



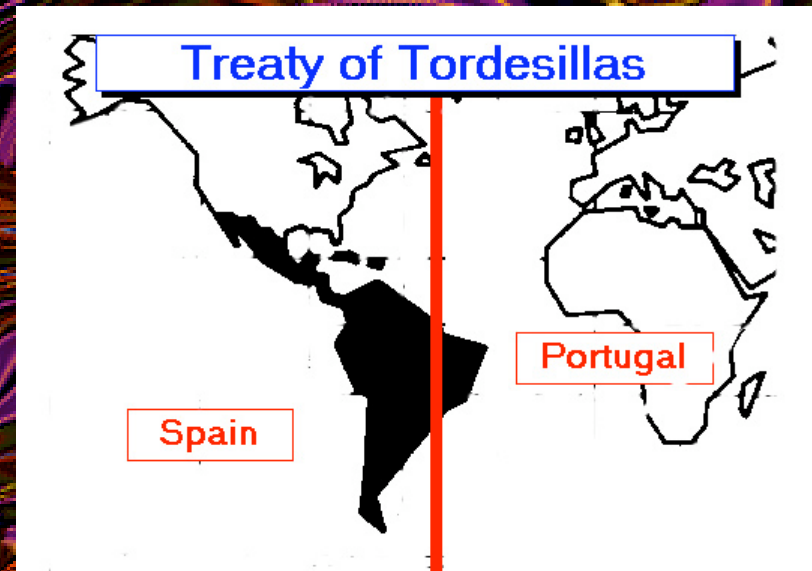
The Spanish Empire in San Francisco



1492-1846

The Course of Empire

- 1492: Columbus discovers Americas for Europeans
- Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494
- Mission, Presidio, Pueblo
- 1775: Spanish arrive in Francisco Bay
- 1776: Mission Dolores and Presidio founded
- 1823: Mexico wins independence, governs California and San Francisco
- 1846: USA defeats Mexico, takes over California and Texas



All the following passages are taken from
Arthur Chandler, *Old Tales of San Francisco*:

- “The Diary of Father Santa Maria” (1775)
- Otto Von Kotzebue, “A Voyage of Discovery” (1816)
- “The Diary of Adelbert von Chamisso” (1816)
- “The Diary of Louis Choris” (1816)
- Richard Henry Dana, “Two Years Before The Mast” (1836)
- “Proclamation” by Captain John Montgomery (1846)

STAGE ONE

Father Maria and the Ohlones

1775

Suspicion and Fear

“On that day the captain, the second sailing master, the surgeon, and I, with some sailors, went ashore. Three Indians who had been sitting for some time at the top of the slope that came down the shore, as soon as they saw us landed, fled from our presence without pausing to heed our friendly and repeated calls.

“Accompanied by a sailor, I tried to follow them in order to pacify them with the usual gifts and to find out what troubled them. We got to the top of the ridge and found there three other Indians, making six in all. Three of them were armed with bows and very sharp-tipped flint arrows.”

Fear of ... ?

“Although they at first refused to join us, nevertheless, when we had called to them and made signs of good will and friendly regard, they gradually came near. I desired them to sit down, that I might have the brief pleasure of handing out to them the glass beads and other little gifts I had had the foresight to carry in my sleeves. Throughout this interval they were in a happy frame of mind and made me hang in their ears, which they had pierced, the strings of glass beads that I had divided among them...

- “When I had given them this pleasure, I took it into my head to pull out my snuffbox and take a pinch; but the moment the eldest of the Indians saw me open the box he took fright and showed that he was upset. In spite of all my efforts I couldn’t calm him. He fled along the trail, and so did his companions, leaving us alone on the ridge.”



Iconoclasm

[Father Maria is walking in the hills of San Francisco and comes upon a large rock with some “droll objects” in its cleft:]

“These were slim round shafts about a yard and a half high, ornamented at the top with bunches of white feathers, and ending in an arrangement of black and red-dyed feathers imitating the appearance of the sun.

