

CORRESPONDENCE OF THE  
SUPERIORS OF THE JESUIT  
MISSION IN IRELAND WITH JOHN  
O'BRIEN, S.J., RECTOR OF SALAMANCA

Edited by  
REV. PATRICK J. CORISH

*Legajo* XIII of the Salamanca Archives, now in Maynooth College, is a collection of miscellaneous documents, nearly all letters, which seem to have been brought together in the one collection simply because they were written in English—though the *legajo* does in fact contain a few documents in Latin or Spanish. Most of them belong to the nineteenth century, a few to the seventeenth, and rather more than a hundred to the eighteenth. Of these, more than half are letters written to John O'Brien, S.J., who was rector of Salamanca from 1743 to 1760.

From these I have selected the letters written him by two successive superiors of the Jesuit mission in Ireland, Thomas Hennessy, S.J., and Michael Fitzgerald, S.J. Fr Hennessy arrived in Ireland from France in 1712.<sup>1</sup> In 1729 he was appointed superior of the Irish Jesuit mission.<sup>2</sup> He died on 14 April 1752.<sup>3</sup> His successor, Michael Fitzgerald, was born in Munster on 2 July 1694. He entered the Jesuit order at Toulouse on 12 September 1716. In 1727 he returned to Ireland, and after ten years on the Irish mission was transferred to the seminary at Poitiers. In 1745 he went to Rome as rector of the Irish College, and in 1750 returned to Ireland as superior there.<sup>4</sup> The *Hibernian Journal* of 24 January 1781 records his death: 'Died in Waterford, the Rev. Michael Fitzgerald, a clergyman of the Church of Rome'.<sup>5</sup>

These seventeen letters deal primarily with the nomination of students to Salamanca, the right to which was in the hands of the Jesuit superior in Ireland. Incidentally, they deal with a number of matters affecting more widely the fortunes of the Catholic Church, and the scarcity of such material in the middle of the eighteenth century must be the main excuse for their publication.

Attention might be directed to certain conventional formulas designed to protect the bearer should he be stopped and searched at the ports. The student nominated to Salamanca is described as an apprentice to business or commerce; the bishop is 'the landlord', the seminary 'the factory', a

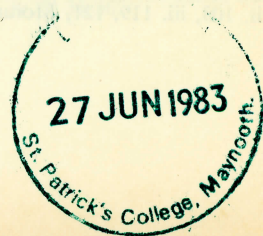
<sup>1</sup> Oliver, *Collections towards illustrating the Biography of the Scotch, English and Irish Members of the Society of Jesus*, London 1845, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> W. M'Donald, 'Irish Ecclesiastical Colleges since the Reformation: Santiago', in *I.E.R.*, x, 255 (March 1874).

<sup>3</sup> See letter no. 12 below.

<sup>4</sup> Oliver, *Collections*, p. 245.

<sup>5</sup> Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the Eighteenth-century Press*, *Archiv. Hib.*, xviii, app., p. 212.



religious house 'the farm'. These necessary conventions were very commonly used in the first half of the eighteenth century. Their frequent use in the first letters printed here reflects the frightened years after 1745, though letter 8, dated 13 March 1749, which still contains a few of them, is signed 'Thomas L. Hennessy, S.J.'. The worst years were over.

I have tried to normalize punctuation and capitalization. Fr. Hennessy's punctuation is very personal, and often obscures the sense. I have expanded such obvious shorthand as 'ye' for 'the' or 'yt' for 'that', but have retained idiosyncrasies of spelling and contraction, e.g., 'wou'd' or 'wo'd' for 'would'. I have expanded silently except in the case of proper names.

Finally, I have tried to give a brief identification of the persons named, though in a few cases I was not able to do so.

## 1

C[lonme] July the 19th 1746

Honour'd and dear Mr John O'Brien,

I have been most agreeably favour'd with your letter dated the 29th of May last, which is the only that I remember to have ever received from you. Your July letter did not reach me, and the bearer whom I believe to be Mr Edmond Hennessy<sup>6</sup> made his way to Holland, in whose neighbourhood he continues now.

I congratulat you most heartily for your good success, and 'twou'd be an unpardonable wrong in me, if I refus'd to co-operate with your laudable intention, but having received the pleasure of your letter only six dayes agoe, I cannot promise you it will be in my power to answer your expectation as soon as you covet, but I assure you that I will not spare any endeavours to promote your good designs. Therefore that I may not be disappointed, nor such as I shall recommend to you be frustrated of our ends, be pleas'd to admit none without my letter of recommendation of the person, which letters will not be, on account of the troubles, in due form, nor have the seal as usually. I will keep up to your directions as faithfully as I can, and endeavour to accommodate you if possible, tho' I must confess it to be a very hard task to avoid imperfect subjects because their parents, their friends, and the prelates that recommend them, cannot be brought to see any fault in them, either because they do not look on their deficiencies to be any way forbidding, or that they have no feeling of their inconveniencies, and in the miserable times we live in it is hard to make a good choice. And as for Mr Devereux<sup>7</sup> no importunity was neglected to have him promoted as he is. His prelat appear'd as strenuously for him as he cou'd, to pass by persons

<sup>6</sup> Edmund Hennessy was admitted to Salamanca on 16 May 1742. On 25 June 1745, his studies completed, he left for Ireland. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 30, 31.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Devereux was admitted to Salamanca on 1 August 1745. On 25 June 1748, his studies completed, he left for Ireland. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 31-33, and also *ibid.*, ii. 103, iii. 119, 121, Moran, *Spicil. Ossor.*, iii. 389.

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do so.

C[lonme] July the 19th 1746

with your letter dated the 29th  
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v. *Hib.*, iv. 7, 30, 31.  
on 1 August 1745. On 25 June 1748,  
iv. *Hib.*, iv. 7, 31-33, and also *ibid.*,  
9.

of great consideration that enterfer'd for him. The Lord reward you for  
your good act done with your countryman in Villag[arcia].<sup>8</sup> All friends  
here are in health and salute you very respectfully. If this comes to your  
hands, as I take the most conducing way that it shou'd, pray accuse its  
receipt from

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy.

