

11-10-1889

Ida H. Grant to Sis, November 10, 1889

Ida Honoré Grant

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/fdg-and-ihg-correspondence>

Preferred Citation

[Title of Document], Frederick Dent Grant and Ida Honoré Grant Papers, Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library, Mississippi State University Libraries

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the Frederick Dent Grant and Ida Honore Grant Papers at Scholars Junction. It has been accepted for inclusion in Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Scholars Junction. For more information, please contact scholcomm@msstate.libanswers.com.

Nov. 10th 1889.
Schwindgasse 4 -
1st Stock

Dear Sir

I receive your delightful letter
Yesterday for which, I am
most grateful. It is very
kind and good of you to think
of my dining-room, but you
must let it drop, as we have
everything very handsome
and comfortable, really much
better than we were expected
to have, and every day I am
more and more glad that
we bought our things over, as

They are really very elegant and fit
in the house beautifully, all of
which looks a little better than
in Morristown, as the hall-
parlor and dining-room
are larger than we had there.
I have succeeded in getting
some delicate Swedish curtains
with small Indian pattern all
over them for the parlor which
go nicely with the rug, they
are soft silk and have three
or four fringe. The shades there
are in the rug. In the little
room between I have the soft
salmon pink thin curtains for
year one, which are lovely there.

As this room is rather dark, and then the yellowish
stained ones are very pretty in the Hall where I have the
Persian rug Mrs G. gave us, the oak bench with mirror, the
oak clock, the greenish ^{and yellow} flowered Tapestry Chairs that
we had up in our little boudoir, and of course, the fire-
rack which you gave Fred, with all the pieces - then the Indian
large game and Indian war-bonnet and embroideries;
over the door, into the parlor, I have the eastern long knives
and spears - every thing that sits out, the Japanese
cloth of gold is divided ^{for use in the parlor}, some over the large doors from parlor
into boudoir and one width over each door, the one into
hall and the other into bed room - Bands of dark red plush
across the strip of cloth of gold, and on the other side
of each door a solid plush curtain draped back
which is graceful and the cloth of gold hangs straight
down on each door, ^{The double doors have two portions of cloth of gold.} - It suits the Hall exactly and everyone
exclaims, that our parlor is beautiful, who enters it - so
I feel that it does well enough for us - Then here the pieces of

^{been} Mohogany the fine Cabinet etc
look very elegant - and people
think a great deal of old
Jano and "curios," which you
know Mr. Lam - the old China
cup - etc in the Cabinet. The
rug for Dining Room turned
out a great success and I had
^{married} the "French Society" (Mr. West &
you remember) make curtains to
match rug of a thin sort of
silk Mohair, through which
the light shines, it being in
blue and pinkish yellow & light
shades in rug. They consider
them beautiful, but I am

Not sure that I like them
as well as I would a solid
blue ground like the rug has,
with same design over it in
the colors. We have the large
Cabinet for China we bought
there, with small Cabinet of
Mahogany we used to have
in bondrie at Morrisdown, these
I had made to order. These
with our lovely side board, table
and chairs make the room
beautiful, we have as you
know beautiful China, and
silver. Mrs Leach gave me
her large set which with

9th

One has to go into that sort of
Society even if the dinner
is light at home. - Speaking of
that I don't find I can help the
family down to as small tables
as I had hoped to do, owing to
the perfect I am made to feel
for my good cook and fine
butler, it is always the same. but
I hope to get control - I must
confess to you, that I have not
yet used the Wood - for jewelry,
owing to the fact that the
Grooming in getting settled and
fixed, came to more than
we had bargained, and it seems

so deplorable and comfortable to
me after this. I saw Mr
Mott has ^{I could not resist though did} from day to day
that Fred is to make it up to
me, as he can lay it by, later;
this I will accept as I didn't
wish to feel that I put such a
grat into General house - finishing
expense so I shall discour-
age Fred in carrying out the
plan. I think I shall not need
it immediately, as the rumors
are there is to be no Court ball
only possibly two Concerts at
Court later, after January
as the Emperor has planned