“At the foot of this niche were many arrows with their tips stuck in the ground as if symbolizing abasement. This last exhibition gave me the unhappy suspicion that those bunches of feathers representing the image of the sun (which in their language they call gismen) must be objects of the Indians’ heathenish veneration; and if this was true -- as was a not unreasonable conjecture -- these objects suffered a merited penalty in being thrown on the fire.”

— Father Maria

Commiseration

“No sooner were signs made to the women to approach than many of them ran up, and a large number of their small children, conducting themselves toward all with the diffidence the occasion demanded. Our men stayed longer with the little Indians than with the women, feeling great commiseration for these innocents whom they could not readily help under the many difficulties that would come with the carrying out of a new and far-reaching extension of Spanish authority.”

— Father Maria

By Rote Or By Heart?

“Throughout the time the Indians were on board we tried to attract them to Christian practices, now having them cross themselves or getting them to repeat the “Pater Noster” and “Ave Maria,” now chanting the “Alabado,” which they followed so distinctly that it was astonishing with what facility they pronounced the Spanish.”

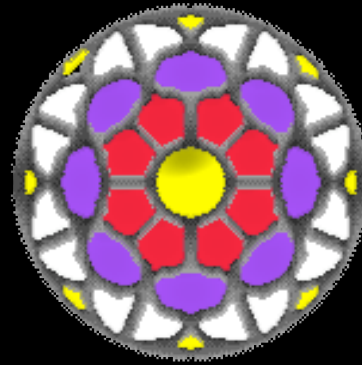
— Father Maria

Song

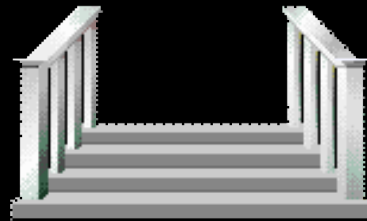
“ I landed and remained alone with the eight Indians, so that I might communicate with them in greater peace. The landing boat went back to the ship and at the same time they all crowded around me and, sitting by me, began to sing, with an accompaniment of two rattles that they had brought with them. As they finished the song all of them were shedding tears, which I wondered at, not knowing the reason. When they were through singing they handed me the rattles and by signs asked me to sing. I took the rattles and, so please them, began to sing the ‘Alabado’ (although they would not understand it), to which they were most attentive and indicated that it pleased them.” — Father Maria



Entering



the Fold



“This is the manner in which these unfortunates have behaved toward us. What is certain is that they themselves seem to be asking a start at entering within the fold of our Catholic religion. Not to avail ourselves of this opportunity would be a lamentable misfortune. To succeed as planned would be the best fortune for all.” — Father Maria

STAGE TWO

Forty Years Later

The San Francisco as seen by
Captain Otto von Kotzebue,
The Botanist Adelbert Chamisso, and
The Artist Louis Choris
1816

“Little Light”

“Precisely at ten we entered the Mission Dolores, where we already found several hundred half-naked Indians kneeling, who, though they understand neither Spanish nor Latin, are never permitted after their conversion to absent themselves from mass. As the missionaries do not trouble themselves to learn the language of the Indians, I cannot conceive in what manner they have been instructed in the Christian religion; and there is probably but little light in the heads and hearts of these poor creatures, who can do nothing but imitate the external ceremonies which they observe by the eye.”

— Otto von Kotzebue, Captain of the *Rurik*, 1816

Indemnification



“I was surprised at observing, that those who were not baptized were not suffered to rise from their knees during the whole ceremony; they were afterwards indemnified for this exertion by the church music, which seemed to afford them much pleasure, and which was probably the only part they comprehended during the whole service. The orchestra consisted of a cello, a violin, and two flutes; these instruments were played by little half-naked Indians, and were very often out of tune.”

—Captain Kotzebue

The Great Mortality



“From the church we went to dinner, where there was an abundance of dishes, and wine, which is made by the missionaries themselves. After dinner they showed us the habitations of the Indians, consisting of long, low houses, built of brick, and forming several streets. The uncleanliness in these barracks baffles description, and this is perhaps the cause of the great mortality; for of 1000 Indians at San Francisco, 300 die every year. The Indian girls, of whom 400 are in the mission, live separate from the men, likewise in such barracks. Both sexes are obliged to labor hard. The men cultivate the ground; the harvest is delivered to the missionaries and stored in magazines, from which the Indians receive only so much as is necessary for their support. It also serves for the maintenance of the soldiers at the Presidio.”