2

Honour'd and dear Mr John O'Brien,

Pursuant to your letter dated the 29th of last May, I recommend to  
you the bearer, R. Mr Robert Stapleton,<sup>9</sup> as a clerk to serve in your  
house, untill he is well instructed in the art and knowledge of promoting  
our commerce, which suffers now greatly on account of the bad times.  
This gentleman is usher'd to me by his landlord, Christopher B[utle]r,<sup>10</sup>  
as a capable subject and trust in God you will find him so. I have already  
acquainted you that your good mother is still living and well considering  
her age. Mr William Carroll and family are also very well in health and  
triving a pace in wealth. I will endeavour to answer your expectation by  
supplying you with the deficiency of your number. I'll add no more but  
that I am with great esteem and regard

Your most affectionate and humble servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy.

C[lonme] August the 20th 1746.

3

Honour'd dear Mr John O'Brien,

I recommended to you the twentyeth of August last Messieurs Robert  
Stapleton and William Hackett.<sup>11</sup> Now I repeat the same good office in  
favour of Messieurs Patrick Roche and Peter Stringer<sup>12</sup> as recommended  
by their landlord Michael O'Gara Tuam,<sup>13</sup> of whom he gives a very good  
character, and answers for their good behaviour, which is a very strong  
motive for me to give them this testimony to you. I will help you with the

<sup>8</sup> The reference seems to be to John Michael White, who had entered Salamanca on 31 July 1745, and on 23 March 1746 left for the Jesuit novitiate at Villagarcia—*Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 31.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Stapleton was admitted to Salamanca on 10 August 1747 as a student in arts. Before this, Irish students had followed the arts course at Santiago and then come to Salamanca for theology. Six years later, on 25 June 1753, his studies completed, Robert Stapleton left for Ireland. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 33-36.

<sup>10</sup> Archbishop of Cashel 1711-57.

<sup>11</sup> William Hackett did not in fact become a student at Salamanca. See below, no. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Patrick Roche and Peter Stringer entered Salamanca on 9 April 1747. On 26 June 1752 they left for Bilbao *en route* for Ireland. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 31-36.

<sup>13</sup> Archbishop of Tuam 1740-48.

two more that are wanting to your number as soon as I can. In the mean wishing you all happiness I conclude with the greatest regard,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy, S.J.

From my usual place of abode  
St Luke's day viz. the 18th October 1746.

## 4

Honour'd dear Mr John O'Brien,

Pursuant to your desire I recommend to your friendly care the bearer Mr Mortagh Brennock<sup>14</sup> from near Kilworth and the diocess of Cloyne. He has, as I am inform'd by persons of credit, wherewithal to challenge your protection, and particular attention, and do hope he will answer your expectation by his application, diligence, and his assiduity in your office, and thereby render himself capable of promoting our very much sinking trade since the breaking out of this troublesome war which has made everything worse than before. I gave to Messieurs Patrick Roche and Peter Stringer from Connaught their credentialls for your house the 18th instant at Mr Michael O'Gara's recommendation. The reason of sending you three out of this province, and none as yet out of Leynster is that the Lagenians have almost already forestall'd all the places in Lisbone, and them that are under Mr Moran's government. It is then just that this province, alwayes depriv'd of its right by the foremention'd gentlemen, shou'd be in some sort endemnify'd. Therefore I postpone them now, and it's for the like reason I pass by the Ultonians, because their head landlord Mr MacMahon<sup>15</sup> has taken the liberty to recommend to Lisbone house such as he thought convenient to my wrong. Wishing you all happiness I conclude by an earnest request of a share in your best hours,

Honour'd dear Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Thomas L. Hennessy.

From the place of my residence  
the 24th of October 1746.

P.S. I pray write to me as soon as you can, I expect to write to you soon again by a sure hand.

<sup>14</sup> Mortagh Brennock was admitted to Salamanca on 9 April 1747 and left on 26 June 1752 *en route* for France. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 31-36.

<sup>15</sup> Bernard MacMahon, archbishop of Armagh 1737-47.

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p. 291.

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with the greatest regard,  
mble and most obedient servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy, S.J.

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5

February the 16 1748

Honour'd and dear Sir,

I received by Mr James Hennessy<sup>16</sup> about Christmas eve your acceptable favour dated the 25th of October last. I am glad Mr Stapleton pleases you. God enable him to answer his wellwishers and the great God's expectation on all occasions! Mr Hacket shall not trouble you. I have recommended to you a hopefull subject one Justin Terry<sup>17</sup> who has joyn'd you long agoe. *Per multas tribulationes oportet intrare in regnum caelorum*, and no way leads to it but *via crucis*. Wherefore be not surpris'd to see yourself assaulted by many ailments. If God did not love you, he wou'd pass you by in this valley of tears and land of bannishment, but *quia acceptus es Deo, necesse est ut tentatio probet te et tollas crucem tuam et sequaris patiando Dominum Deum tuum*. However I am well pleas'd that all your infirmities leave you the liberty of stirring. Ther's I believe as yet one of your number six wanting. You may have him next August if you please and whatever else you care command or order shall be duly regarded. In the mean I am with all the best wishes imaginable,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy.

6

Honour'd and dear Mr O'Brien,

After my recommending by proper credentialls Mr Paul Power<sup>18</sup> from Waterford to one of the four vacancyes in Lisbon house, the good Portugees wou'd not admit him because he is not yet in orders nor near being of age to be promoted to them. Wherefore I am under a necessity to beg your relieve for him and if possible you may be pleas'd to admit him to your family to prevent his being disappointed. Mr John

<sup>16</sup> James Hennessy, born 16 January 1720, entered Salamanca 16 May 1736, and joined the Jesuit order at Madrid in 1737. He returned to Ireland in 1747 and worked for a few years in Clonmel, after which he returned to Spain. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 29; Oliver, *Collections*, p. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Justin Terry entered Salamanca as a student of arts on 6 January 1748. He was ordained priest in September 1751 and left on 15 February 1754, without completing his final year's studies. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 31-37.

