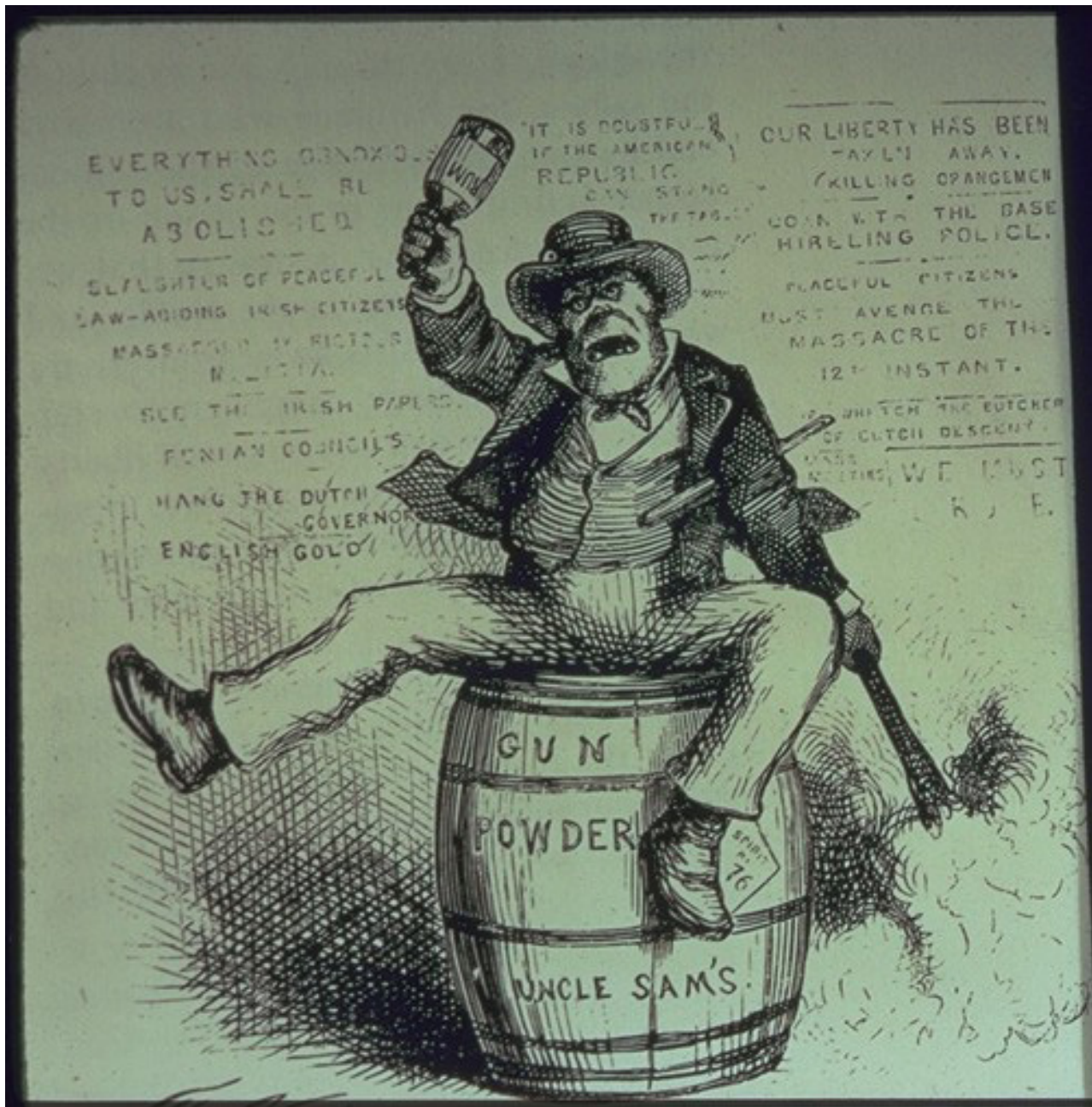


Cartoons on Immigration in the 1800s

Directions: Have your students review the images in small groups or individually, using the critical thinking questions as a basis for their discussion.

“The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things,” cartoon depicting Irish immigrants. By Thomas Nast, published in *Harper’s Weekly*, 1871.



