

During this long interval they were usually motionless, and offered the most favourable opportunities for attacking them.

Soon after the boats arrived on the scene, a couple of whales were harpooned; but, to the great regret of the fishers, both escaped, owing to the breaking of the "fore-ganger," or that part of the rope immediately connected with the harpoon. In one case, the rope, which had been considerably exposed to bad weather, was faulty, and gave way; but in the other, the line retained its perfect strength, and seemed to have been broken by being coiled round the tail of the fish, and subjected to a degree of tension it was unable to bear.

In spite of all discouragements, however, the fishers continued their pursuit for several hours. At length, another whale was struck. No help being at hand, it was nearly two hours before a second harpoon was fastened; and then, without the application of a single lance, the wounded animal dived to the bottom, and died. However, by dint of great energy and inexhaustible perseverance, its carcass was recovered. Just before this was accomplished, a fourth whale "hove in sight,"—was pursued, surrounded, and captured.