

"A HOUSE OF DEFENCE"

Long enough have I lived and sought to know the value of things,
To know the gold from the tinsel, to judge the clowns from the kings;
Love have I won and given, friendship of men has been mine,
But to-day I offer thanksgiving for a gift more rare and fine:

For the friendship of true women that has been since the world
had breath,

Since a woman stood at a woman's side to succour through birth
and death;

God made us a bond of mirth and tears to last forever and aye,
For women's friendship, staunch and true, let me give thanks
to-day.

Much have I met to rejoice in, much have I sorrowed for;
But nought is better to hear than the foot of a friend at the door,
And naught is better to feel in life than the clasp of a woman-hand,
Which says, "What are words between us? We know and we understand."

For the friendship of dear women, that has lasted since time
began,—

That is just as steadfast and just as deep as the friendship of
man for man;

For the tie of a kinship wonderful that holds us as blood-
bonds may,

For the friendship of women—tender, true—I would give thanks
to-day.

Many the joys I have welcomed, many the joys that have passed,
But this is a good unfailing, this is the peace that will last;
From the love that lies, and the love that dies, and the love that would
slay and sting,

Back to the arms of our sisters we turn for our comforting:

For the friendship true of women, that has been and shall
ever be,

Since a woman knelt by a woman's side at the Cross of Calvary;
For the tears we weep, and the trusts we keep, and the self-
same prayers we pray,—

For women's friendship, strong and deep, let life thanksgiving
pay.

—(The above is copied from a Xmas Card and was unsigned.)