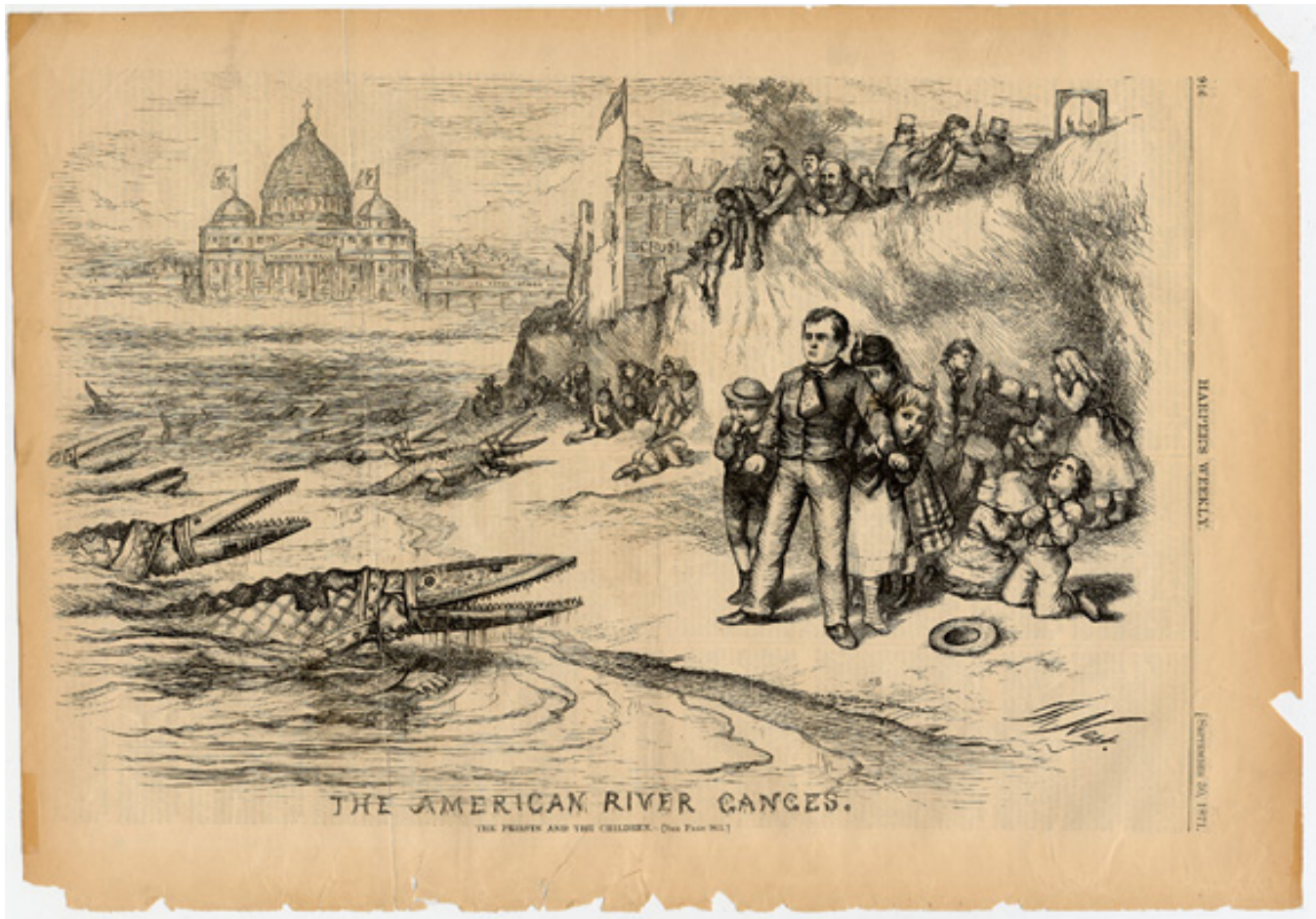
The writing on the wall expresses what the artist perceives to be Irish immigrants' sentiments. It includes, "Everything obnoxious to us shall be abolished," and "We must rule."

“The Mortar of Assimilation—And the One Element That Won’t Mix,” June 1889 cartoon from *Puck*.



