

The music of the starry march,
The chorus of a prayer.

So nature keeps the reverent frame
With which her years began,
And all her signs and voices shame
The prayerless heart of man.

THE FAITHLESS CAPTAIN.

THE ship "St. Thomas," Captain Robert Williams, was bound from New York to Liverpool, in the month of June. Favoured by a fresh westerly wind, she soon cleared the land, and on the first Sunday out, was going along finely with all drawing sail set. The chief mate, Mr. William Briggs, after the crew had breakfasted, and the watch had been set, asked the captain if he had any objections to calling the men aft to prayers.

"No objection whatever, Mr. Briggs, provided you do the preaching and praying yourself; for you know well enough that I have but little faith in such exercises.

Captain Williams was between forty and fifty years of age, a plain, blunt seaman, who was more ambitious of being considered an enterprising shipmaster than a Christian. His mate was not quite thirty, and was indebted to him for his promotion from before the mast to second mate, and then chief mate; they had sailed together for many years, and each had confidence in the other. Appreciating the motives of his mate, he always permitted him to have prayers on board when the state of the weather was favourable, although he took no interest in religious matters himself.

Mr. Briggs ordered the watch to arrange some seats on the quarter-deck, while he went forward himself and invited the watch below to come aft, and listen to the reading of the Scriptures, and such other religious exercises as the occasion might suggest, remarking at