— Captain Kotzebue



The Presidio



Religious vs. Military Empire

“The best understanding does not exist between the missions and the Presidio. The fathers consider themselves as the first in this country, and the Presidios merely sent for its protection. A soldier, who constantly carries and often uses arms, unwillingly bears the government of the church. The Presidio, living only on their pay [which at one point was 7 years in arrears], depend for the supply of their wants upon the missions.”

— Adelbert von Chamisso



Utopia?

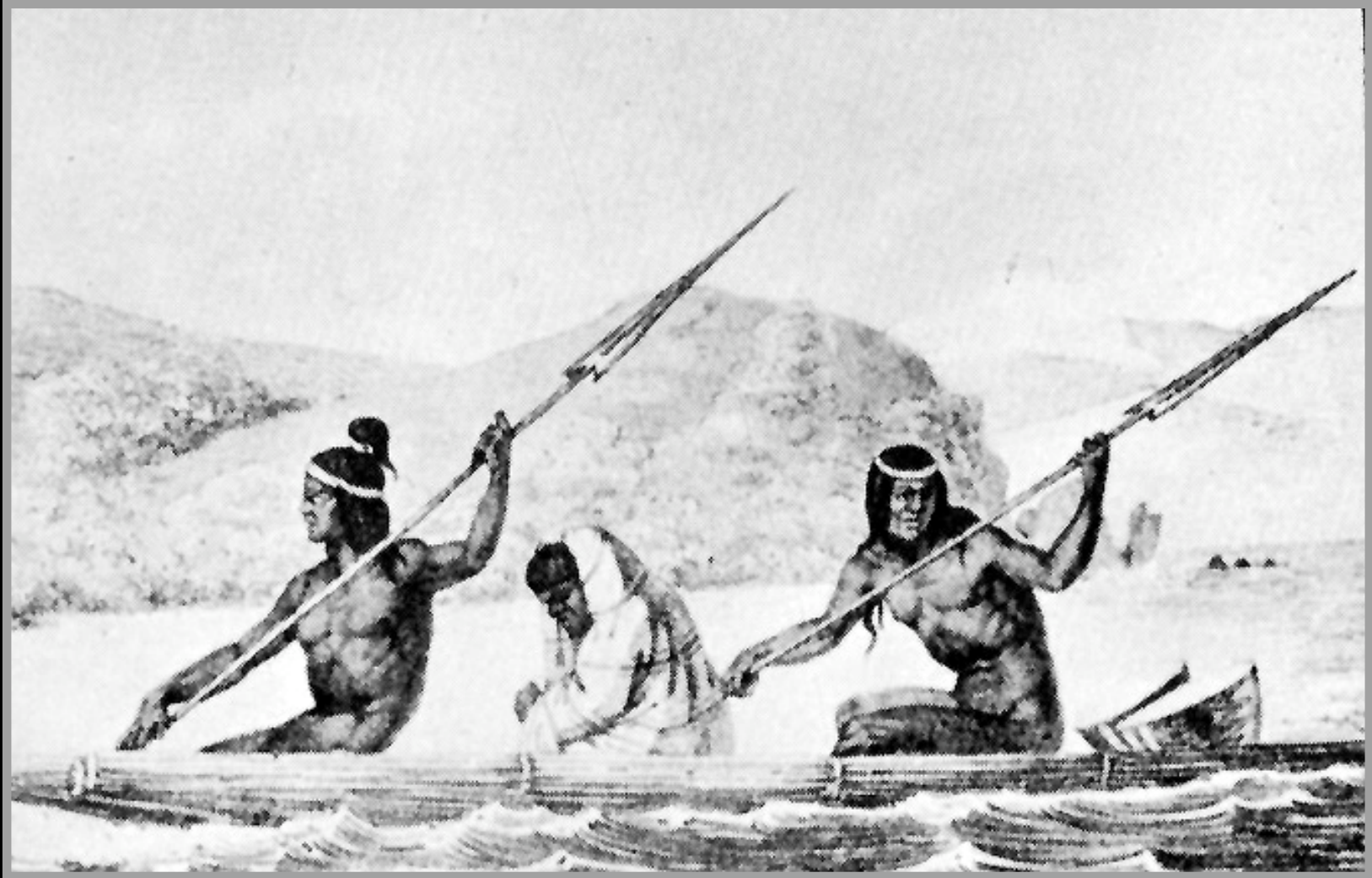
“The Indian Village at Mission Dolores is inhabited by fifteen hundred Indians; they are given protection, clothing, and an abundance of food. In return, they cultivate the land for the community. Corn, wheat, beans, peas, and potatoes — in a word, all kinds of produce — are to be found in the general warehouse. By authority of the superior, a general cooking of food takes place, at a given hour each day, in the large square in the middle of the village; each family comes there for its ration which is apportioned with regard to the number of its members. They are also given a certain quantity of raw provisions. Two or three families occupy the same house. In their free time, the Indians work in the gardens that are given them; they raise therein onions, garlic, cantaloupes, watermelons, pumpkins, and fruit trees. The products belong to them and they can dispose of them as they see fit.”