<sup>18</sup> Paul Power entered Salamanca on 10 August 1748, and joined the Jesuit order in Madrid on 8 September 1750 (*Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 35). On 15 November 1783 he was appointed parish priest in Waterford in succession to John St Leger, S.J. (Oliver, *Collections*, p. 262). Oliver gives the date of his death as 22 February 1795, but the correct year is 1794, in which year it is reported in the March issue of the *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*—see Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, *Archiv. Hib.*, xx, app., p. 291.

St Leger<sup>19</sup> who recommended him to me will be very much oblig'd if you can do for him, and so will I. I wrote to you by this Mr Power. I hope you've got my letter. In the mean I remain with a most profound respect,

Honour'd and dear Sir,

Your most humble and obedient servant,  
Thomas Hennessy.

Clonmell July the 13th 1748.

7

Clonmell August the 27th 1748

Honour'd and dear Mr O'Brien,

I have receiv'd last week your acceptable favour dated the 25th of June last and am very highly oblig'd to you for your zealous attention about our interest. What you've heard of unpriested subjects's exclusion from St Patrick's house in Lisbon is fact, and not to be easily mended. You know that the *proprium quarto modo* of the Portugees is to be headstrong. They must be reclaim'd from their despotism gradually. Their proceeding obstructs very much the equality of provinces. The Lord reward you for your tender compassion towards your countrey men as he has stor'd you with charity for us all. Tho' I have the vanity to imagine that no fault of myne influences the conduct of the Portugees, yet I cannot but agree that ther's a contempt in reality to my poor authority when without its concurrence they model the constitution of the house as they please, and in truth the most part of the governours of the house do think themselves free from keeping any regard to our orders but as much and as little as they please. Rome has been boder'd very often about that article and its authority is but very little more respected than mine, and there was one of 'em who paid no deference to 'em at all, and was cashier'd for it, and plac'd in a sort of bannishment, wherin he dyed a year or two after.

I most seriously entreat you to take the proper care of your health. Your family and uncles fare very well the Lord be prais'd. I am endeavouring now to get a colony of ours here to promote our trade. Their shopes are to be in Cashell, Carrick, Kilkenny and Lismor if I can get tradesmen that will speak the Irish, for others will not do, they cannot but be idle here. I have procur'd something to support four or five, who can be of great help to one another. Ther's now an union of this farm I hold treating in Rome in favour of this residence, which if compass'd will promote greatly our trade. The chief man backs it, and tho' it is in agitation I can learn of no opposition given to it as yet, which gives me hopes that it will meet with success. If so 'twill be a precedent for more of the kind. God's will be done. Pray try whether Mr Barron<sup>20</sup> in Seville understands the

<sup>19</sup> John St Leger, born at Waterford on 23 August 1713, entered the Jesuit order at Toulouse 25 April 1729, returned to Ireland 1742. He built a chapel and Jesuit house of residence at Waterford, where he died in 1783. Cf. Oliver, *Collections*, p. 264, Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, *Archiv. Hib.*, xviii, app., p. 222.

<sup>20</sup> Nicholas Barron, born in Fethard, co. Tipperary on 16 January 1720. He became a student in Seville, where he entered the Jesuit order on 5 January 1741. In 1750 he returned to Ireland and worked in Clonmel. He died in Cork in April 1784. Cf. Oliver, *Collections*, p. 233, *Archiv. Hib.*, xxiv, 122, Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, in *Archiv. Hib.*, xviii, app. p. 224.

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to me will be very much oblig'd if  
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humble and obedient servant,  
Thomas Hennessy.

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Clonmell August the 27th 1748

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e Jesuit order on 5 January 1741. In 1750 he  
nel. He died in Cork in April 1784. Cf. Oliver,  
22, Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, in *Archiv.*

Irish. If so recommend to him to write to Mr Retz<sup>21</sup> for his return and I  
will back him, as also Mr Lisward of Castille<sup>22</sup> and Nerton of Toledo.  
I want none but such as speak that language, for want of maintenance  
for 'em. If you know any more in that kingdom that can be of service  
to my project, let them write to me and I will joyn my intercession with  
Retz for 'em provided always that they will labour hard, and bear all  
manner of hardship, and desire no sweet nor commodity but the bare  
necessary in this world. My companion Mr James salutes you respectfully  
and I joyn him as

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Tho[mas] L. Hennessy.

8

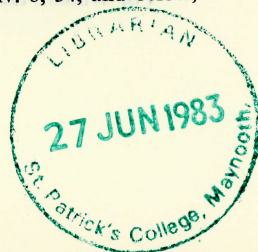
Honour'd Mr John O'Brien,

This informs you of nothing new. Our factory is growing more  
numerous, but mends not much, *quia licet messis sit multa et magna  
operarii tamen pauci sunt*. We have got lately from the province of Arragon  
a valetudinarian call'd Laurence Rourke a good individual to himself but  
of no other service to our business, yet I hope he will recover himself in  
which case he will be serviceable. How are you and your family par-  
ticularly Messieurs Terry and Sheahy?<sup>23</sup> If you'l want any supply this  
summer, give me your orders about it that you may be provided in time.  
Your unkle Carrol and the rest of his family are well. We are now three  
in Clonmell, and if the success answers my endeavours and expectation  
there will be no room left us to complain. We have a bishop as favorable  
to us as we cou'd desire, that never puts us on the level with the other  
regulars. Our brothers in Waterford, particularly Mr St Leger who  
deserves it best, are well estim'd. The Dublinians make no figure in their  
natif city. Let me hear from you as soon as you can. I have importun'd  
so often Mr Retz about giving me a successor that he begins now to look  
out for one, by which I hope to get some respite before I part this world  
in order to make up the deficiency of my repentance. He moreover  
grants me the favour as I have desir'd him to end my life where I began  
that of the spirit in our apprenticeship in Paris, where I hope to do some  
service for our trade here. At least I was formerly by a relation of my  
one to give for ever an itinerant labourer in this district his natif place,  
and in that of Cashell. A little interest in this world is of some use even  
for spirituals, and one is very bare when he is destituted of all such for

<sup>21</sup> Francis Retz, general of the Jesuits 1730-50.

