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Ida Honoré Grant to Sis, February 6, [1890]

Ida Honoré Grant

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Vienna Feb 6.

1890. It seems
early, much revelation
about "dip" life.

Julia is still 13

Dear Sis,

I have been rather neg-
lecting my writing of late and
also, I have very few letters
from home - much to my
disappointment & I wish you
had all been as busy, as I.
The Falls and Service began
here just before last week
a week, as the morning has
just over and Mr. Surfield
arrives, & going to them
all and staying late, some.

Things we have not done at
home for years, as there we
have always, more solemn, and
small affairs. There is a
perfect howl one may say
or "steady growl", here among
the Diplomats (who have been in
this profession for years, and
are most cordially treated
in every country), that the Austrians
never invite them to any-
thing but a ball or a
soirée, in fact, that they never
have anything but that,
which is really most true,
I find it the more I hear

I more convinced I am, that the Austrians
live as they are reported to do - They are not
very wealthy most of them, and they are really
very oriental in their way of living. They never
give dinners, only on the most rare and
extraordinary occasions, and then the parties are
simple. The dinner begins at five or five and
is over in an hour. They serve very fine
Chino to eat off of. Considering delicacy
and simplicity much more important.
Anything fine they have is hung in the hall.
The Diplomats or Ministers are invited officially,
always, once to the palace, with the Emperor
(the ladies when the Emperor is here) then to Count
Kaluzky's the Minister of Foreign Affairs
and that finishes all idea of dinners given
during the year. On the other hand the
Emperor never enters the house of anyone
less than an "Ambassador", (the latter signifies
a monarch or king, a minister only representing

5th

a government, no one really
in secret) as Arch-Duke had
who never been known to
go to a Ministers house, so
the Diplomatic Corps as I
find, by observation and
experience follow in the
footsteps of the Austrians and
give very few dinners. The
Ambassadors, those who are
married here, give receptions
and balls, and to these come
the Arch-Dukes and families,
after great ceremonies of invita-
tion and etiquette, also in

times just the Emperor went
some times to the houses of
Ambassadors — The System
of leaving cards here is in-
fluence and important, and
one has to be most careful and
guarded in having to be done
at certain time after inter-
action etc, but the Austrian
Ladies never have a day for
receiving, in that too, they
are oriental, they do nothing
in the day time, but what
they enjoy, sleeping very late etc.
but these "soirées" which cor-
respond to our "Leas", are where

They do their visiting and talking, and what
would be considered at home, perfectly and
thoroughly stupid, goes on with great interest
here - They talk over all their news at these
society, the ladies some times all together,
and talking a great deal without gentlemen,
if they choose, from one to the other. The real
fact is, I find after more experience that it is
true, all the haute Aristocracies are related
to each other - They are obliged to inter-
marry these old families, as there is not one out-
side of sufficient rank to intermarry and
returning cards one has to study the little
Almanach de Gotha to know which is the
de Ruyter, it is, one is calling on everyone
being a cousin of every other family in the
high circle - For instance, if this Whistonian
family there are four sisters of the head of the
house who have married their cousins, all
look alike are immense women, rather hand-

9th
Some one of them also, married a Lichtenstein, who is the brother of the one I met last week shooting on the plain at home - In speaking of, who shall make the first call, which must always be done the day after introduction, we have not the least difficulty about that, as all rank is well marked, and it is only where they intend and wish to be very cordial that any change is made in the ceremony - For instance, that

Reck Long Count Hojos
who has been in our country
knows all about it, was pre-
sented to Fred and me, by
Countess Clavis's daughter (her
daughter-in-law is the sister of
Count Hojos) and in coming
to see us the Count called in
person, staid a long time, then
asked Fred to come to see
him and he showed show him
his trophies (which are really
wonderful, as he has gone to every
country in the world just for hunt-
ing) and he told Fred about
what house he would be at

home every day, and two days after, told him a
note saying he was going to a luncheon at that
time, that day, so he must excuse him if he
should call, but he would like Fred to write
him what day he would come, so he would
be sure to be at home. When Fred went
all the family were present to meet him,
they are really charming people, all speak
English well, - Then the following evening
Fred wanted to introduce me to the Mother
of all, who is really very stately and elegant,
and instead of her sitting, as they always
do to wait my coming to her, she came across
the room to meet me and of course, had
to call upon her the following afternoon,
that is learn my cards and she left her
here at the same time, which was an un-
usual politeness, as it was my place to call
upon her, whilst the strangers always do,
except upon those who have lower rank
Countess & the old gentlemen was pleased to

