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An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!
A worm! a God!—I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost! At home a stranger,
Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,
And wond'ring at her own: how reason reels!
O what a miracle to man is man,
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy, what dread!
Alternately transported, and alarm'd!
What can preserve my life? or what destroy?
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave—
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

Tis past conjecture: all things rise in proof.
While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread:
What, though my soul fantastick measures trod
O'er fairy fields; or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathless woods; or down the craggy steep
Hurl'd headlong, swain with pain the mantled pool;
Or scaled the cliff; or danced on hollow winds,
With antick shapes wild natives of the brain?
Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod;
Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfined,
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
Even silent night proclaims my soul immortal;
Even silent night proclaims eternal day.
For human weal, Heaven husbands all events;
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around.
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.
Wear I the blessed cross, by fortune stamp’d
On passive nature before thought was born?
My birth’s blind bigot! fired with local zeal!
No; reason rebaptized me when adult;
Weigh’d true and false in her impartial scale;
My heart became the convert of my head;
And made that choice, which once was but my fate.
On argument alone my faith is built:
Reason pursued is faith; and, unpursued
Where proof invites, ’tis reason then no more:
And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,
Or reason lies, and heaven design’d it wrong:
Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;
The mother honour’d, as the daughter dear.
Reason the root; fair faith is but the flower:
The fading flower shall die; but reason lives
Immortal as her father in the skies.
* When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.
Wrong not the christian; think not reason your’s;
’Tis reason our great master holds so dear;
’Tis reason’s injured rights his wrath resents;
’Tis reason’s voice obey’d, his glories crown;
To give lost reason life, HE pour’d his own:
Believe, and shew the reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb:
Through reason’s wounds alone thy faith can die,
Fraktur. Susanna Bittenbinder, born 14 March 1822. Hereford Township, Berks County, PA.
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