— Louis Choris



Ohlones on the Bay

by
Louis Choris



Thirst for Possession

“Melancholy feelings attend our offering a few words on the Spanish settlements on this coast. With an avaricious thirst for possession, Spain extends her territory here, merely because she envies others the room. She maintains her presidios at great expense, and tries, by a prohibition of all trade, to force ready money back to its source. But a little liberty would make California the granary and market of the northern coasts of these seas.”

— Adelbert von Chamisso

Stage Three:
The American View

Richard Henry Dana (1836)

NONE OF THE BEST

“In their domestic relations, the Mexicans of California are not better than in their public. The men are thriftless, proud, extravagant, and very much given to gaming; and the women have but little education, and a good deal of beauty, and their morality, of course, is none of the best.... If the women have but little virtue, the jealousy of their husbands is extreme, and their revenge deadly and almost certain....

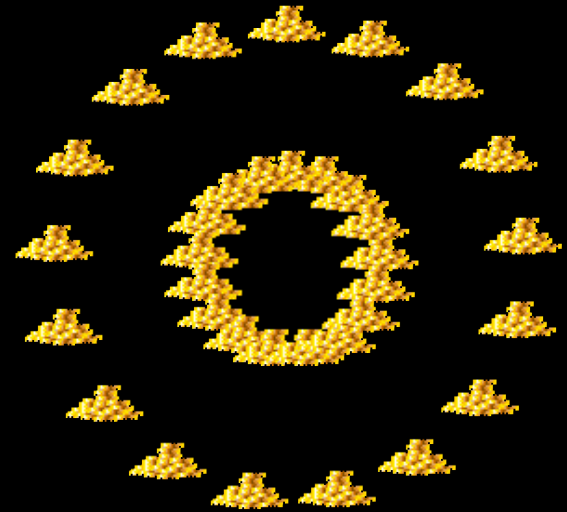
“The very men who would lay down their lives to avenge the dishonor of their own family would risk the same lives to complete the dishonor of another.”



— Richard Henry Dana

WANT OF MORALITY

“To show the entire want of any sense of morality or domestic duty among them [the Indians of San Francisco], I have frequently known an Indian to bring his wife, to whom he was lawfully married in the church, down to the beach, and carry her back again, dividing with her the money which she had got from the sailors.”



— Richard Henry Dana

An Enterprising People

[California is a place with] several good harbors, with fine forests in the north; the waters filled with fish, and the plains covered with thousands of herds of cattle; blessed with a climate, than which there can be no better in the world; free from all manner of diseases, whether epidemic or endemic, and with a soil in which corn yields from seventy to eighty-fold. In the hands of an enterprising people, what a country this might be! we are ready to say. Yet how long would a people remain so, in such a country? The Americans and Englishmen who are fast filling up the principal towns, and getting the trade into their hands, are indeed more industrious and effective than the Mexicans; yet their children are brought up Mexicans in most respects, and if the ‘California fever’ (laziness) spares the first generation, it is likely to attack the second.”