12th

The last night putting himself
out to get the introduction from
they all consider they have
been wonderfully ^{cordial} that is I know
they have for Vienna Austria
Cracie, and yet this old Country
Layover never has - May & Re-
ceive, never even has a
dinner, and would not
even dream of giving a
dinner - She says she only
goes out occasionally as she
has a very large family and
has also taken the charge
of her son's children, the young

Count's whose wife is dead
 They give themselves no trouble
 whatever, - Liza goes on just
 the same for them and their
 children, whatever they do - I
 can see that the diplomats
 shd have been here for ten
 & twenty years might object
 to not being taken in any
 nearer or more intimately, but
 for us, as strangers, we feel
 that we are being quite fair
 enough - Comte de Puget
 the ^{of diplomatic corps} ~~Coyenne~~
 Charge of my presentation, etc.
 and tells me always what to do,

a matter of official etiquette, has been here for
25 years, and has dined three times, in Queen
Parade, though always she is received most
cordially and is a great favorite - The cause
of her dining there was, that it was at the time
of the marriage of the Crown Prince to the
Princess Stephanie (from Belgium which Country she
strongly represents) so they had quite a witness
of attention then -

The Austrians themselves say a very strange
thing is prevalent, "You will find our Country
very uninteresting and I fear our people deal
with strangers, as they have so many relations
and are kept busy doing for them what they
ought to do for others" - I tell you all this about
the forms and ceremonies, because you may
ask in your letters about it - As to ourselves
we feel that after hearing all the talk
of the diplomats, we have had very kind
and especially cordial reception here - For instance

Lady Paget has told me, and
it is said the Austrians were
receiving and yet the Countess
Saffers has received me
very time I have called on
her to see me personally,
staying some time brought
her daughter to see Julia
(and Li 21)
and then the young lady
invited Julia to her "Thick"
I let her go to thinking it
would be very small and
quiet, and there Julia
found herself with 17 grown
up young ladies of the aristocracy.

Craie talking of the dolls
etc. They had been to and
John of course, felt rather
out of place. Thought Countess
Laaffe and her daughters
had taken pains to tell how
beautifully Julia behaved and
conversed and Countess's
daughters too. Fred that she
saw Julia at the "tea" and
thought her wonderfully
sweet and interesting. They
are all quite polite in their
manners and most agreeable
in what they say, when I do

See them and as I say being all related one
thing is repeated all around the circle - I heard
next to be presented by Comtesse de Jougla to the
Arch-Duchess Elizabeth (The sister of Arch Duke
Albert, the mother of the present Queen of Spain)
she spoke of her son's having been in America
at the time Genl Grant was ill etc, and through
I looked wonderfully young to have a daughter
thirteen she having already given Julia quite
a complement when she first spoke to me,
she said (all in French) that she heard I had
a most delicious charming daughter, which
I suppose she got in part from the Sauffs
as the Comtesse Sauff's sister of the Minors is
d'Ame d'honneur to Elizabeth - Fred has his
audience with her yesterday, and she talked
great deal about his father, and loaded
him down with compliments for me and
for Julia - She is quite old doesn't go out
at all now but is really the most popular of

2nd -

All the Arch-Duchesses, she
has been a widow once is a
fact, having been married to
one of the Arch-Dukes, and after
the death of her first husband
it is said the Emperor wished
to marry her, instead of the one
he did. Elizabeth's father was
the greatest & most talented Soldier
they have ever had among the
Arch-Dukes her brother, Arch-
Duke Albert having held the
same place - her sister is mar-
ried to the Arch-Duke Louis
& is also, a great favorite but very

