do so clear and decisive as may seem the opposition of various systems of logic and inference and analysis that deprecate the philo-sophic’s higher ideas of himself. We know—the wisest, the best of us, too little of man, we guess to clumsily at a God, we are too uncertain of any abstract Right, of any abstract Wrong, of finalities in heights or depths in this life or any other, to determine such a complex and profound human and social problem. In exploring the long chain of creation that stretches out between Perfection and Im-perfection, let us be willing to leave as superfluous our certitude of the relationships of the Uranian as to what is ultimate in the vast scheme of cosmic organization. Instead, let us make it our practical business, as individuals and fellow-mortals, whether Uranians ourselves or not, to climb higher with all our best wills and works and everywhere and eternally to help human nature to climb.

The following study of the life and literary productivity of the poet August von Platen-Hallermund, in their relations to aspects of the homosexual instinct, was originally prepared for separate publication, as a monograph. Its appropriateness to inclusion in “The Intersexes,” and many requests that it should make part of this volume have decided its author so to add it here as a final chapter. It may yet be convenient to make some detached use of it; hence a separate pagination is given to it, below that for “The Intersexes.”
CHAPTER XIII.

The Life and Diary of an Uranian Poet:
August von Platen (1796-1835).

"Love devours me, and he is coldness itself... O, why has Providence made me what I am? Why is it impossible for me to love women?"

"You have torn my soul from me, robbed me of my soul and left me only my body — a heavy, terrible burden... O reader, whosoever thou mayest be, into whose hands these lines perhaps may come, lament for me, weep with me, that I should have suffered so unspeakably!"

(From Platen's "Diary.")

August von Platen-Hallermund, by aristocratic rank a count, a member of one of the oldest of Ansbach family-lines, and certainly one of the most gifted of poets in the portrayal of what is distinctively psychologic in similisexual love, was born at Ansbach, October 24, 1796; and died suddenly at Siracusa, Sicily, in November 1835, in only the fortieth year of a prematurely-ended career. His outward life was in no case eventful, compared with many poetical existences. It was chiefly a matter of a short military-service, a considerable University-life, and then of about a dozen years of residence or travel in Italy, during which time his literary repute in his native Germany was reaching a high measure of critical and popular recognition. As a life, however, it was in no sense monotonous or stationary. Its inner chapters are a deep psychologic drama. Born of affectionate and careful parents, in easy circumstances, the earliest outward data to be noted include Platen's severe training for the military profession, as a mere lad in the Cadet-School in Munich, till the year 1810; when, still a youth, he was enrolled
among the royal pages of honour, at the Court of King
Maximilian of Bavaria. There, during about four years of
service and study, his naturally quick mind advanced ma-
terially, even under the "fashionable" tutelage of the
"Pagury" School. He decided to enter the army as a pro-
fession, though with no real vocation for it. From
1814 till 1818 he was not only in a regular routine of
home-service in Munich, but made the march with several
other Bavarian regiments into France, to join the Allies
against Napoleon. The end of the Napoleonic campaign
coming before Platen's division could take part in the
action, he returned to Munich without a "baptism of fire."
To the period following, his military life in Munich,
we shall find that some of the most characteristic of the
revelations of the earlier part of his Diary belong; al-
though not of the impressive sorts which are met in the
next stage of his restive existence—his student-life at
Würzburg and Erlangen Universities. For, sensibly decid-
ing that he was not born for soldiering, and having
ideas of a diplomatic life, Platen turned from the army,
to pursue philosophy, literature, political history and
other matters, first at Würzburg University, then at
Erlangen. He was a most close and successful student.
It was here, at these Universities that prolonged and no-
table episodes of his nature, innermost, sentimental life
are met. These quite surpass in emotional definiteness
two or three affairs of a homosexual sort in his soldier-days.
They include his relations to a fellow-student at Würzburg
named Eduard Schmidtlein ("Adrastus"); to another
student Hermann von Rotteman; to Otto von Balow; to
the young law-student, Höffner; who is named "Cardenio"
in the Journal; to Justus Liebig; and to Karl Theodore
Germain. They were all students with him, now at one time,
now another, during his college-life; and successively
they were central figures of the strange and affecting soul
dramas that Platen has written out for us, in the Journal
and in his verse.

