and its goals, its language of improvement or destiny, but social Darwinism put them right back in. The nineteenth-century *idea* of history was unthinkable apart from the *form* of progress.

Theodor Adorno identifies the "concept of total progress" with bourgeois society.[1] But its totality is misleading. Victorian progress was never "total" in the sense of uncontested. Fears of regression or collapse existed throughout the nineteenth century. John Ruskin was never one to trust categorically in progress, which he equated with hubris, an invitation to divine correction. Still, while the Jeremiahs of the nineteenth century chastened their contemporaries' overconfidence in the progressive virtues of British industry, they did not ascribe to a belief that decays or reversals in civilization were natural and inevitable. Instead, they treated them as dangers that could be prevented by checks to selfish social habits. Decay and reversal were thus folded into the Victorian ideology of progress as critique. The gospel of progress drew strength from its critics: the Jeremiad styles of Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle, and occasionally Matthew Arnold were revered throughout the century. Thus, the religion of progress was always beset by certain salubrious crises of faith, all through the Palmerston years and the Great Exhibition, more audibly so in the de-evolutionary fears and nihilist outcroppings of the fin de siècle, and deafeningly so after the world wars of the twentieth century. But modernity's definition of itself as progressive was never completely eradicated. Even after the holocaust, Adorno perceived that there was enough life left in the old belief for him to feel the need to recuperate it from its cloying and dangerous excesses, which he does by reconceiving progress as a dialectics of resistance.[2]

Historical and individual progress came together in the nineteenth century to solidify the notion of a species destiny—Hegelian, Marxist,

Utilitarian/Liberal, or eventually eugenicist. "Humanity," in these philosophies, is a vehicle driven by one or another engine (biology, reason, love, spirit, God) towards one or another version of perfection (enlightenment, freedom, justice, adaptability, or happiness). The sticking point in these philosophies—the place where thought did not map easily onto reality—was in the relationship of the parts to the whole of "humanity." For John Stuart Mill, the role of the part was crucial. The impressive pace of improvement in Britain and Europe depended upon it, he believed, insofar as liberal society was healthy and robust in proportion to the freedom it allotted to the individual. Hannah Arendt, writing from the perspective of the post-war mid-twentieth century, believed that such Victorian salutations to individual liberty were little more that naïve vestiges of the intoxicating optimism of pre-revolutionary France. There was really a jaundiced secret at the heart of the Victorian belief in progress, Arendt suggested, and it was the recognition that "the endless progress of bourgeois society" required the accumulation of power by nations equipped to enforce economic laws on a global scale.[3] And this accumulation of power—"imperialism" by name—depended on racism as its enabling ideology.[4] In all its iterations, the metanarrative of human perfectibility through progress was always uncertain as to what humanity was—where to draw boundaries around and within it, and what this meant for the ontological status of those cast by thought to the outside.

There is no accident in the fact that the age dominated by concerns with the progress of humanity is also the age that we now identify with the ineluctable emergence of anthropogenic climate change. In retrospect, the blind spot in the nineteenth-century's idealistic humanism is also its (and our) tragic undoing. For possibly the only thing that Victorian Britain believed to be unchanging was its climate. Amitav Ghosh calls it "the great derangement"—the assumption that "Nature is moderate and orderly," and that the scaffolding of "the real" no less than literary realism was the reliable backdrop of a maritime climate, with the seasonal patterns, the plants and weather, which that climate produced.[5] And so on for the different climates of the globe, each of them providing unique but consistent stages on which human beings acted out their dramas, confident that no matter the gravity of suffering they endured, the planet would, more or less, go on the same. If there was an outside to the Victorian belief in progress, a space free of the presumed laws of unidirectional change and development, it was (ironically and erroneously) the space of nonhuman natural environments, which were static in their seasonal predictability, practically (so it seemed) without end.

Now that global environments are unmistakably changing, we are in a position—albeit a shaky one—from which to view the concept of human progress itself from the outside. More than the debacles of the twentieth-century world wars, climate change frees us from the deeply embedded premise that, whatever its ups and downs, and despite the setbacks caused by our viciousness, human history nevertheless progresses. Human survival, it is apparent, along with the progressive projects of social justice and human self-understanding, are dependent on, entangled with, the future of climates. To speak of the "ends of man" in the twentieth-first century is to invoke a grimmer literalism than the enlightenment ever intended.

The ideas of "progress" and "humanity" are tied together with the rise of climate change in a knot of causal relations and influences that we have only recently begun to unravel. Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer's introduction of "the anthropocene" into geological modeling inspired an increasing wave of work on environmental history and theory in the humanistic disciplines, and more works are published (seemingly exponentially) each year. In the moment of this rich critical activity, a few needs and possibilities appear. Some needs: to continue rethinking "humanity" and "subjectivity" in terms of intersectionality, an alternative to the past pitfalls of bounded and stable models of selves and groups; and the need to interject eco-justice into these conversations as a common denominator of concern, albeit with differing levels of responsibility. Some possibilities: to rethink progress, a temporal form, as space, the simultaneous coexistence of arenas of injustice and hatred with local practices of justice and care; relatedly, to recuperate mourning as empowerment, "shared vulnerability" as strength, as in Judith Butler's thinking, but now in environmental no less than global politics.[6]

NOTES

1. Theodor Adorno, "Progress," in *Can One Live After Auschwitz?*, ed. Roll Tiedemann, trans. Henry Pickford (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 143.
2. Adorno, "Progress," 144–45.
3. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951; New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1968), 143–44.
4. Arendt, *The Origins*, 158.

5. Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 22.
6. Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Politics* (New York: Verso, 2004), 49.

———————◆———————

Queer

ELLEN CROWELL

IN 1891, *Punch* inaugurated "Queer Queries," a faux-advice column where imaginary readers aired grievances and sought solutions. In April 1891, "Urgent"—a starving vicar in a stingy parish—seeks counsel on whether to pawn his "lectern and ancient carved pulpit" for food, while "Perplexed"—whose property boundary has been breached by an invasive "aroma of questionable herrings and very pronounced haddocks" from the fish shop next door—asks whether to demand full meals as compensation.[1] Alongside these "Queer Queries" sits a poem entitled "Coming Dress," which dismisses as mere "queer robes" the sartorial future advocated by feminist reformers: "[S]hall we welcome with delight / queer robes that make a girl a fright? / Pooh-pooh! We're simply imperturbable. / The Reign of Fashion's undisturbable."[2] Vicars, aromas, and clothing here share queer pride of place; queer is that which disturbs or perturbs; even (or especially) if their rumblings can be easily contained by the boundaries of conventional humor and fashion. In other words, in 1891 "queer" was *punchy*.

It is, of course, punchy again—perhaps even punch drunk. A Gale Primary Sources term search suggests that "queer" hit a popular high-water mark in the mid-1890s—a height it did not reach again until the early 1990s. The pivot year was 1898, after which "queer" fell off precipitously and—after a small resurgence in the 1920s—kept falling. The fate of "Queer Queries" speaks to this pinch point: inaugurated in 1891, by 1898 *Punch* had discontinued the feature entirely. When "queer" did return to fin-de-siècle popularity levels in 1991, it did so only to blow right through and keep rising, up through our present moment. Registering both the pain and shame of a homophobic past and the world-making energies of political, critical and aesthetic activism, the