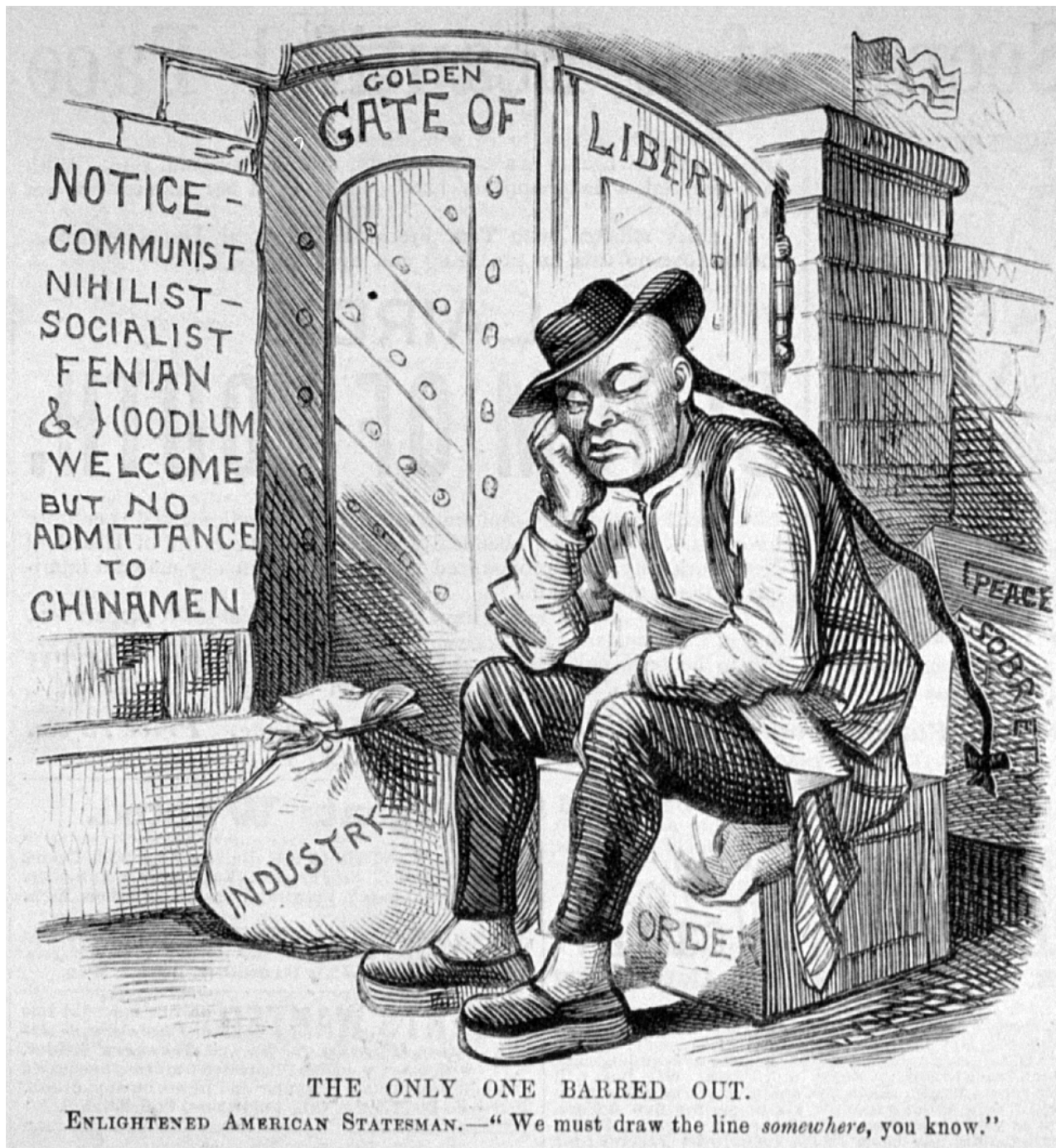
A common element of opposition to Irish immigration was the belief that the Irish were almost sub-human and possessed violent, irredentist tendencies. (Irredentism is the pursuit of lands which a group of people believes rightfully belongs to them.) In the “Mortar of Assimilation” cartoon, how is the Irish immigrant depicted compared to the other immigrants? How is this depiction mirrored in the cartoon, “The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things”? What tool is Columbia (the personification of America) using to assimilate all of the immigrants into American culture? What does Columbia seek to turn the immigrants into? Does the cartoonist believe the Irish are capable of becoming good citizens?

**“The American River Ganges,” by Thomas Nast.
Published in *Harper’s Weekly*, 1875.**



In Thomas Nast’s anti-Catholic cartoon, what is rising out of the water? What structure looms out from the mist in the background and what does it represent? Who does Nast believe are the primary victims of the spread of Catholicism and how does Catholicism reach these impressionable minds?

“The Only One Barred Out,” from *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, April 1882.



What is the primary critique of the cartoon on the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act? What virtues does the cartoonist believe that Chinese immigrants bring to the United States? Who are the immigrants that are being let in? Do you think the primary reason for opposition to Chinese immigrants was racial or was derived from something else?

ALL CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. A common element of opposition to Irish immigration was the belief that the Irish were almost sub-human and possessed violent, irredentist tendencies. (Irredentism is the pursuit of lands which a group of people believes rightfully belongs to them.) In the “Mortar of Assimilation” cartoon, how is the Irish immigrant depicted compared to the other immigrants? How is this depiction mirrored in the cartoon, “The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things”? What tool is Columbia (the personification of America) using to assimilate all of the immigrants into American culture? What does Columbia seek to turn the immigrants into? Does the cartoonist believe the Irish are capable of becoming good citizens?
2. In Thomas Nast’s anti-Catholic cartoon, what is rising out of the water? What structure looms out from the mist in the background and what does it represent? Who does Nast believe are the primary victims of the spread of Catholicism and how does Catholicism reach these impressionable minds?
3. What is the primary critique of the cartoon on the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act? What virtues does the cartoonist believe that Chinese immigrants bring to the United States? Who are the immigrants that are being let in? Do you think the primary reason for opposition to Chinese immigrants was racial or was derived from something else?