THE EASTON GAZETTE.

VOL. 81. NO 17. EASTON, MD., SATURDAY. MARCH 27, 1897. $1.50 PER YEAR



An American Matadore.

An Interesting Description of the Mexican Sports of Fighting Bulls by Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

THE royal Mexican sport, of Spanish origin, known to Americans as "Fighting Bulls," is a sight which once seen in all its daring, danger, nerve and skill, will not readily be forgotten.

It is to the Mexican, what athletic games, especially foot and baseball are to the Americans,

The Sunday and holiday performances in the arena are always well attended in Mexico, by people of all ages and classes, and by the fair sex as well. When an entertainment is given, for instance, to exhibit the prowess of some celebrated fighter, or to test the merits of some new strain of fighting bulls, the occasion is made a gala one, and society as well as the people turn out in great numbers to show appreciation of their national sport.

Arriving on Saturday afternoon, of a hot autumn day, in the city of Mexico, among the many strange and curious things which attracted my attention, were the costly turnouts of the citizens, all seemingly bent in one direction.

Costly hacks and carriages, drawn by blooded horses, pranced along the cool shady side of the *Pesai* or boulevard.

I noticed particularly the fairer sex, arrayed in sacques of rich and delicately shaded silks and satins, and beautiful dark-eyed *senoritas* with white lace "fascinators" upon their heads, and large soft fans in their hands, sitting placidly in their open carriages, as they rolled along the asphaltam drives that lead through *Calle de San Francisco*, and out on *Buccarelli*. It was the elite of Mexico surely, and they were going to *Plaza de Toros* to see as advertised, "The five beautiful bulls, that were to be run to their death the following day."

Lured by the passing throng, I too wended my way to the *Plaze de Toros*.

Arriving there in the rear of a monster arena, protected by an *adobe* wall, I found the doomed bulls, the object of much excitement and interest. Scores of carriages surrounded the *corral*, and the lovely, languid eyes of the fair occupants brightened with enthusiasm as they disc ussed and pointed out the merits and demerits of the five sleek bulls, that were to do battle for their lives the following afternoon.

"*Plaza de Toros Buccarelli gran Benefica del Poncanna Diaz*," was the announcement which covered the bill boards.

This was to be a special occasion. It was for the benefit of President Diaz's nephew, *Poncanna Diaz*, who is the idol of the Mexican public, the most famous and wealthy of all matadores.

He is the owner of the *Buccarelli* bull ring, and his revenue from bull fighting more than equals the salary of the President of the United States. To lend more interest to the entertainment, on the occasion of my visit, an American for the first time in the history of the bull ring, was to make his *debut* as a bull fighter.

The name of this American I saw was Charles Meadows who had the added name of "Arizona Charley," he having been a ranger-scout on the Southwest plains.

A wealthy young ranchero, and King of cowboys, of a sporty nature, he had gone to Mexico to hunt up new fields of adventure, and while there had been a guest for several weeks, at one of the *Haciendas*, where they breed bulls for fighting.

Being thoroughly skilled in the handling of wild stock, Arizona Charley soon became an adept at foiling the maddened beast with the red cloth, and administering the fatal stroke with the rapier.

With perfect confidence in himself to face the mad bull in the arena, he had decided to appear as a full-fledged matadore, and was then to make his bow before the public.

It was three P. M. on Sunday, when I pushed my way through the surging throng to the front door, and gained a comfortable seat in the *Sombra*, or shady side, of the amphitheater.

Buccarelli is a wonder of architectural construction. It is a coliseum combining all the advantages of the Roman theaters of old, with the conveniences of to-day. There is a ring or arena proper, some two hundred feet in diameter surrounded by a low fence, and behind this are the tiers of seats, and elevated above them, are the private boxes, and over all is the immense gallery for the *oi polloi*. The arena is roofless, but a roof covers the space reserved for the vast audience.

This immense amphitheater has a seating capacity of twenty-two thousand, divided into *Palcos* (boxes), *Sombra* (shady side) and *Sol* (the sunny side).

The government takes a strong hand in the bull fights, and according to the bull fighting code, the bulls must come from one of the four *Haciendas* that breed them for fighting purposes. The Federal district takes twenty one per cent. of the gate receipts, and the secretary of the Republic presides as judge of all fights given. In him is vested the power to reject any part of the performance or he may impose any fine he may see fit upon the gladiator.