Before the end of his student-life, Platen had attracted
notice, even in high literary circles, by his poems and his
brilliant satirical dramas. He abandoned his political dreams
just as he had dismissed his ideas of being a soldier. He
resolved to follow out what appeared to be a manifest
literary destiny. His choice was justified. Though not
a prolific comedy-writer nor a many-sided one, nor yet
a versatile psychologic poet, still, Platen reached a high
mark of popular and critical fame. The latter has not
yet by any means lapsed. The Oriental poems known as
the "Ghazels," the deep human feeling in the Sonnets, and
the passion, rhythmic sense and melody of the Odes are
always certain of admirers. As to his comedies, English
readers will find them a sort of precursor of the kind of
social-satire piece that W. S. Gilbert, in especial, has
immortalized for the British stage—though himself mod-
elling after Aristophanes— including the dressing-out of
old theatrical figures and conventions with contemporary
wit, biting irony, parody and poetic elegance. Platen's
comedies do not hold the stage in Germany now; but
there is no specially clear reason, as to some of the few
pieces themselves, why they should not do so.

After 1826, Platen's want of personal liking for Ger-
many, North or South, and his contempt for most of the
aspects of its literary society and movements grew mor-
dant. He became fairly Germanophobic; a condition of
temperament to which his homosexual nature contributed
a good deal. At any rate, the brilliant poet's travelling
in Italy became something like a residence there. In 1835
an attack of cholera, during the epidemic of that year,
ended his life, at Siracusa.

Something must be promised here as to the Diary
itself. From almost his boyhood, August von Platen had
kept a diary. In it, with unreserved truthfulness, he
wrote down not merely his educational growth and his lit-
When in Germany in 1837, Platen gave all except the latest volumes of the manuscript to a friend, Dr. Pfeuffer. But after Platen's death, Dr. Pfeuffer and Professor Schelling, another near friend, and also the poet's mother, were shy of publishing the complete work. Its revelations were too disconcerting. The poet's mother decided that the books would best be given to Count Friedrich Fugger, her son's intimate, confidential friend, who would use it with discretion in preparing the biography of Platen that Fugger had in mind to make. But Fugger died shortly. So came the Diary back into the hands of Dr. Pfeuffer. The public had been eagerly expecting a biography of so distinguished a literary man as Platen. Only a small, dull section of the record presently appeared, avoiding carefully all the most important psychologic history and incidents. The more suspicious part of the public were mystified, but had to be content. (This edition frequently is met now, as the complete Diary of the poet.) But the bulky original remained shut away in the Royal Library of Munich, to be seen only by privileged eyes. In 1890, on the centenary of the poet's birth, appeared the volume of the complete Journal, to the extent of one large moiety; and in 1900 came the concluding volume, deciphered and edited by Herr Laumann (of the Royal Library of Munich) and his associate Dr. L. von Scheffer. This edition is absolutely complete, word for word, line by line, with Platen's own record; except where he himself tore out pages, now and then. The Cotta publication-house, in Leipzig, issued the edition; and it is the only one that should be consulted by persons interested in its absorbingly fascinating if painful history. Various recent summaries of it, reviews, etc., in German, French, and one or two other languages, are conspicuously deficient or even grossly incorrect.

A linguist of great talents, Platen wrote the Journal not only in his own tongue, but—as to considerable por-
tions—in French, Italian, or Portuguese, and with citations from Persian, German however predominates. The Journal has not been translated into English, nor is likely to be so. The two volumes now presenting it in print are a rather formidable piece of book-making, together there are some 2000 large pages to read. The last entry is at Siracusa, October 13, 1835. A few days after that date, the diarist passed from earth.

