

his back on the sloping deck. Jacky fell with him, but atop, and the Spanish black did not rise again.

"John, lend me your jack-knife, quick; and get under cover."

It was Mr. Jiggers who spoke, and he spoke none too soon, for at that moment a bullet from Grimes' revolver struck the mizen-mast close to my head and glanced off at an angle. I lay down flat on the deck behind the case.

"Now then, John, take your revolver and keep friend Grimes amused while I shorten sail and undo the tiller."

I did as he told me, and Mr. Jiggers, with a coolness and hardihood that with him seemed second nature, ran to the halyards and lowered the main-sail. He then released the tiller. The *Petrel* ceased to heel over, and in two minutes more the *Black Witch* had forged ahead. Grimes had now seized his rifle and was blazing away at us, but evidently his nerves were shaken, for his furious fusillade did no damage.

McNab now crawled to Mons Meg. He trained the gun on the *Black Witch*, and took careful aim. There was a flash and a roar,