Today any all winter and will be a day morning
till after the Anniversary of her son's death be-
sides they say she always hated receiving and will
<sup>they think of having an diplomatic dinner too, but no one knows yet what
will be the result.</sup>
never again have the Court balls, ^{that} that could easily
be so - No other receiving is done at Court ex-
cept Prince Hohenlohe's regular weekly recep-
tions, for the Emperor, who does not care to receive
and has it done for him officially as is also the
case with the Empress, who has Countess Sisy
receive for her a certain number of afternoons
in the winter, in her home, certain apartments of
the Palace set aside for her none of the Royal
family appear on these occasions, though some
of the Archdukes, the Cabinet Ministers and
Diplomatic Corps - all of whom must also pay
their respects to the Emperor, by calling on
Prince Hohenlohe, on New Year's day - It is
so totally different from England, Russia and
Germany - there they have become very democratic
and receive all foreigners, and have regular
receptions - Lady Paget, Princess Reuss and
one or two others give one ^{ball} ~~part~~ here during

19th

The Season, and there is a
Countess Clau who is the only
Austrian Woman of any rank
or nobility of position, who inter-
tains or receives and she has
a regular "Salon" during the
Season which latter, by the
way, does not begin at all until
the last of Dec. or 1st of January
and lasts only about five
weeks during which time people
go to these few formal receptions
and to the Opera - then all is
over except for a week or so
in May, when people appear again
dinner about and go to the Opera

and learn songs for their places
in the country which are really
their homes - This has all been
explained to me over and over
again, last of all by the Doyenne
of the Diplomatic Corps, the Countess
de Jongs who has been here
for 23 years from Belgium,
and who will take me to these
receptions just - When she
thinks it time in Dec. She is
charmingly agreeable, speaks
English beautifully as well as
German, and of course, French
She and the Count are still in
the country as it is considered

too early among Austrians to be in town - They are
all now busy hunting & shooting - Count de
Jonge occupies a Palace, very Oriental, enclosed
in a large court rather dreary and like a stable,
and when one scarcely knows which may be the
door of the house - When the bell is rung, the back
door is opened - Here all is grandly large and
very bare, much like the under story of
"Shoimbrum" and after the high stair case is
passed, it can be seen that one has reached
the living part of the house - One is conducted
by three or four servants ^(who bring) which indi-
cates the rank of the host here - We went out to
call upon Mr. Hart & on the de Jonges, and walked
through the lower courts of the house, which were
cold and dreary that day, and afterwards reaching
the next floor we were ushered through about
three or four barren rooms, or halls, and then
a door was opened into a large drawing room
where we found the Countess waiting for us with a
most cordial welcome - There was nothing of
particular interest in this vast imposing
room, but the usual number of chairs and

17th
Table with of course, the most
fully important "Sofa", which
is always the seat of dignity,
and to which I found myself
led with scrupulous care by
the Countess. That is a very im-
portant ceremony, observed
here. When I take Mrs. Stein
and Mrs. Chew to be presented to
any of the Ambassadors, I
am led myself with great im-
portance to the sofa, as if all of
life depended upon that the
Lady of highest rank present
always has the sofa. It is
very amusing. Fred and I liked

with the Brinsley Richards
(The dinner given to us) a few
evenings ago, and the going on over
The sofa was fascinating —
Every time Madame Mangel, and
Miquel (the wife of the latter)
I moved, from one room to
the other, the ladies saw that
we both sat on the sofa, all
the other ladies rising and moving
aside to help us to the sofa
We changed back from one room
to another several times, because
Mr. had music and recitations
after dinner. This attention of
being given the sofa, is a Ger-
man custom and is as im-
portant here, as the arranging

Of places according to rank at table. — The
Comte de Jongs came in, when we called, & made himself
agreeable asked much about America all in French
Then they had tea served very simply. Their manners
were very quiet, affable & natural, and their dressing so
simple compared to the ladies of the servants, that it
was remarkable, he, had an loose jacket sort of Morning
Coat on; the men and women all got the Chasse as
they appeared in telling us of their hunting. I had
next me at Bingley Richards, an American who conversed
in French a very accomplished, agreeable & lively
man, who was rather broad in his views having
been in China Japan — & was by the way of America
He told me that Vienna was beautiful and the manners
fine the people accomplished and agreeable but
the place dull socially, that he knew how the rest of
the world lived and could not understand why
the Viennese never took the trouble to do anything
for social gaiety. He said he had a daughter of
his own a charming woman, who only liked her
country home and pleasures, he often wished
her not coming earlier than Jan'y to the city
and then leaving in a few weeks for Italy or Rome

21st

other place, and then returned
to the city home for part of May
When she left soon for the
Country home, which she loved
I think Mrs Chew came over, ex-
pecting to find Vienna a place
like Paris very gay, and is amazed
as all Americans are. In older
times the Hungarians (who now
devote themselves and their money
to Buda Pest) used to live there,
and gave the place the reputation
of being a gay place, and then
this city itself is beautiful and
the shops look gay though
there is not really much in
them - like the shops in N.Y.

