

the gallery spectators urged on their favorites. Wagers abounded. The spectacle of the birds was bloody and brutal. The brave cocks exhausted themselves, but would not quit until one of the two contestants lay dead. Money then changed hands.

And, of course, bullfighting was the most famous entertainment of Mexico. Thousands frequented the Sunday afternoon spectacle in Mexico City. Although it was a sport shared by all classes, status was clear by virtue of seating. The wealthy sat in the shade, while the masses suffered the sun. The spectacle proceeded in traditional stages. The bull entered to have *picadores* and *matadores* goad and tease him with lances and red cloaks. They had to be agile to avoid death on his horns. Then, amid trumpet sounds, the bull's tormentors stuck small lances into his neck. The bull, snorting and thundering to no avail, attacked anyone and anything. Finally, the chief matador emerged, with more trumpets, to do battle armed with his red cloak and long blade. After some flourishing, the matador plunged his weapon between the bull's shoulder blades to the heart. On to the next and more blood.

On his arrival in the 1840s, diplomat Brantz Mayer was told that Mexico had three great “‘amusements’: a Revolution—an Earthquake—and a Bull Fight.” Unfortunately, they all had rather high costs. It is to the Revolution that we turn in the next chapters.