

**CHEAP JACK ZITA;
IN THREE
VOLUMES; VOL. III**

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Cheap Jack Zita; In three volumes; Vol. III by S. Baring Gould

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S. BARING GOULD

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VOLUMES; VOL. III**

CHEAP JACK ZITA

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BY

S. BARING GOULD

AUTHOR OF

'MEHALAH' 'URITH' 'IN THE ROAR OF THE SEA'
'MRS. CURGENVEN' ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES

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CHEAP JACK ZITA



CHAPTER XXVII

SIR BATES DUDLEY'S RIDE

AFTER a night of revelry, the winter morning broke on men lying tipsy or asleep about the smouldering embers of their fire, against the walls of houses, or crowded on the benches and on the stone floor of the Galilee. Every tavern was packed, and many private houses as well. The rioters had demanded admission, and had threatened violence if opposed. Doors had accordingly been opened to them, and they had received reluctant admission.

On the whole, little serious mischief had been

done. A few shops had been invaded, a few well-to-do persons blackmailed, some windows broken, all the ale and spirits in the public-houses drunk out, and all the hams in the licensed victuallers' consumed; but with the sole exception of the cutting open of the head of the chief constable, no personal violence had been done to any one.

The demonstration had been absolutely resultless, so far as concerned the purpose for which it had been organised. The only fruit that would come of it would be that the bakers, millers, and provision-dealers would raise their prices, so as to recoup themselves for what they had lost, and that certain of the rioters would suffer penalties out of all proportion to the injury done.

Some consciousness that a mistake had been made stole over the dull brains of the men as they awoke, chilled and headachy, on the morning after the entry into Ely. Those men who

had promoted the movement, but had not been suffered to direct it, were certainly alive to the fact that a great blunder had been made, and that their safety was at stake. And when the rumour spread that the dragoons from Bury were about to arrive, the pot-valiant fen-men rapidly dispersed.

Droves and roads radiating from Ely were thronged with fugitives, flying at their utmost speed towards their homes, and none speeding more rapidly than those men who were guardians of the money collected from the farmers and shopmen and millers for the cause, and who sought not only to secure their persons, but also the money they carried with them, for their own advantage. The sum collected might enable them to escape from the neighbourhood, and it would form a comfortable little capital on which to start business where they were unknown.

When, about noon, the military arrived, the streets of Ely were almost as silent and un-

occupied as on any day in the week save market day.

They were met by the magistrates, preceded by Sir Bates Dudley, Bart., an old canon of Ely; the chief constable showed with his head bandaged, and the high sheriff looked approval from his bedroom window, in nightcap and dressing-gown.

Orders were issued for the pursuit of the rioters to Littleport, their headquarters. As it was necessary that a magistrate should accompany them, Sir Bates Dudley was lifted into a saddle. He was a small, very globular man, with a red face and a wig of sandy hair.

'You won't go very fast with me?' inquired the baronet of the officer in charge. 'Be—be—cause, though I was a horseman oo—oo—once, I haven't ridden these forty years.'

Then, turning to his footman, he said, 'Tut—Tut—Thomas, you'll please to run at my s—s—ide, and hold my leg, lest I tut—tut—tumble