What surprises me is the expense
of ribbon, buckles and clasps
such Quick Knocks. We had
quite a dinner party last evening
a very nice one, of Americans, for
Mrs Weston and her daughter, who
are here from Philadelphia
having brought us a letter from
Mr Dring, in which he asked
us to do what we could for
them as particular favor to him
Also, Dr and Mrs Hensst. of Pittsburg
who came with letter from the
Club of which Fred is a member.
The "Americans" who from such grand
dinner on General Grant's birth
day every time. We had be-
lieve Mr Copper Mrs Chen's basket

Whom we had not yet entertained, the Meis, and
Dr. Henry — The Meisons have gone to Dresden
today, where one daughter who is talented has been
studying music, then they return here for the winter
the daughters, to study vocal & instrumental music
and the little son German — They are amazed to hear
that Vienna is so quiet socially — I think they expect
to look in on one moved at London or Paris and be
presented at court etc. — They are going to take
a house in London for the spring season when
the father comes over — Americans here all
astonished I am so surprised that even old
practical ones, like Huntington did let their
daughters marry and bring their money over
here to build up estates of dissipated descendants.
I can run the Ambassador Ritz felt that was
just an American woman to before, the one couple
(Miss Huntington) and she was never received
at court not having the family record of Quakerism,
necessary at this court. It was the same with
the American woman who married Eschschay, he
was at the real head of one of the very highest
families in Austria yet she was never received
or able to go to court with him because she had
not the proper qualifications of family and now

25th

Here is Miss Lee the daughter
of the former Charge d'Affaires
from America, who could go
to Court when her father was
officially representing his Country.
She is now married to a young
Officer as poor as poverty, does
not have a good a house, as the
Forrest St. in our Country, and
he is of very fine high family
and on official occasions
is obliged to carry her at home
which she seems quite fatigued
with, and her father is very
proud of her having married
into one of the finest families
of Aqueducts. There is no far-

Doesn't insist to come, but
when it is refused a wife, be-
cause she is not of good large
familly or high rank, it must
be humiliating especially, as
her children, if she has any
may thank her for making them
Orill - up their father's little
estates "but feel their mother is
not quite so good; and they then
believe fall in sake on her
account - For this reason here,
all the royal familly, and for
Arch-Bishops marry their Cousins
and as the Countess of Stitzow
said to me in London urban
No choice or love in marri-
age, as, we must take the one

who is least disagreeable of those few who are of
the same birth and rank as ourselves, & there
we may go to our court together. Her husband
who was ready, was a practical doctor, and did
not object to discussing the matter in the
same way.

Now I suppose I have nearly killed for training
on this way about all the homonical ideas of this
otherwise interesting country - as far as already known
by this time, I have worn the jet - training
with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction
already a great deal, so we have been interesting
for the Duke of Coimbra, and since for the King of
Portugal - the last stage of mourning is past
about over - Madame Mozet who married the king
in Washington, when Genl. S. was President, is charming
& Miss Livingston of N. Y. related to the Jays, and
very nice, originally a Southern woman, niece
of Rev. J. Johnson - has not been home for 20
years, but is just the same - most cordial &
agreeable, comes and makes me long visits - but
just opposite, we find also the Turkish Am-
bassador next door - It is a good close ly-
cellent shut - for us. I fear word that if you
read this letter through you will be nearly

29th Dec 1, But when I get to
Mithun, it seems a pleasure
to talk to you all, so my
scraps are long and fearfully
stupid I suppose. I now
really begin to feel at home
and more settled so that
I will have more time to write
and will make up the
letters which I am several
months in America.

We have all been enjoying
the description of your expe-
rience, which must have been
quite wonderful and perfect

as your affairs are. It is
like reading of fairy land
No wonder people stand
Amazed. It is so much
better for you than it all,
than some others who never
know just what to do and
are never really able to make
others happy because they
are not so themselves.