Many imagine that the bull is merely turned loose among a lot of men, who attack the animal in any way possible, and kill it as soon as it can conveniently be done

But this is an error, for the bull fight that is worthy of the dignity of the name, is a more scientific affair. Every man has his special function to perform in connection with the death of the animal, and the matadore, the man to whom is trusted the task of dealing the death blow with his sharp rapier, does not attempt the destruction of the animal, until all the others are called from the arena, and the judge orders the final fight between the man and the beast.

A full bull-fighting outfit consists of two captains who do the killing, four men whose duty it is to flaunt the red cloaks in the bull's face, four who cast the sharp darts into the hide of the animal to madden him, and four mounted men with spears.

Within an hour from the time the doors were open on this occasion, the immense bull ring was crowded to overflowing. The boxes and shady side were full of the most stylish and fashionably dressed people, among whom were fully fifteen hundred Americans in attendance. There being over twenty thousand persons present.

The crowd was becoming restless, when suddenly all eyes were turned towards the judge's box, and a loud applause burst forth at the sight of that august indivi dual.

Taking his seat in his gaudily decorated box, the judge made a sign to the bugler, who at once sounded the call for the opening of the doors on the opposite side of the arena, and under the front seats.

A horseman first entered, mounted on a beautiful spirited white animal. He was a striking looking individual, dressed in a long flowing cape, knee breeches, and a cocked hat with a gaudy plume. The horse pranced to within a few yards of the judge's stand, then with a bound was suddenly reined back upon his haunches, and held there until the judge threw the rider a key which was a token that permission to begin was granted.

Another bugle call, and the company entered. The American matadore, Charles Meadows, riding in the lead with Poncanna Diaz on one side, and La Charitta, the only feminine bull fighter in Mexico on the other.

Behind these followed the rest of the bull fighting outfit, with the four white mules driven abreast, and which are used to drag out the animal after he has fallen.

The grand entry was a fine spectacle, and it might be added that there was not a costume worn, by any of the participants, that was not worth a thousand dollars in gold.

After they had marched up before the judge, and saluted him, they counter-marched, and then took their positions for the work in hand.

At the third bugle call a door opened, and the bull with a wild bound sprang into the arena. As he passed out of the door into the arena, a man stuck a bard, on which was fastened a large rosette, into his shoulder. He only tossed his head at his tormentor and went straight for Poncanna Diaz, who was standing in the center of the ring with a red cloth on his arm. Lowering his head for the charge, the animal gave one mighty lunge, but Poncanna was not there. He had leaped gracefully to one side and the bull only lifted the red cloth that he held. Turning as quick as a cat could have done, the bull looked for the matadore, but he had sped away to one of the "escapes."

The bull was now wild with wrath. He was a handsome black four year old, with long, sharp horns and active as a panther. His hair was as fine as silk, and on one of the wide satin ribbons which hung from the rosette in his neck was the word Cazadero, the name of the ranch on which he was bred.

For a few seconds he stood pawing the ground furiously, and raising a cloud of dust, but seeming to have taken in the whole situation, he singled out a horse and rider, and with a low bellow made straight for the trembling animal. The rider took his position and as he rushed upon him he thrust his lance into the animal's shoulder; but the bull was too strong and determined, and catching the horse between the fore legs, he tossed him and his rider into the air.

As they came down, with another thrust of his sharp horns the bull severed the jugular vein of the unfortunate animal, killing him instantly, when he immediately turned his attention to the prostrate horsemen, and was in the act of making a lunge that would have sent him into another world, when Arizona Charley glided between them, and flaunting his red cape in the bull's face, started across the arena.

It was a close call, for to save the spearsman, Charles Meadows had left an opening for the bull to attack him. He had no time to dodge, and so sped away across the arena waving his red cape in a circle behind him.

The bull came close upon his heels, and it was a race for life, while the wildest excitment prevailed, men, women and children screamed with delight at the perilous situation of the American.

That was the acme of joy in a bull fight. Arizona Charley, however, was fleet of foot and glided safely over the escape, but not more than a yard ahead of the bull. The band played, and hats, parasols, capes, fans and Mexican dollars went flying into the arena towards Arizona Charley, in admiration of the man.

Arizona Charlie had now won their hearts, and this was the Mexican mode of showing their appreciation The next horseman dashing up turned the bull with his spear, Poncanna got into the middle of the arena standing behind his mantle holding it in outstretched hands, and as the bull charged, he would step nimbly to one side and then to the other, not moving more than three or four feet until the bull had made several charges.

The bugle called again, and the horses were taken out of the ring, and the dart throwers came in upon the scene, holding in each hand a dart eighteen inches long, covered with feathers, colored paper and streamers.

