

Poetry.

NOTHING.

"There is nothing."—I. Kings xviii. 43.

'The Prophet's servant, with an eager eye,
Swept mountain, sea, and plain :
Before, the rippling waters spread ;
'The land, behind, was parch'd and dead ;
From rim to rim the sky, o'erhead,
Showed never sign of rain.
" Nothing ! " And yet, despite his fainting cry,
A rich response was nigh.

How oft our faith, striving with very tears,
Finds stay and surety gone !
Doubt cuts th'untwining strands, which Hope
Flings thro' our darkness, like a rope,
And our wrack'd souls, despairing, grope
In blindest anguish on.
" Nothing ! " Then God, amid our skeptic fears,
Speaks,—and the way appears.

When stern affliction's flames our spirits prove,
Or we in trials bend,
Joy flies from life; sweetness from breath ;
And our crush'd hearts so groan beneath
A weigh of agony that Death
Is met as dearest friend.
" Nothing ! " Yet God reveals himself in love,
And points our souls above.

Oft in contrition bow'd we feel, in deed
And mind, weak to fulfill
His hest, whom men should crown the First.
Our best is nothing, yet our worst
Is often proffered him, accurst
With double sins of will.
" Nothing " we have ; and yet our very need
Calls forth the greater need.