In his moral character a man of the most elevated and sensitive sort, in his religious beliefs a Protestant, in the daily aspects of life highly practical, possessed of an idealizing temperament that naturally shunned all that is ignoble and animal per se, Platen presents a type of the ethical quite as firm as his intellectual personality. Along with this comes a third aspect—his inborn inter-sexualism, homosexual passion, and aesthetic uranianism, from youth upward. He was outwardly a man, a soldier; he had a virile mind in his body. Yet nevertheless only the nude appealed to his sense of supreme human beauty, to his great capacity to love, to desire love, to his sexual longings. The surges of spiritual and bodily passion that swept over his heart, even the lighter currents of sexual admiration, the chances and changes of his ideals and yearnings, the fleeting happiness of love that fell to him, its jealousies, its concealments, its struggles for attainment, its uncertainties, its renunciations—always some man is the object and end of these matters; never a woman. And as he matured, more and more unequivocally sexual became their fire. Whole groups of his poems sprang into being solely through these homosexual inspirations. By Platen’s discreet avoidance of names, of prepositions that point out sex, by Oriental colourings and so on, there is no open offence given to the reader who either knows nothing of homosexual sentiment or has a prejudice against it, even in Vergil or Hafiz or Shakespeare. Only by reading between the lines, as one well may do after perusing the Journal now before us as the master-key to Platen’s poetry, do we understand that poetry. For Platen lived under the curse—as least it is seldom a blessing—which makes a man’s warmest friendships into sexual loves; which makes its victim seek through the world for the sort of “friend” (so often not to be met however near at hand) who will surrender all to the seeker, just as the surrender of the seeker must needs be all: that subjection to the law of a mystic and inter-sexual psychos that means probably the profoundest joy or misery of which sexual human nature is capable.

More than this, Platen himself, like so many thousands of Uranians, did not till comparatively late in life understand his own nature; did not succeed in harmonizing its workings with his inner moral and religious convictions; did not free himself from the specters of his mis-taught conscience. This, even though he was relatively early convinced that in his sexual struggles lay nothing base or bestial. First and last, we have his fine idealizing—indeed too fine for his own peace—and his virile morality, in all the Diary. We may note here that he was never weakly pederastic in his instincts. He found himself driven chiefly to the sexually mature, to the manly youth or young man. Moreover he had all his life long many friendships that, fortunately for his tranquility and happiness, remained unaffected by his homosexual tendencies; as is the case with most intellectual Uranians. He was warmly esteemed and respected by men who were really friends—not more, and whom he thoroughly appreciated and valued. But when the attraction to another man began with the note of sexual passion, it generally proved to be such ad finem: and often like the old phrase of “Parrhasius” it was indeed “a mounting devil” that tortured and lingered to torture.

The homosexualism of Platen cannot be traced to heredity here. But it seems typically inborn. Even in
his boyhood, when only a royal page, amid the other lads of that aristocratic office in Munich, we find him experiencing what was a first and immature love, extremely ideal but vehement and never forgotten, for another young man, a guest at the Court, Count Mercy d’Argentic. An even more vivid sexual-sentimental passion came to him through the charming personality of young Prince Gottingen-Wallerstein, whose untimely death on the battlefield of Hanau deeply shocked Platen. Yet prematurely strong as we shall find these experiences were, they become pale beside the chronicle of Platen’s secret love for two young officers, Friedrich von Brandenburg (called “Federigo” in the Journal) and Captain Wilhelm von Hornstein; both which affairs came into progress during Platen’s first military years. But in turn, these episodes seem superficial and jejune, when contrasted with the self-revelations of his passionate University-loves, during his semesters at Würzburg and Erlangen. Here we meet with the records of, successively, his intimacy with Eduard Schmidtmann ("Adrastus"); with Hermann von Rotenhain; with young Otto von Billow; with a student not clearly identified except as “Gardenio” (a pseudonym in the Journal); with Justus Liebig, and with Karl Theodor German. Also mentionable, as either earlier or at this time, are some other intimacies more or less homosexual in tincture, continued into his later years: though in some cases going through the mutation to “mere friendship,” or else evaporating altogether from his heart and mind—those with Issel and Perglas, and with a passing military acquaintance (visiting Ansbach); with Köpisch, and so on. These however are not recorded in such graphic detail and poignant clarity.

