# JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES. A POEM

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

#### ISBN 9780649757343

Judith and Holofernes. A poem by Thomas Bailey Aldrich

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

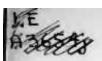
This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

# THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH

# JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES. A POEM





# JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES

### A POEM

BY

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
Che Riverside press, Cambridge
1896

424300

#### NOTE

THE invocation on page 15, a few brief passages scattered through Books I and II, and the lyrical interlude in Book III—amounting in all to about one hundred and twenty lines—are from an earlier poem. The other eight or nine hundred lines constituting the context are now printed for the first time,

There are Greek and Syriac versions of the story of Judith and Holofernes which differ essentially from that given in the Apocrypha. It is fable and not history, and in the following narrative the author has taken such liberties with the myth as suited his dramatic purpose. He

has widely departed from precedent in his delineation of Judith, who moves through the Apocrypha a beautiful and cold-blooded abstraction, with scarcely any feminine attribute excepting her religious fervor. The distance between her and Charlotte Corday, humanly speaking, is immeasurable, though their heroic deeds are nearly identical in motive. Judith's character throughout the ancient legend lacks that note of tenderness with which the writer has here attempted to accent her heroism.

### CONTENTS

														PAGE
		BO	5000		200									
JUDITH IN THE TOWER	ં	٩	•		•	:	i.	*	*	*	***	٠	•	9
	1	BO	OK		I									
THE CAMP OF ASSHUR	*	•	٠	<b>.</b> *	÷	6	Œ.	*	•	ં	*	•	.*	31
	E	300	ЭK	I	11									
THE FLIGHT	1	9		٠	•		30	•			*	•		53

BOOK I

## JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES

#### BOOK I

#### JUDITH IN THE TOWER

Unheralded, like some tornado loosed
Out of the brooding hills, it came to pass
That Holofernes, the Assyrian,
With horse and foot a mighty multitude,
Crost the Euphrates, ravaging the land
To Esdraëlon, and then hawk-like swoopt
On Bethulfa: there his trenches drew,
There his grim engines of destruction set
And stormed the place; and gave them little rest
Within, till sad their plight was; for at last
The wells ran low, the stores of barley failed,

And famine crept on them. A wheaten loaf
Was put in this scale and the gold in that,
So scarce was bread. Now were the city streets
Grown loud with lamentation, women's moans
And cries of children; and one night there came
The plague, with breath as hot as the simoom
That blows the desert sand to flakes of fire.

Yet Holofernes could not batter down

The gates of bronze, nor decent entrance make

With beam or catapult in those tough walls,

Nor with his lighted arrows fire the roofs.

Gnawing his lip, among the tents he strode—

Woe to the slave that stumbled in his path!—

And cursed the doting gods, who gave no aid,

But slumbered somewhere in their house of cloud.

Still wan-cheeked Famine and red-spotted Pest