<sup>22</sup> Edward Lisward, born at Clonmell 1 February 1715, entered Salamanca on 6 May 1739, where he joined the Jesuit order on 5 May 1741. He returned to Ireland in 1750 and worked in Dungarvan. On 15 September 1761 he succeeded John O'Brien as rector of Salamanca. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 7, 42-43, Oliver, *Collections*, p. 256.

<sup>23</sup> Nicholas Sheehy entered Salamanca on 17 March 1749, and left before the completion of his theological course in May 1751. See *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 34, and below, nos. 13, 14.



to promote any thing for the publick good, though he may [be] happy enough otherwise and perhaps more happy in many circumstances. I am to expect this summer one Mr John King<sup>24</sup> from the province of Andalousia, what he is or what he will be as yet I know not but take my chance. I shall have when he joyns us 20, and you know when I came we had not ten, and we have apprentices abroad to supply our want. I know this account will please you, and answer your zeal, and therefore I trouble you with it. Excuse it and all libertyes I have taken. My removal does not appear to be near as I cou'd wish, when 'twill, you shall hear of it, in the mean I conclude with great respect and esteem,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Thomas L. Hennessy, S.J.

Clonmell March the 13th 1749.

9

Clonmell September the 15th 1749

Honour'd dear Sir,

Having heard nothing from you this long time, and waiting impatiently for your determination about the addition you were to make to your family, I am under a necessity to presume so much of your goodness as to send to you a hopefull young man, an orphan fatherless and motherless, a near relation of Mr James Goggin of the ancient and famous family of the St Johns. I will dispatch him immediately and spare you hereafter untill I have your own positive orders, which I beg as soon as you can. All friends are well here. Pray how does Lisward incline? is he fit for our drudgery? If so let him address Mr Retz, and he shall have my concurrence. Are Messieurs King and Baron parted that kingdom as yet? What delays them? How is your *pusillus grex*? No more but that I am with fresh esteem and most profound respect

Your most humble and obedient servant,  
Thomas L. Hennessy, S.J.

To Mr John O'Brien in Salamanca.

10

Clo[nmel] May the 10th 1750

Honour'd Mr O'Bryen,

I heartily thank you for your favour dated the 12th of November last received th'other day only. I sent to you on sight a patent for Mr Bermingham<sup>25</sup> as you've desir'd, and were persuaded to do in his favour at

<sup>24</sup> John King, born in Meath 24 June 1715, entered the Irish College, Seville in 1737, where he joined the Jesuit order on 18 January 1741. In 1750 he returned to Ireland and worked in Galway. On 26 July 1766 he became rector of the Irish College, Salamanca (the Jesuits were expelled from Spain the following April). The 'Mr John King, a Romish clergyman', noted in *Pue's Occurrences* of 16 April 1768 as having died 'a few days ago at Galway', is almost certainly he. Cf. Oliver, *Collections*, p. 254; *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 45, xxiv. 136; Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, *Archiv. Hib.*, xvii, app., p. 130.

<sup>25</sup> For William Bermingham *alias* Nugent see *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 32, 35, 52.

Mr Ward's<sup>26</sup> import after his own way I colour his importu directly as he us'd enough what you h made that advance the houses, which the local superiors to the provinces a justice, nor have n trust and country thought you wou'd by the means of y everywhere else, a and if you admitt for want of exam Do not imagine liberty, or advan maintain all that, of provinces. It is they please, and and do not expect will have done w

The subject I relation of Mr Ja absolutely again and provide for

I wrote very o other employe slowly coming t Mr Lisward an Mr Retz told m there, that I ha say to it I know

I always had interest what se ago as to let m

<sup>26</sup> Probably John *Collections*, p. 265.

<sup>27</sup> James de Ar *Ecclesiastical Coll*

<sup>28</sup> Edward Kea 1737; returned to *Journal* for 2 May clergyman of the 105, iv. 7, 28-9; *Hib.*, xviii, app.



bliss good, though he may [be] happy  
more happy in many circumstances. I am  
for John King<sup>24</sup> from the province of  
he will be as yet I know not but take my  
s us 20, and you know when I came we  
ices abroad to supply our want. I know  
answer your zeal, and therefore I trouble  
types I have taken. My removal does not  
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9

Clonmell September the 15th 1749

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Mr Ward's<sup>26</sup> importunity, who himself is for filling every vacancy, and  
after his own way he certainly will not forget any circumstance that will  
colour his importunities, yet he is not now as troublesome to me self  
directly as he us'd to be, but works all he can underhand. I perceive well  
enough what you have done for Mr Bermingham and I believe you have  
made that advance for him because you did not know the condition of  
the houses, which are very partially supply'd with subjects on account of  
the local superiors filling the places at their discretion with little regard  
to the provinces and to justice. I had not the least inclination to wrong  
justice, nor have not still, but as I had no other possibility of doing my  
trust and countrymen justice, but by presuming on your goodnesses, I  
thought you wou'd not disapprove my conduct by supporting the equality  
by the means of your house. If there be not as many of other provinces  
everywhere else, and more of Dublin there than of ours except Aurajo's,<sup>27</sup>  
and if you admitted a sixth now of this side, 'twou'd fall out as you say,  
for want of examining the inequality in other houses and of keeping it.  
Do not imagine that I have the least notion of hurting the freedom,  
liberty, or advantages of your house, by no means, but I'de rather  
maintain all that, and it is what I extremely covet as well as the equality  
of provinces. It is envain for me to expect it, the Lagenians will do what  
they please, and I shall pass for a partialist. They alwayes have done so,  
and do not expect they'l soon mend their errors. My comfort is that I soon  
will have done with the task.

The subject I have to send is a clever young man one St John, a close  
relation of Mr James Davin, a new convert; since you declare yourself so  
absolutely against his reception I must wait for the later end of the year  
and provide for him with Mr Aurajo.

I wrote very often for Messrs Keating<sup>28</sup> whom I understand fonder of  
other employments than of any he can fill here, Barron and King are so  
slowly coming that I do not know when I shall see them, I wrote also for  
Mr Lisward and it is no fault of mine if matters do not fall out right.  
Mr Retz told me I may have them by writing for 'em to the head man  
there, that I have done, and nothing as yet of their coming and what to  
say to it I know not.