Platen was never a woman-hater. On the contrary, he much admired the beautiful and the intellectual and the ideal-feminine in woman. All his life long, occurred intimate friendships with women. Several women fell in love with the man and poet. But no woman’s beauty or physique, no sexualism in a woman ever appealed to the nature Platen. What is more consistent, even when he was a lad only once is there to be traced anything like a sentimental intimacy and feeling for any female human being. There occurred during his relatively boyish officer-days, in Munich, a superficial attraction over him from a young French girl Mademoiselle Emphrasis de B—, visiting the Court with her mother. To his own riddlement, Platen thought that “at last” he was learning what other young men do not have to learn — the falling in love with a pretty girl. But in his lines about it, we see that he had not faith in the sentiment himself, even when it occupied him in an idle way. He knew that he was on the wrong track for him, no matter what was for others the right one. We find him soon returning to his natural, passionate and “sexual” feeling for women. Emphrasis de B— faded utterly and swiftly out of his memory. There was never any sequel to this boyish illusion.

Yet a word, before we take up the entries in the Journal — to point out that in the comedies of Platen there is hardly a trace of his homosexuality. Not in stuff, not in types, not descriptively — nowhere! If he had written some of the tragedies that he planned, doubtless he now would have yet another literary aspect. We might have had a “Conrad von Hohenstaufen,” from him that would have surpassed Schiller’s “Don Carlos” in its suggestions. But only in the Diary and the poems does the homosexual passion speak out. The private (and very large) correspondence of the poet is not published, will probably never be published, so far as it is now accessible extant. From that correspondence we could expect many of the same strange chords as in the passionate confessions of the Journal.

Another prefatory note to be made here, is allusion
to the gradual awakening in Platen of the physical side of his homosexualism: the long resistance on his part to physical attractions, to bodily desires toward his own sex. Only late and involuntarily in his experiences did he realize that there was no use in denying them or struggling against them that love had, it was that ‘devoured’ him, not any merely ardent friendships; that in the phrase of ‘Piéride’ what burned him to the vitals was:

— ‘Venus tout entière a sa proie attachée.’

In the Journal’s consecutive affairs we trace clearly his change. He passed from a merely romantic longing for an ‘intellectual’ relation with some young man to whom he was suddenly attracted, to the throes of a glowing physical-sexual disturbance. Or we may more correctly say, that we can follow the course of Platen’s confessing to himself that his love for X or Y or Z was sexual. Not till the fifth or sixth affaire de cœur that with the handsome Würzburg law-student, Schmidtlein do we find Platen crying out that ‘the body has its rights as well as the soul;’ and querying if ‘the former are more shameful than the latter?’ The confession however is tardy. There are plenty of signs that he had ever struggled with the promptings of homosexual desire, in a subconscious way or almost so, ab initio. His misgivings, his very arguments with himself that are dropped out here and there, imply this. He would not admit the truth to himself till forced to do so; and some of his causticy is naive. But such a vague state of mind ended when he was at the height of his passions for the beautiful Eduard Schmidtlein and for Herman von Rotthahn (‘The last night we did not part, we slept together—’’) as with the chapters as to ‘Cardenio,’ Böllow, and German; and beyond doubt there were no more sparks of sexual conscience on Platen’s part after Italy. Still, to the end, Platen veils the physical side of his feelings; as would any highly refined heterosexual or homosexual. The ‘Books’ of the Diary numbered XXI and XXII give the clearest recognition on his side of the power of his emotion, and of his acceptance of its full sexual conquest over him.

As regards any real revision of the Journal from Platen, after that uncertain time when he decided to think of it as suitable for other readers, we find that he has not much impaired his confessions by tinkering with it. In fact, he seems to have done little more—fortunately—than to tear out some pages that he did not wish any second person ever to read. There are a good many of these tearings-out; eloquent when one notices the connections in which they occur: guesses at his courage sinking as he reviewed them. But we have enough of the long history, as it is. Many entries are of great length. A considerable quantity of verse is also met in the Journal, some of which has not yet been reprinted in the editions of his Poems. But none of this unprinted poetical matter equals what has already been transferred to his published poetry—especially the Sonnets, Odes, Ghazals, some short pieces, and the pathetic First ‘Epistle to Cardenio’.

