

445 E. 65th St., New York, N.Y.; 8 May 1970

Paul Standard

Dear Zell Dorr:

Alas! our visit must be put off until autumn. A veritable & unaccountable hailstorm of invitations followed the posting of my last letter to you, with the net result of our being signed up for a month of Sundays. What a sad & embarrassing return for your prompt & generous invitation! It reminds me of the story of the Scotch Dominican's long harangue against sin & the threat of hell-fire, which was followed by a lightning flash & a thunderclap as the great chandelier dropped from the vaulting & smashed itself to pieces at the foot of the lectern. The preacher's voice, now directed upward towards the vaulting, now turned resentful, exclaiming, "Oh, Lord — don't be ridiculous!"

As to whether those principles of letter-shapes are indeed familiar, it may be truer to say they were once familiar — but that was in the XV & XVI centuries, when the edged pen was still the universal tool for the relatively few who could read & write. Some day, through a graphic demon-

stration,

you will come to realize how much we have lost through the introduction of the pointed spring pen & more recently of the stylus we call the ball point. This it is that accounts for the steady alienation that has obliterated the close connection between the edged pen & the ancient sources of letter-shapes, whether in the Hebrew, Greek, Arabic or Latin alphabets. In my teaching years at Cooper, Parsons & W.P.U. I was able to recapture this relationship for my students who thus came to realize the extent of the deprivation — a deprivation whereof even the late president of Cooper was destined to learn from me: he thanked me heartily for making the matter clear to him. The world at large remains in that late president's earlier state — a state wherein, I fear, the overwhelming proportion of university heads on either side of the Atlantic, are still frozen fast! But here I am, trying to thank a cordial spirit for a generous invitation, & achieving the ranting rank of my Aory's dominie!

I see I should not have said 'ranting' — not when addressing the author of Of Right and Day, an author who, like her quoted peers, can carry unawares the essence of much that mankind has lost in only a few centuries but seems at last about to regain.

Yours
Paul