I alwayes had the greatest relyance on your fondness of doing our poor  
interest what service you cou'd. I remember you were so kind some time  
ago as to let me know you cou'd prevail by your interest and credit with

<sup>26</sup> Probably John Ward, S.J., superior in Dublin at this time, for whom see Oliver, *Collections*, p. 269.

<sup>27</sup> James de Aranjo, S.J., superior of the college in Santiago. See M'Donald, 'Irish Ecclesiastical Colleges since the Reformation: Santiago', in *I.E.R.*, x. 256 (March 1874).

<sup>28</sup> Edward Keating entered Salamanca on 25 May 1734; joined the Jesuit order in 1737; returned to Ireland in 1750 and worked in his native Wexford. The *Hibernian Journal* for 2 May 1777 reports the death, at Wexford, of 'the Rev. Edward Keating, a clergyman of the Church of Rome and parish priest of Wexford'. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, ii. 105, iv. 7, 28-9; Oliver, *Collections*, p. 253; Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, in *Archiv. Hib.*, xviii, app., p. 185.

the chief man to admit to your trade one for us in them quarters. He is by reputation a good one and I believe really so, however he has given very good proves of his vocation, he is a county Cork subject call'd Cornelius Quin, very promising as they write to me, and I believe it because I have seen him. He is now in Portugal in the very town of Lisbon, longing for his admission; he was sorely disappointed by the Portugees after giving him a solemn promise of receiving him when he came to that head city, they wou'd not receive him on account, as is pretended, of some misunderstanding with Mr Doran,<sup>29</sup> who enjoys an employment to their disliking given him by Mr Retz's orders. This hard circumstance of the young man and the undeserv'd disappointment given him engages me to apply to you for your best interest to get him receiv'd in that nation. He is not very well supply'd in the world as to welth, which I beg of you to consider. Whattsoever you do for him I take it done for myself, and will be equally oblig'd to you for it, as also for all your other favours past. Be pleas'd to let me hear what you will do for this lad, and you will oblige me in the highest degree, who am with a most profound respect,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

Thomas L. Hennessy, S.J.

My service to your friends there as Messrs Sheehy and Terry.

11

Waterford April the 11th 1751

Reverend Sir,

I sho'd not have been so long in this country without opening a correspondence with your reverence had not the unsettled situation I've been in hitherto and the alteration the change of climat made in my health hendered me, but now, thank God, that I am much better I shall indulge an inclination I had of a long while and assure you of the respect and regard I have for your person as well as of the constant harmony I intend to keep with you which I hope will not a little contribute to promote what we both chiefly aim at. I am very glad to hear, reverend sir, what endeavours you have already made for the common good and how successfully you have been in them. May the great God forward 'em more and more; they were never more wanting than they are at present and probably will become so more and more.

I've been applyed to from all parts of this kingdom for places in your house and in St Iago. As I did not know what vacancies will offer this year I could give no other answer but that as soon as I wo'd receive information from abroad I wo'd do all I could to satisfie the persons who applyed to me as far as distributive justice wo'd allow it. I therefore begg the favour of your reverence to let me know as soon as possible 1° what places you can give in your house, 2° how many are to be admitted in St Iago, 3° if you can to procure me the same information from Lisbon

<sup>29</sup> For Edmund Doran, S.J., see Oliver, *Collections*, p. 243.

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Collections, p. 243.

Our prelates here exclaim greatly against our Portuguis for their manner of proceeding and especially for the method they are ran into of admitting none but priests, and of their receiveing whom they please 'emselves without regard for the necessities of this country, or the reccommenda-tion of the superior of this mission. Probably they will bring their com-plaints elsewhere, and God knows what may be the consequence on't. When you favour me with an answer address your letter to Mr William Carrol for me. He and all his family are well. I shall write to you more at large when I hear from you and am sending you some proselites. In the mean time I am most respectfully,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,  
Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.

12

Waterford October the 10th 1752

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your most agreeable favour of the 16 May reached my hands but a few days ago, at my return from Dublin, where I had been since July last. I learned there with pleasure what you confirm to me in your own letter, viz., that all things are easy with you and that them unruly sparks who had given you so much trouble are at last reclaimed and have returned to their duty. I hope what is passed will prevent any such beheaviour both in themselves and their successors; at least you may assure 'em that if it sho'd not, proper care will be taken to make 'em repent at home at their leasure any such liberties they'l give 'emselves abroad; that I shall admit none hereafter but upon that condition, and that the chief prelates of the kingdom have already engaged to answer for their respective subjects. Mr John Murphy<sup>30</sup> communicated to me a letter or two he had from some of those engaged in that rebellious faction. As disedified as I had been by their former beheaviour, so edified and pleased have I been at the sentiments of repentance they express in them letters, and if they and the rest continue in them and beheave accordingly they may depend my good offices with their respective superiors shall not be wanting as often as they can be of any service to 'em. I must ingeniously own to you I was very much surprised at your long patience and forbearance with 'em, tho' I am glad on't once it contributed to reclaim 'em and give 'em a sense of their duty. Had they been dismissed in the beginning as they deserved, or at least suffered to go off as they themselves intended, the scene wo'd end there and their vacant places wo'd be soon filled with as good and I am sure more obedient subjects. As for your part, my dear sir, content with the merit of your patience despise what such

<sup>30</sup> John Murphy entered Salamanca on 27 November 1730—cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 6, 27-8. He afterwards became a very well-known priest in Dublin. There are several letters from him to John O'Brien in this *legajo* of the Salamanca Archives.



as went off think or say. None will believe 'em but such as you'd neither covet their approbation or dread their censures.

Since my coming into the kingdom I had put on a resolution to recommend none to the colleges abroad, but such as I wo'd have a personal knowledge of. I am more and more confirmed in that same resolution, and shall stick to it as long as I am in my present employment. That made me reject some applications made to me from abroad in favour of several I knew nothing of, but by some letters wrote to me on the subject. Mr Davin<sup>31</sup> in his last to me recommends one Thomas Landy of whom he gives a very good character and who is actually in Madrit, but I have no vacancy for him.