In the following review of from the Journal the reader must understand that not the twentieth part of actual references that would be of high interest and appropriateness can be cited here. There will be given only a relatively fragmentary series, from pages here and there; demonstrating in Platen’s nature the workings of one ‘affair’ after another—especially the mature episodes, those at Würzburg and Erlangen. The reader will find a brief study of several of (merely) the earlier incidents set forth in an article by Ludwig Frey, in the ‘Jahrbuch für Sexuelle Zwischenstufen’ for the year 1899. Unfortunately at the date when that study was written the most important volume of the Journal had not been given to the public. Hence the interesting article by Frey is extremely in-
complete, and contains sundry more or less salient errors of judgement or statement.

On turning over the Diary we find that — as might be expected — the first entries that we seek refer to shadowy, idealistic loves; much more fanciful than grounded in personalities. Platen mentions, years later (in October 1817, when he was passing a summer at Schiersee) that a friend in the Palace of Munich, young Xylander, "was the first object" of his homosexual emotions. But no such entries as to Xylander, occur in the proper date. Instead we find that when Platen was sixteen years old, and yet a page, he saw at a court-ball the young Count Mercy d'Argenteau, a relative of the French ambassador to Bavaria. The beauty and grace of this youth made a deep impression on Platen — deep, for it never wore away wholly. He always looked back to it with a throbb of heart the more feelingly because he felt, even to his latest years, that no physical sexudism had any share in it. Indeed Platen was spell-bound by this young of Argenteau, merely by seeing him a few times; for he never was presented to the young Frenchman and only two or three words — those by accident and of no importance whatever — passed 'twixt the two. But long entries in his Journal testify to his emotion. He writes later: "I wished for love; till now I had felt only a longing for friendship... How happy I am when near him, how my heart rises! A gentle excitement fills all my soul. Seeing him again has the same effect upon me as if out of his features, at the first glance, a new life nape to my heart... I dreamed of him to-night — a fair and kindly dream, fair and kind as himself... Even if I never see him again, O, my God! let not this love be extinguished in me! It is the love for all that is Beautiful, True and Perfect... I will rejoice when I see him, and be sorrowful when my eye finds him not. I will think and dream and speak of him.

I will love him to a passionate enthusiasm, I will call out his name in a fiery ecstasy when I am alone..." When the departure of young Count d'Argenteau from Munich was near, Platen's entries grow proportionally vehement: "—Is fate so inexorable? O, turn this blow from me, my protecting genius! I will do and suffer anything if only he can be allowed to remain near me... I cannot be without him. I feel that, as an indescribable void in my life."

On seeing young Mercy d'Argenteau really for the last time, at the theater one evening, Platen slips into the box that d'Argenteau had just left, and carries away the programme that probably d'Argenteau had held during the performance! Now all this state of mind was aroused by the mere physique of a young man whom Platen never knew; secretly could say he really had met at any time! But this is characteristic, and it was to be duplicated for awhile in other sentimental attractions. Young Count d'Argenteau, we need not say, left Munich in utter ignorance of what a male adorer he left behind him.

But at this same time, or only a few months later, Platen came under the spell of another "shadow-love": one of an even more idealistic complexion. This was his passion for a certain young Prince Oettingen-Wallerstein, a kinsman of the King of Bavaria. This Prince Oettingen-Wallerstein seems to have been of quite exceptional beauty of physique, and a fine young character within. His traits are today traditional in the family to which he belonged. His mental and moral promise was high. Platen made no more acquaintance with Prince Oettingen-Wallerstein than with young Count d'Argenteau. But again his idealism breaks out into a not less clear and articulate love. There are several entries that sufficiently witness this, at the time, not to speak of numerous later ones. And Platen learned through this passionate fancy for young Prince Oettingen-Wallerstein what sorrow in love can mean: for the Prince was killed in the Battle.
of Hanau. Platen never grew indifferent to his image, nor to the painful emotion that this death excited. He was often greatly depressed by it. There are plentiful references to the deceased young soldier, and to moods that his memory inspired. Even in mature life, after all his later experiences of quite other sort, we shall find in the Journal that the Prince occupied a special and sacred niche in Platen’s heart; probably because the sentiment had been so indicative and tragic. When he heard of the death of Prince Otto von Bayern Wallstein, he went so far in his grief as to write a letter to the mother of the Prince — a letter the tone of which seemed to him in after-years indiscreet, to say the least — begging the lady to send him some personal relic of her son. He never received a reply. But we can believe that he had his own sentiment in fair perspective when he wrote, by and by:

“I loved my dead, whom I had only seen three times.”

