

8-12-1892

[Ida Honoré Grant] to Sis, August 8, 1892 [Incomplete]

Ida Honoré Grant

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Private Little France

Aug 8th 1892.

Dear Sir - I am delighted to hear
from you, having received the
letter you wrote on the train near
New York the first since your
landing in America I think.

How pleasant for you to go for a
rest in the "Adirondacks" even
for a short time, as you must be so
occupied at home, that I fear you
will really become ill or overworked.
Though you do seem so strong &
able to stand anything.

We have thought once that we should
have to return home, having received
news in Brussels of the death of Mrs

Chen, the wife of our Secretary, who had
gone to "Mancusbad" the first of July per-
fectly well and strong. It all seemed a
mystery, for though her little attacks
had many times, interfered with our
trips, in fact retarded our departure even
time we have ever left Vienna when her
husband would be called to her side and
it would all turn out to be the "hysteria".
Often when he seemed to think her terribly
ill, I would meet her two hours later looking
perfectly well & fresh and when I would say
I am glad to see ~~you~~ better she would re-
ply, "Why I haven't been ill at all".

Her hysteria interfered in fact so with
his duties that when we reached Rome
and I had received word that Mr Chen
had gone to "Mancusbad" to the "with his wife
who was very ill with peritonitis and so
he could not return to Vienna for a long
time" and was very sorry if it interfered
with our journey and we had to delay."

etc, We thought of course, it was the same old story exactly what had
happened last year and the year before, so Fred resolved that he
would be determined, and telegraphed it was impossible for him
to return. Of course, the following day, when we read the an-
nouncement of his death in the papers, Fred immediately tele-
graphed sympathy and willingness to return & take charge of
legation if Mr Chew existed & take his wife's remains to America
etc, but he ^{Mr. Chew} writes that there is no need of that now as he has
returned to Vienna etc - Of course dying in a hotel, Mrs Chew
was placed quickly in some vault ^{at M.} there, and her parents
have come over to take charge of matters - It remains to
be seen what Mr Chew will do: some change he must make
of course - He has not \$20 to his name, only his salary which is
very small and he has been living in a very handsome flat.

Went next door to ours - Mrs Chew left - Mrs Little Children
who will soon be taken care of by her parents who are very
healthy and whose only child she was, her brother having
turned out terribly dissipated and so dreadful in his conduct
that no lady would receive him in her house (some Washington
Friends told me) lived abroad entirely, and was found dead
in his bed in London three days after the arrival of Mr
and Mrs Chew there, on their way to Vienna. Mrs Chew here
morning Mrs C. said that Mr. told him she could
not stand the nervous strain, of going into black and
thinking about it all the time. I presume her brother's
death was a relief in some ways, as she was the only Child left.
It must be very sad for Mrs Coffey, who seemed very quiet and
totally the opposite of Mrs Chew in every way, but who seemed

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Anxious about her daughter when in
Kienma, (she & the father brought the children
over from America when the Chens got settled
in Kien) and Mrs Hein said had no influ-
ence over, or happiness with, Mrs Chen.

The latter poor thing, Fred and I de-
cided positively was a little out of her
mind, though I never would say that
for the world. She was stranger after
biting that bitter bone than ever
before, and though handsome and
beautifully dressed always, she made
an impression upon society in Kien
which it was unpleasant for us to hear
of, though we always thought her
not one of those light, silly talkers
not to be understood in the right-
my by foreigners, thought in reality in-
cent. Over here you know a person
is either good, & acts & looks like a

lady according to their etiquette, or
She is all wrong, they don't understand
those degrees of innocent fastness, which
we tolerate in America - It is very
competing to me that I never spoke of
Mrs Chew to anyone even the mem-
bers of the Legation except kindly as
she and I came from the same land
among foreigners. Though I know
she talked at random and variously
at times, about me to some Americans,
who showed it by the way they refused
her in speaking with me & rather
jumping me, which put Fred and me
our guard always - But even if ^{that} ^{was} ^{the} ^{case}
I spoke of her peculiarly and now I fear
they are gossiping in the same way
since her death. This we gather from
what our clerk in Lima writes, most
innocently in a letter Fred received today.
He says - "Strange stories are afloat

relative to the Cause of Mrs Chew's death, stories so revolting
& so utterly at variance with what one was wont to believe, that my
pen refuses to put them down, it must be the heat & spreading
the train of people which originated them, though these stories
are told by those who were eye witnesses etc etc. ^{knowing}
Mr Hinings Crankiness. His dislike of both Mr and Mrs
Chew we make great allowances for the grief which
he has ventured to write. Of course Fred has taken no
notice of his remarks and the only foundation for them
is the remarks of servants and underling who gossiped
about Mrs Chew's strange ways continually - They probably
saw her walking at Marsefield with some young offi-
cer during the absence of her husband or seeing

her so young and to them, too gay and as she died
unexpectedly they probably thought her broken hearted
over some flirtation or something of that sort, as
there is no medium course in the eyes of these
foreigners. They are hearing Paris notwithstanding
the rumors of Cholera which Fred thinks all an
exaggeration and mistake -

I do hope you are really going to have a fine rest
in the mountains and I know your big game sons
will enjoy the life there immensely as even my
young children did when they were there. It is such
splendid life, especially for boys who are studying.

Pages 9–? Missing