—Richard Henry Dana

The Judgement of History

“The Spaniards in California had not developed a frontier; they merely held it for fear someone else would get it.”

— Franklin Walker



Spanish Life: the
“Typical Californio”

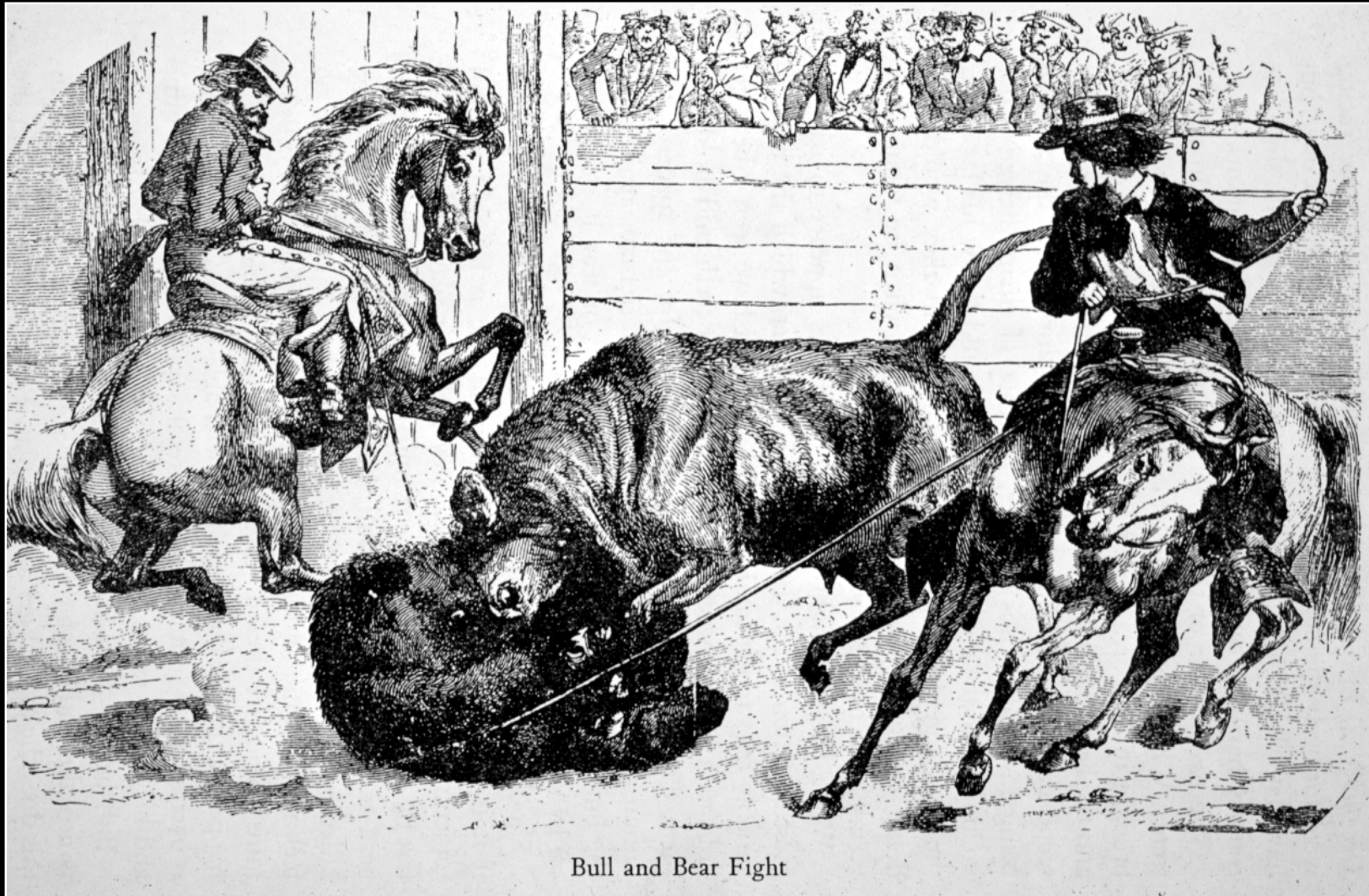
Spanish Life: The Bull and Bear Fight #1