Your rulers' behaviour wo'd surprize me greatly, had I not known allready a good deal of 'em gentlemen's little concern about the wellfair of this poor country, but what I can't be reconciled to is that direct opposition they make to it. What in the name of God is it to 'em that you by your industry and care sho'd put that establishment in a condition to maintain more than ever it did before? What harm can it be to 'em that you sho'd have philosophers as well as divines? Is it not visible that the more they are, the more emulation they'l shew, and the more they'l exercise one another the greater their progress will be? In a word if they persist in their opposition you must apply properly to the city<sup>32</sup> and set forth the situation of your house, the many advantages arising out of your having both philosophers and divines, that additional fund left your house by the late legacy which I suppose your ruler there won't think himself qualified to apply to any other house, the disgust and murmours of a great many of the prelates of Ireland occasioned by the frequent complaints they have from 'em parts, and the earnest desire they express of seeing that house you live in encrease the number of its subjects. I've hindered some of 'em from carrying their complaints to Mr Visconti,<sup>33</sup> but I am sure if this new opposition you meet with reaches their ears it will not be in my power to hinder 'em from carrying their complaints perhaps further, as some of the chief men of 'em have allready told me. I shall write to Mr Visconti upon it, and shall also recommend to Mr Usher, now in my place in the city, to back the request I'l make to the gentleman, but you must write immediatly and acquaint him of the whole matter. If you sho'd want help as you must, and that 'em gentlemen will refuse it you, you shall have some of our own who may be as usefully employed there as elsewhere.

Good Mr Hennessy dyed the 14th of last April. *Requiescat in pace.*

<sup>31</sup> James Davin, S.J., nephew of Thomas Gorman, S.J., spent his life in the Imperial College in Madrid. He entered the Jesuits in 1725. As his regular correspondence with John O'Brien come to an end in 1756 it may be presumed that he died in that year. Cf. M'Donald, 'Irish Ecclesiastical Colleges since the Reformation: Santiago', in *I.E.R.*, x. 253-4 (March 1874).

<sup>32</sup> Rome.

<sup>33</sup> Ignatius Visconti, general of the Jesuits, 1751-55.

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its, 1751-55.

By his death and by Dr Creagh's<sup>34</sup> unfair dealing with us, we have lost  
that place, which is now possessed by a secular priest and that in virtue of  
a collation given him by Dr Creagh eight days after he had signed one  
in favour of Mr Gorman.<sup>35</sup> You may see the man thereby and that's  
enough. I've spoak to your oncle Carrol and delivered him your message.  
He and family are well. I shall if possible engage him to give you by this  
opportunity the satisfaction you require about the goods he sent you.  
His mistake in the shoes was, as he tells me, that he imagined strong  
ones wo'd not do in that country. All friends here joyn in their best  
compliments to you but none more cordially than

Reverend and dear Sir,

Your most affectionate humble servant,  
Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.

13

Waterford April the 23rd 1753

Worthy and dear Sir,

I've received your most esteemed favour of the 8th of December some  
time ago along with the inclosed paper which I have transmitted to Mr  
Visconti along with my own remarks and all such reasons as I could  
think of to inforce your petition. I make no doubt but it will be granted  
it seems so reasonable and all objections made against it so weak and so  
frivolous. In my letter to Mr Visconti I insisted particularly on the great  
difference of maintaining subjects where you have all conveniences of  
life, and selling the same conveniences, very often, to disadvantage (as  
it must be the case) to transmit the price of 'em elsewhere in order to  
purchass the like for ready money. I've prayed Mr Visconti to direct  
by post to Mr Solis whatever orders he shall think proper to issue on this  
matter, that no time sho'd be lost and that you may be able to commence  
next year by my having timely notice in order to send you proper subjects.

I've communicated to Mr Murphy the cobby of your letter to Stringer  
and his answer was that it was to no purpose to talk of it to Dr Linagar<sup>36</sup>  
or his vicars because said Stringer is no subject of theirs; as to Sheehy  
he is here as coadjutor to our vicar general who promised me at the time  
he employed him he wo'd make him give a proper satisfaction for his  
behaviour to you. I spoak to the young man himself and he promised me  
he wo'd write to you as I suppose he did. One of the things I believe  
that weighed heaviest on him was his not getting the usual viaticum, tho'  
if he did himself justice he'd own he was no way intitled to it. However

<sup>34</sup> Peter Creagh, appointed coadjutor bishop of Waterford and Lismore on 12 April  
1745, succeeded 1747, died 12 February 1775.

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Gorman, born 29 December 1691, entered the college at Santiago in  
1709, joined the Jesuit order on 12 March 1714, returned to Ireland in 1724 and worked  
in Clonmel, Limerick and Cork. Cf. Oliver, *Collections*, p. 248, M'Donald, 'Irish  
Ecclesiastical Colleges since the Reformation: Santiago', in *I.E.R.*, x. 253-4 (March  
1874).

<sup>36</sup> John Linegar, archbishop of Dublin 1734-57.

it's not reasonable that on account of his or his superiour's misconduct the dioces in general sho'd suffer. What I am resolved to do in order to be even with 'em is to admit none at their reccommendation, but to send from myself such subjects as I shall think fit for the purpos and the like method I shall take in regard to all other subjects whose superiours on the occasion have not acted as they sho'd. I thought Dr Sweetman<sup>37</sup> of the county of Wexford had done the needfull that way as he seemed to me disposed to do when I expostulated the matter with him. I shall go myself to Gallway this season and shall procure a due submission from Mr Kirwan. You have one of that name actually in St Iago in whom I am sure you'l have a good deal of satisfaction and whom I earnestly recomend to you.<sup>38</sup> I shall do all my endeavours to send you none hereafter but what I shall have room to think will answer your expectation. As to Mr Moony<sup>39</sup> of whom I hear a very good character, now that he is there and you yourself think he'l make a very hopefull subject, I beg you will admit him. Mr Murphy his patron might have misconstrued your directions to him, however that's no reason to disappoint the poor lad. Mr Murphy never spoak a word to me of the lad, and that to be sure because he imagined the thing was settled 'twixt you and him. I see no necessity of sending him a patent. My letter to you will do as well.