The bull was now in a humor to attack anyone who came within his range of vision, and this was the most dangerous part of the play, for the dart throwers must let the animal come within arm's length, standing their ground long enough to place the darts, before they tried to escape. These sharp little instruments of torture must penetrate the hide, and therefore, be thrown with considerable force.

After the man had placed several pairs of the darts in the bull's neck and shoulders and the blood was streaming over the glossy hide of the animal, La Charitta, the beautiful Mexican girl, dashed in on horseback, holding a pair of highly decorated darts in her hand.

Her skill and daring at once won admiration for her and she was certainly a magnificent horsewoman, fearing nothing and daring everything.

The cruel work in which she was engaged was almost forgotten in seeing her face, ablaze as it was with enthusiasm, and her wild, graceful riding.

Riding along at full speed La Charitta met the charging bull, and as she passed, barely escaped the sharp horns, while the fair rider's hand shot out and two glittering darts were placed in the burning flesh of the now maddened brute.

All was now in readiness for the final act. The judge handed Poncanna a sword, which he gracefully surrendered to the American matadore.

The audience were delighted at this act of courtesy, and anxiously awaited to see what the American would do.

Bull fighters are trained from childhood, and it was not generally believed that the American, being only an amateur at this kind of work would leave the ring alive.

The Americans in the audience were fearful, though hopeful, yet they felt proud of their representative. That Meadows was fearless and active had already been demonstrated, but what he could do with the rapier was yet to be seen. He was dressed in a beautiful suit of blue and silver, and with his long hair presented a fine specimen of man hood.

Stepping out towards the center of the ring, Meadows faced the bull to show what he could do in a death struggle with the infuriated animal. Tall above the average, towering head and shoulders above the Mexicans, he stood cool and fearless in the face of what might be a terrible death.

A moment the bull hesitated, then with a loud bellow and angry snort he charged upon the scarlet mantle of the American. The scene of cruelty and danger was forgotten in admiration of the man's steady nerve and picturesque pose that were in themselves fascinating, even had the sport been less dangerous than it appeared.

It was only a moment after the American had thrown his cape to the judge, that the bull was coming across the ring, straight for the Arizona Plainsman.

Another instant and the movement of man and beast were like flashes of lighting, and it seemed that the brave matadore must go down before the infuriated rush of the monster beast but with a single stroke of the gleaming rapier, the bull's heart was reached and he fell heavily, while the victor stepped quickly to one side, and looked calmly down upon the mass of quivering flesh. It was a master stroke, nothing could have brought about a quicker end. No bullet could have found a more fatal spot.

The American could hardly find his way out of the arena for the hats, fans, ribbons and other articles that were thrown at him in wild admiration of his victory, and thunders of applause rolled across the vast arena.

The four white mules were then brought in and dragged the dead bull from the arena, after which other battles royal were fought, the animals being killed in the same way by the matadores.

On this occasion three horses were killed, and two men seriously injured, but such is always expected at a bull fight.

Civilization and humane laws will eventually moderate the cruelties in this kind of sport, but it will hardly ever be done away with. Already in some parts of Spain the horses are provided with armor, and the bulls wear cork jackets where the decorated barbs are placed, thus giving the whole scene without the spilling of blood until the final stroke is given, but the risk of life is there to the matadore, and the death of the bull must follow.

From Cripple Creek.

After the big fire in Cripple Creek I took a very severe cold and tried many remedies without help, the cold only becoming more settled. After using three small bottles of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy, both the cough and cold left me, and in this high altitude it takes a meritorious cough remedy to do any good.—G. B. HENDERSON, editor *Daily Advertiser*. For sale by H. Roberts, Easton; P.M. Pastorfield, Royal Oak: J. F. Sisk, Cordova.

CLEVELAND AND HIS CABINET.

What the Members of the Late Administration Will Do.

The following is stated to be what will become of ex-President Cleveland and his Cabinet officers:

The ex-President accompanied Mrs. Cleveland to their new home at Princeton immediately after the inauguration of President McKinley. It is reported that he will go on another fishing excursion in E. C. Benedict's yacht.

Secretary Olney will resume the practice of law in Boston.

Secretary Lamont will go South with his family for six weeks, and will then return to New York and take charge of his various business interests.

Secretary Carlisle will practice law in Louisville or New York, his friends think the latter place.

Attorney-General Harmon will again be a member of his old law firm in Cincinnati.

Secretary Herbert will open a law office in Washington.

Secretary Francis will return to St. Louis to resume the direct conduct of the brokerage business of the D. R. Francis commission house.

Secretary Morton will go back to his splendid home, "Arbor Lodge," just outside of Nebraska City, Neb.

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