Spanish Life: The Bull and Bear Fight #2

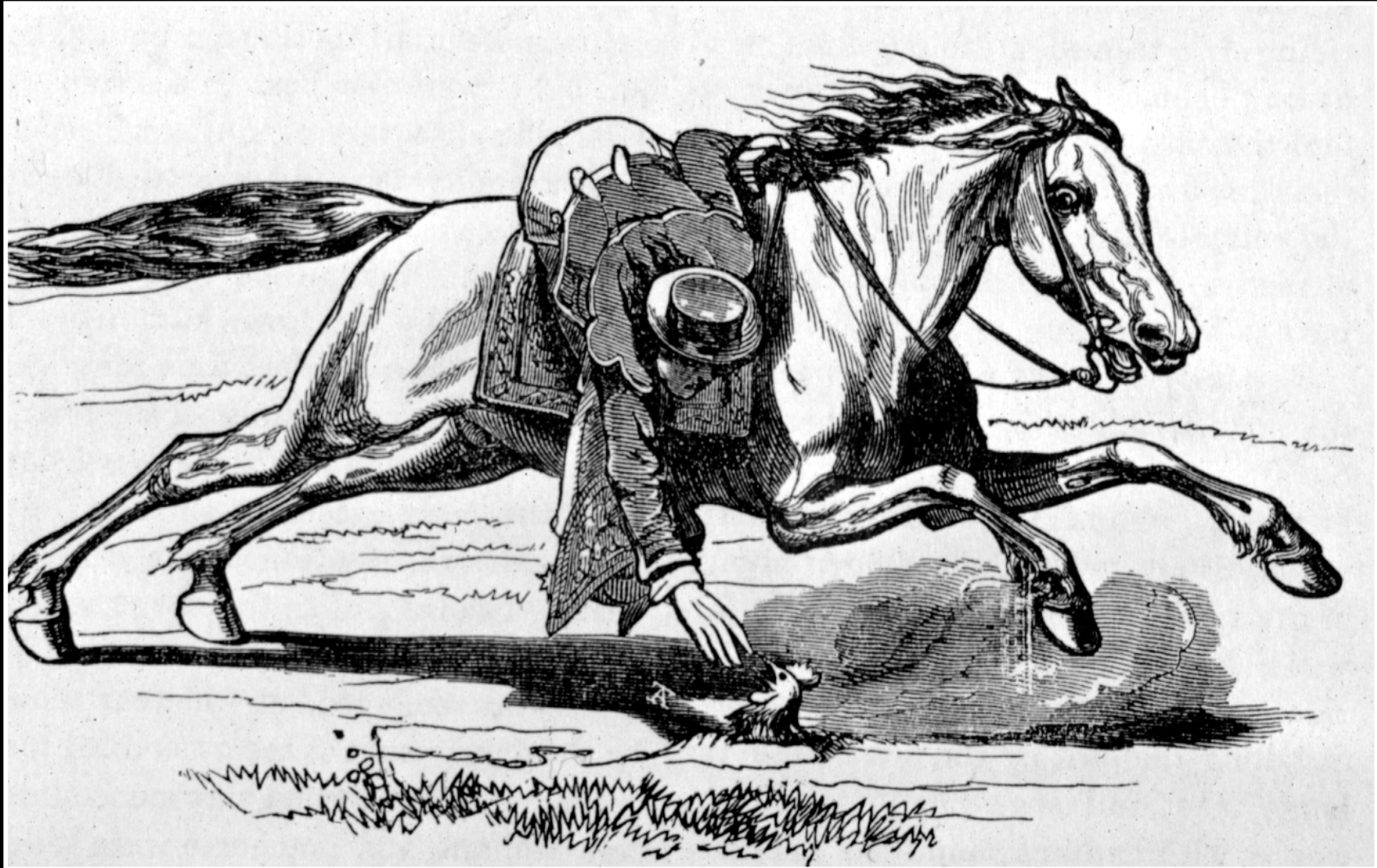


Spanish Life: The Bull and Bear Fight #3



Bull and Bear Fight

Spanish Life: Chicken Pulling



WINES

