

Florence Nightingale.

It is seldom one enjoys one's own epitaph. The very interesting story of the heroine of the Crimean war, written by Miss Tooley, is not an epitaph, nor is it in any sense mere fulsome eulogy, but it is generally deemed best to make all biography *post mortem* acknowledgments. This life of this valiant woman is written in such a spirit as to make it pleasant reading for the modest and gracious personality herself; not the easiest thing in the world to do, this telling people the truth about themselves without hurting their pride or overshadowing their dignified reserve.

It is easy, however, to understand that Florence Nightingale should be given a place of great honor among the heroines of history; and it is easy too, to see how suited are the names of Florence to this English girl, born in the flowery city of Tuscany, and why should not the name of the sweetest singer be hers? The real family name was Shore; her father was William Shore, of Derbyshire, he assumed the name of Nightingale by the sign manual of the Prince Regent, when he succeeded, in 1815, to his estates, that were his by right of his maternal relatives. This was five years before the birth of the daughter who was to make the name famous. Florence Nightingale's mother was Frances Smith of Parndon, in Essex.

The author of her fascinating biography is not a Catholic, but apart from a wee phrase now and then, no Catholic can hesitate to pronounce her book delightful. She says, somewhere in the course of the story, that these brave and generous women, Florence and her band of thirty-eight volunteer nurses, with the French, English, and Irish Sisters of Charity who made up the Corps, "were more truly the successors of the Apostles than all the Cardinals," we are not going to quarrel over that, and it is good to see how all these noble and fearless women served at Scutari and Sebastapol, etc, during the horrible siege, and after suffering all the incommodities of war, the rigors of the climate and the lack of means to save all whom they might have saved had the commissariat been properly managed. The eyes of the reader are apt to grow misty and a full feeling may be in his throat as he reads some of the chapters that tell of the dismal helplessness of these devoted servants of their suffering fellow-creatures; not the least