

Alice Fullenwider

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THE ILLINOIS

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TO THE GIRLS OF ILLINOIS

FROM THE MEN

How much fair women fill the dreams of men!
Making o'erflow the measure of their hopes,
And giving each of them the strength of ten
Till lion-valiant in his love he copes
With opposition hugely terrible,
Then, winning, seeks his guerdon in the eyes
Of her who gave, and falling, even full
Of wounds, is happy in her sympathies.
At once the meed and the encouragement,
At once the wish and the wished-for reward,
The first of struggle and the end of joy,
Asked of the Giver, from the Giver sent,
For all of these 'tis you that we regard,
O sweetly peerless girls of Illinois!