Sipping with her eyes and
does not say anywhere. Her husband
Renier has a high position for
latent besides inherited. She
and Elizabeth travel a great
deal speak 6 or 7 languages
as they all do. - Can both been
to Spain this winter - Elizabeth
is just as anxious to hear the Queen
of Spain praised, or her sons
as any mother. I have quite
enjoyed being presented to
all these Arch-Bishops, as
they are interesting and agree-
able, but the other Ministers
bore me, now that is all

I will never see them again, till we go
away except perhaps at a distance at a
ball occasionally. I am sorry the Empress is
not here and there seems no prospect of her
coming, & our seeing again, as all say
that even before her sons death, she never was
here except just for the two balls every year.
She hated Vienna because they say Vienna
Aristocracy did not fancy her or receive her
well in her youth and she, supposes says of
her palace to this here indeed, likes Baden-Baden
very much - This Lady Suft and the other Au-
trichian ladies consider perfectly outrageous,
those who represent Queens here, think the Em-
press should be more civil and take her
place as Empress - receive with the Emperor,
whether she feels like it or not etc.

We have cards for all the "soires" so every Minister
has, among the most pleasant being those at
Comtesse Clam, and Princess Reuss. The German
Ambassador the latter having a magnificent yellow

25th
is most agreeable personally
and just cousin of the Emperor
of Germany while Prince
Leopold is also, of the highest
royally ruling family in Germany
altogether. Prince Leopold is a
great favorite having the very
high rank as well as birth,
modest and dignified or air of
etiquette. The German family
having adopted that style,
which is in direct contrast
as the Austrians are pleased
today, to the etiquette which
surrounds their Emperor who
is usually liked, but says

himself and family in an
entourage of formality &
trying to turn and his family
though it makes them so proud
that they have been away
from Verina all the time
for despite themselves - As is the
fact when they are confronted
down and have to see people
they are really very agreeable.
Prince & Metternich also has
"soirées" these latter consist
simply of people coming
& call in evening dress,
being invited by card saying

They simply "La Pimisee" — "Restera ou sera
Chez elle" such evenings at the bottom of
the card is "9½ heures du soir" — It is all
so easy they have no supper at all but
hired servants bring about through the
rooms every little white with tea and light cake
on the tables — Then on little tables in the different
parlors are dishes of cakes and bonbons
for people to help themselves — Some times fruit
of milk and beer — Some times even the extra

refinement of ice being passed or orange
sherbets on the tables all evening —
This was so at Pimisee's house last evening, and
then all of us were out of the house by 12
o'clock — Now in bed at home, it is really
very little trouble, and so simple, they don't
stand till saying it is dull, or have to
have music etc — none of that — It is
really their time of relaxing and talking
with each other — Some dress in full evening

29th

Dress others high necked, and
go home in a hour - Many
of the younger ones assembled
in a large library all to smoke
cigarettes & not the ladies do
here a great deal - Quincy
Lenox and all of them like it
so much. The women are very
large and have beautiful
necks and arms - They are larger
than the men - We went last
evening, to dine with the
Baron and Baroness Schwartz-
Benson - he was minister in N.
While General Grant was President

They were very much at the White
House. They asked the Minister
of War another Minister and
Wife and a Member of Parliament
Went and wife to meet us ^{by boat} but
be very high Aristocrats but
high officials — We dined
tomorrow morning with
Prince and Princess Renard
who have been very nice to
us, and on Tuesday next
we dine with Talusky
When I assume we shall
have had our share of Min-
isters for the season having

also dined with the Papeto. I don't know
that I shall soon get up my courage to
ask them to dine, as they have to meet
people of certain rank & each must
be seated with certain honors etc etc etc
& all very hard. The reason Ministers do
not join the Societies or general entertain-
ments is I think, because the Etiquette
is against the Emperor or Royal family
going to their houses, in Austria not in
other countries at all, and they don't like
it. It is a relief to find that more and
more is not expected of us. The most digni-
fied of the Ministers do the best and hold
themselves very high and stiff. We are de-
lighted at that. Our entertaining of
Americans or feel Mr. Amot is an work
and they really seem most grateful. His
salons are full of flowers and I hear con-
tinually of how it is appreciated. He writes
me all about himself. All at home
all - Edw. Howard's heart.