Looking backward o’er life’s pathway

In memory I see

Rugged rocks and canyons…

Were they placed there just for me?

No. Each one must ascend the mountain

And fathom each deep dark cave…

Must walk in the quiet valley

And ride on the treacherous wave.

There’s a path on hill and canyon

Where others have come and gone

Seeking earthly and heavenly treasures

Seeking new strength each morn.

Did I help a sister to follow the path?

Did I show her where I had failed?

Did I show her the vines on the ledges?

The cave where the night winds wailed?

I see midst the crags where the sturdy oak

Shelters the songbird and quail

Venomous reptiles and creeping things

That litter the hazardous trail.

How I longed to turn back and avoid them…

To follow the moss-grown road,

T enjoy the beauties of nature

And friends who bore no load.

But the carefree friend did not need me

‘Twas the friend who struggled on

Who needed the help that I could give

And would help me when others passed on.

It is to human life. The thing we crave

Full of sin and sorrow and joy

Full of earthly and heavenly treasures

As well as base alloy.

But above the chaos is life Divine

Wherein no venom lies.

Where Love and Kindness reign supreme

As the beauty in clear blue skies.

The years have passed and I sit alone

Enjoying the close of Life’s day;

I wonder, “Is life worth the price

That mortals choose to pay?

Ah, yes! When the struggle is ended

And we see what we have done

The hardships are all forgotten

When we hear the glad, “Well Done!”

Anna Ness