I made your compliments to your friends and desired your oncle Carrol to provide you with the things you call for. As you did not mention the quantity you wanted he'l send you but two dozen of shoes and as many stockens. The sizes of the shoes such as you mention are by much he says too large, especially those of 12 inches, being too big for any man in this city if you except two or three. However he'l endeavour to make 'em so that they'l fit any in your house. The stockens will be somewhat dearer than the last time the price of wool being raised. I desired him to let you know precisely the price of each kind. He expects a ship will soon sail for St Anders on board of which he intends sending 'em. He and family are well and desire to be remembered to you. As to Landy we shall be time enough to determin about him when we hear from the city. In the meantime I shall make what enquiry I can about that Limerick family and if any be found fit for the purpose shall have his requisits to benefit of your good disposition towards 'em. I am most sincerely and most respectfully,

Worthy and dear Sir,

Your most devoted humble servant,  
Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.

<sup>37</sup> Nicholas Sweetman, bishop of Ferns 1745-86.

<sup>38</sup> Thomas Kirwan entered Salamanca on 17 March 1749, and left before the completion of his studies on 18 May 1751—*Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 33-4. The Thomas Kirwan from Santiago entered Salamanca on 7 October 1756—*ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> For the complications attending Francis Mooney's admission to Salamanca see *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8-9, and for his subsequent career there see *ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

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14

Waterford December the 22nd 1753

Reverend and dear Sir,

I've not this long while been favoured with a line from you though in one of Mr Visconti's letters it was hinted to me that you wo'd in some time inform me of the success of our joynt petition to him, sure he has not hitherto suspended his sentence on that head, or if he has pronounced, is it not fit I sho'd know it that I may square my conduct therewith? I am addressed from all quarters for places in your house or in St Iago, and except six which the good old man says he'l receive next October, I don't know what to answer the rest. You'l oblige me if you let me know from this till May next whether I can depend on any place in your house and how many. My good friend Mr Thomas Phelan of Cadiz will forward me your letter.

Inclosed I send you Dr Sweetman's letter to me on account of his subject's behaviour in your house which he is far from countenancing, and I think it's proper your young gentlemen sho'd know with what eye he looks upon it. In consequence of what he says of Mr. Shehy, I spook to Mr Connery his vicar general and expostulated with him his and Mr Creagh's remissness in oblidging that young gentleman to make a proper attonement. Mr Connery sent him to me, and after I had shown him that paragraph of Dr Sweetman's letter where he is charged to be the chief ringleader of that riot, he ran into vast appologies and open recriminations which gave me to understand it was in vain to loose time with him and so dismissed him. What sears him most, I find, is to have been disappointed in his viaticum which he richly deserves. If I be not mistaken he holds correspondence with all his refractory collegues, and perhaps with some in your house, which if you sho'd find out, you'd do well to prevent. Kirwan is not come home as yet, but when I see his superior I will acquaint him of that youth's behaviour, and you may depend on it none shall go to you for the future without having proper instructions and positif injunctions to avoid all such combinations.

This country at present affords nothing worth your notice but that in all likelyhood Dr Creagh is disappointed in the parish of Clonmel and that one Mr Danniell will rescue it out of Creagh's and Eagan's hands, this Danniell having obtained it in court of Rome. All friends here are well and salute you most kindly. Your oncle Carroll has sent you I suppose the things you called for. I wish you a most prosperous and happy new year and am with all respect,

Reverend dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,  
Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.

*Enclosure*

Wexford August the 30th 1753

Very reverend Sir,

I remember when I had the pleasure of seeing you a few daies ago, you told me that the disturbance, or rather rebellion, raised some time ago in the Irish colledge of Salamanca on account of some rambling Irish taylor had made such an impression on Reverend Father O'Brien the rector thereof, that he made a resolution of not receiving any body, for the future, from the dioceses his then turbulent subjects were from, unless a proper submission were made by the transgressors. Tho' I think it hard the innocent sho'd suffer for the guilty I smartly rebuked my subject Mr Bernard Downes,<sup>40</sup> who solemnly protests he had no hand in the conduct of said affair, only that he did not discover to the rector that the taylor was hid in the colledge by one Sheehan and one Coleman<sup>41</sup> who were the ringleaders or conductors of said trouble; and he says farther he is ready to make any submission that can be required. For my part I protest if any subject of mine, for the time to come, has any hand in any disobedience or refractoriness of the kind, he shall have no wellcome or reception from me, if I am apprized of it in time. I am also informed of late that, when I was promoted to the rank I now unworthily hold in the world, the aforesaid good father did me the honour to make some publick demonstration of joy in his colledge on the occasion,<sup>42</sup> for which I wo'd long ago, as I do hereby, have returned him my most gratefull thanks and acknowledgment, had I been properly, and in time, informed of that very great honour done to

Very reverend Sir,

Your most affectionate wellwisher and most humble servant,  
Nich[ola]s Sweetman.

## 15

Reverende in Christo Pater,

Gratias ago plurimas Reverentiae vestrae et plures certe habeo pro data mihi notitia de numero alumnorum in domum suam admittendorum, ineunte Octobri proxime futuro; jam delectum juvenum, quales Reverentia vestra requirit, paratum habebam, unde mihi liberum non manserat, alterutrum ex Dominis Hasi, prout Reverentia vestra commendabat, in istud seminarium hoc anno admittere; hoc responsum a me ipsi retulerunt, anno jam fere lapso, et revera plerumque contigit, ut loca omnia in istis

<sup>40</sup> Bernard Downes entered Salamanca on 17 March 1749. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 34, and also *ibid.*, ii. 104, iii. 119, 121-2.

<sup>41</sup> John Coleman entered Salamanca on 17 March 1749. Cf. *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 8, 34.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Diary of John O'Brien*: 'In August [1745] the news came that Dr Nicholas Sweetman, a former student of this college, had been elected bishop of Ferns, which was celebrated with six dozens of rockets'—*Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 31.