I think after a while your
house will be perfect to your
own taste. - I am sorry I
did not see your new dia-
monds before you left this
side - & the clothes will be

always nice for our Pop who perfectly dotes
upon the last dress suit, which he saw his dear
precious Min wear this summer, and he puts it
on every time I have company, and when he goes
to his dancing class with the greatest pride and
much satisfaction to myself; He is also wearing a
pair of Min's patent leather shoes + They would
deeply appreciate your thought of us, and will
be charmed to get the pickles which were
so very good I remember, but now I must
not stop thinking about us and bring
good to us, as we have already more than we
deserve so can ever repay or thank you for -
I must come to see you, and let us do some-
thing for you + I have written so often to the dear
coming over but she never responds in any
way, why is that? - Won't she come this winter.
I do hope she will - Mrs Grant only staid
a week with Buck and Fannie, leaving for the
moment a wild enthusiasm about fixing up
her own home, which is very nice I think
I told her before she went away when she
talked as if she had no object in life and did
not know what she was going to do - that I

33-
Thought it her duty to either
stay with us, and be happy
here, or go home with a pure
pleasant feeling about her
own lonely fine house, and
go into it with pleasure to
herself and friends. I told
her that we wanted to have
just as cheering reports of her
as she wished to have of us.
And that if people asked
her why she didn't stay with
us, she oughtn't to say she
thought her children
would be happier without

her but she ought to say that
she preferred to have her own
home and her own authority
which was the simple truth
and fact, and could not
ignore her children. I think
it had good effect and she
started quite elated over firming
up her home, as much as any
of us were doing with ours -
She now writes that she going
to have the steam put in, &
have the walls fixed up, & that
there has been trying to prevail
upon her to do for some winters
as they needed repairing to be

kept from going to Run and every time he would
mention that, she would stop up her ears, and say
that house was good enough for anyone and that
she intended to sell it or rent it and would fix it
for the new comers. I think she has made up her
mind to have a good time, as I suggested, and make
her children happy instead of anxious, and my
only fear is that after the excitement and pleasure
of getting up, all, is over she will have the usual
reaction. She wrote in her last letter that
Mrs. Dento's two sons had lost their place just
after she sailed in the spring, had not done a
stroke of work since and that Buck had
been paying their board for them, all summer
which he did not write his mother, for fear of dis-
tressing her pleasure in her trip. Mrs. G. also writes
that Sister Annie will only be with her part of the
time, as she is not willing to leave Bettie in a
boarding house, and that she is not willing
herself to undertake the care of them both but
of course, she will in the end have them, as
they are on her hands anyway and it is much
pleasanter to have some one with her. I think
that her life was all she has had done, has made
Mrs. G. too restless to have peace and is settled
down finally, and it is probably better for her to be there
or she will only remain contented. Luckily the

Helen do not last longer than
 her gauty and she can always
 do as she pleases about going
 and coming. It would
 not be pleasant for her to
 have crossing into a sort of
 official life, and she at
 home, nor would she want
 to go into society herself - so I
 am in hopes all will go well
 but one never can tell from
 day to day - Fannie and Buck
 were visiting and taking all
 summer about her being
 with them and yet she only
 has the patience to remain
 there a week being anxious to

get her own house in order.
and all started there.

The Prestons are amazed I think
to hear that Vienna is not the favorite
place in Europe, as it has that
reputation. But of course we
cannot take people to see them
or take them to other's houses
as one could do in any other
place; as Mr Lincoln could
do for them in London. They
are charming people —

We are delighted with having
all we need and no more, of
society, as it is very restful after
our long and Washington
ways of rushing — There the
women are really suffering
from nervous prostration.

tion, while here³⁹ - they lead their
own tranquil lives only do-
ing for society what is absolutely
necessary. It seems to me
to be true that we have gotten
into this comfortable spot for
a time any how. We always
had as much position as the
same place with not enough
to keep it up - and more ex-
pected of us than now.

The other "Slips" are more
happy in being permanently
arranged for, as Diplomacy
& a regular profession in
other countries —

I have written all I know
about ourselves now for

Must write what you are all
doings and how the family are
are and if Ma is not coming
over. What about Honor's school?

Why will you all think me ill
and why don't you tell Ma how
perfectly well I was when that
picture was taken? She asserts
so positively that I look very
ill that I feel that I should
inquire and find out
to see how I am all over.
If I ever was tired or looked
badly it must have been
when I ran out to Chicago
before sailing, as then I had
had so much to do, and had
been running back and forth
from W. I am just as I was

When you were here and you often re-
marked that I looked better than usual.
My sickness Julia mentioned lately this day.
She is a great help and protection to me in
my house keeping - as she interprets to
me the German, when I speak with
the servants and even the body speaks to
the cook for me.

I suppose you will be in a great
way as busy and we I have been too
occupied I am reminded myself of you
here -

I long to hear from you all and
that you will not be disgusted with
this letter I am with love for all

Yours affectionately
Edw. A. Grant