Nicholas Sweetman entered Salamanca on 4 Sept. 1721, and returned to Ireland in 1724—*ibid.*, pp. 5, 25. Jasper Stafford, another student from Wexford, entered Salamanca on the same day. He later joined the Jesuits and was rector of the college from 1730 to 1743.



Wexford August the 30th 1753

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seminariis per biennium et quandoque triennium in antecessum rogata et promissa sint, quare reverendo P. Martino mirum videri non debet quod ejus votis nunc annuendum non sit.

Ut autem omnes hoc anno mittendi parati et rebus quas Reverentia vestra commendat instructi accedant, qua maxima potero diligentia curabo. Interim ex animo gratulor Reverentiae vestrae quod sub finem administrationis suae numerum tandem alumnorum auxerit, nec dubito quin pro suo, in hanc nostram miserrimam patriam, zelo, augendus magis sit adhuc. Olim octo vel plures aiebat domus ista. Imminutus numerum dolebant praesules nostri, dolebat et hujus nostrae missionis praeses, qui praesulum querimoniis quid respondendum nesciebat. Me autem ab hujusmodi querimoniis partim liberavit Reverentia vestra, quam Deus optimus maximus diu servet incolumem quamque in suis sanctissimis sacrificiis sui memorem cupit

Reverentiae vestrae,

Humillimus in Christo servus,

Michael FitzGerald.

Waterfordiae 28 Junii 1754.

16

Waterford October the 29th 1754

Dear and reverend Sir,

I was informed in Dublin last August where I then was, that you had been called to the city. I could not imagin on what score as I knew our settlement there had got a factor already whom I had sent thither last March and that with Mr Visconti's orders. It's true in sending me said orders he mentioned you along with two more who had been proposed to him by Mr Usher the late ruler of our house there, but in pitching on the one I sent I gave Mr Visconti my reasons for not thinking of you, which chiefly was that as you had spited blood the season before, I was sure that climat wo'd not at all do with you. In his answer which I received the 1st of June last, he approved of the choice I had made, but what surprized me most of all was that before he could receive my answer to his first letter, he sho'd have sent his orders to you to repair to the city. Either he must have forgot what he wrote to me, or else he must have been prevailed upon to change his mind. I suspect the later and that thro' the means of some of your gentlemen there, who I believe wo'd not be sorry to see you removed.<sup>43</sup> Be that as it will, I am glad to hear the mistake was cleared up before you proceeded farther than Barcelona, where I hear you had some affairs to treat and which must have made your journey less useless to you.<sup>44</sup>

The letter you wrote me from Madrid I received at my arrival from

<sup>43</sup> For further light on this incident see *Archiv. Hib.*, iv. 37, note 1.

<sup>44</sup> Captain Thomas Burke had died at Barcelona in 1753, leaving all his estate to the college in Salamanca. Cf. M'Donald, 'Irish Ecclesiastical Colleges since the Reformation: Salamanca', in *I.E.R.*, xi. 6 (October 1874).

Dublin and tho' it mentioned nothing of your being countermanded, still I was sure you wo'd not proceed to the city, and hope this will find you safe and well at your old residence. You'l do well to improve the encouragement Mr Visconti gives you, about which I've petitioned him for, you've to be sure before now got a new provincial and if he sho'd not concur with Mr Visconti's intentions you'l do well to address him again and I hope he'l give his final orders to settle that affair to your liking. The very attempt does you no small honour in this country, and I hope the success will crown your reputation among us.

Mr Arajo has called this year for seven subjects, whom I have already sent him with a proper compliment on the encrease of the number. A very great battle is made in the city about the house of Sevilla, the merchants of that place as well as some of those of Cadiz have I hear presented a petition to the Propaganda beging an Irish ruler for that factory, and two great persons took upon them to urge the affair with Mr Visconti. I daily expect to hear the issue of it, and if Mr Visconti is prevailed upon, probably I shall be ordered to provide a proper person for the purpos. Your uncle Carroll and all his family are well and salute you most kindly as do allso Messrs St Leger and Shie,<sup>45</sup> and assure yourself none does it more cordially than

Dear and reverend Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,  
Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.

17

Waterford March the 24th 1757

Dear Sir,

Since I received your favour dated in August last, another you wrote to Dublin was communicated to me, whereby I am glad to hear you've gained your point, and that you intend to encrease your family next October. The person I send this letter by, to our worthy friend Mr Thomas Phelan (who will forward it to you) will return hither in May next and will with pleasure charge himself with any commands of yours for me. That will be a fair opportunity of letting me know what you intend doing and how far I can serve you. I've a nephew of my own whom I recommend to you as an apprintice and who I believe wo'd answer your expectations. If you can serve him, I flatter myself you will do it, and I make it my request. You may depend allso that I shall make it my studdy to choose out for your purpos such as I think will give the most content. Mr Arajo receives seven next October, as he writes to me, which may serve for your government. Our disappointment in Lisbon and in Seville will be a

<sup>45</sup> Simon Shee, S.J., born 18 May 1706, joined the Jesuit order in Seville on 28 January 1726, returned to Ireland in 1738 and worked in Waterford. Oliver, *Collections*, p. 265; *Archiv. Hib.*, xxiv. 145. He died on 16 May 1773, 'Sunday evening, suddenly, as he was preaching to a large congregation, at the Big Chapel in Waterford'. Brady, *Eighteenth-century Press*, in *Archiv. Hib.*, xvii, app., p. 152.

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great loss to this poor factory, but your laudable endeavours will in some  
 measure make us amends, God prosper 'em and grant you their due  
 reward.

Your oncle Carroll is just recovering out of the lingring state he had  
 been in for some time passed which greatly allarmed his friends. He'd  
 be a sensible loss to the poor, as his chief studdy is to relieve 'em. I spoak  
 to him and his son about your nephew who they tell me is a promising  
 boy, but they say there is no proper opportunity here for forwarding him.  
 Still I believe they'l soon encourage his coming to town, and you may  
 assure yourself I shall shew him all kindness in my power. All your  
 friends here and in their respectif stations endeavour to do as well as  
 these times permit, and live easier than could be well expected. They  
 salute you most cordially but none more so than

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,  
 Mich[ae]l FitzGerald.