Pace by pace, with the beginnings in this way of Platen’s homosexual life and but little later) were certain likenings and attractions to young men that were more of the nature of friendships; some of these being life-long ones, as mentioned. Yet it is noteworthy in their connection that such relationships, no matter into what they developed, always began with a glow of homosexual love; with his being “taken” at first sight by merely the beauty of the young man in question: his sense of male beauty catching fire. And sometimes they balanced a good while, in a curious, a plainly homosexual and Uranian way, between friendship and love, love and friendship; till they calmed to friendship only. Or (as is so characteristic of the Uranian) he ceased to care much or at all for the originators of these emotions. Among these intimacies we have that with Messerschmidt, with Count Friedrich Fugger, Gustav Jacobs, Nathaniel Schlichtegroll, Max von Graber, Adalbert Liebeskind, Friedrich Schmitzlein, Joseph Xylander and Friedrich von Perglas. Four of these loved and valued Platen as their friend, in good and evil report, year in and year out. The still smaller circle of such true friends, including Messerschmidt, Graber and Fugger, became — more or less — Platen’s life-long confidants as to his homosexuality and its dramas. But that they were homosexual themselves, during any stages of the friendships is no wise clear. When now and then, in after-life, that matter happens to be plainly spoken of between Platen and them, the denials on their part, plainly incidental to what they have to say to him, are not doubtful. We occasionally have sufficient reason to think that the beginning of these intimacies with Platen was on a mutually homosexual basis, in at least a psychic degree. But in any case, as time passed, these friends became “just friends”, nothing more; ever invaluable as such to Platen. He was a mystery to them. They did not understand his sexualistic riddle as it matured. But they were well-natured enough, if not experienced enough, to contemplate it philosophically and kindly, and to do what they could to guide and help their friend if he needed them. Max von Graber and Fugger were peculiarly Platen’s confidential repositories of his troubled life. They were worthy of his trust, even where they did not—approve. The reader is particularly referred to the long entries in the Journal as to young Perglas, who was a fellow-officer; and to the records (in Book V) as to Issel, a handsome young painter. With Issel, Platen struck up a rash, enthusiastic, sentimental intimacy, full of a quality of abnormal regard. Issel and Platen became bosom-friends for some weeks; travelled about Tyrol together; and then Platen found out that they were completely unsuited to intimacy! In this history, as in others, fault appears to have been not a little with Platen. Issel seems like an affectionate, impassive fellow, while Platen was arrogant and impatient and tactless. After several trivial contentions, Issel quitted Platen at Aibling. After he
had gone. Platen realized with shame that his own stupid pride and want of tact had driven a good friend away, and he laments, too late, his ill-behaviour. But in the relationship with Perglas (see the many entries in the Journal) we have more curious examples of how Platen could conduct himself when mixing up friendship and love. Perglas appears to have been rather well suited to be a friend to Platen, as Platen to Perglas: especially as we cannot help surmising that Perglas was psychically homosexual—at least bisexual. But somehow neither young man was able to be perfectly straightforward and frank with the other. Neither would trust the other with his heart and nature. Perglas, more than once, in his sexual attitude toward women, with his plain sympathy for Platen’s vaguely defined nature, hints at a helenic sort of bond as desired by him, too. But their half-confidence and Platen’s disputes and dogmatic ways, repelled Perglas. They quarrelled and made up, quarrelled again and made up again constantly. They could not be happy apart, yet could not get along when together—in large part because of half-confidence rather than complete ones, and also because Platen’s temperament was at no time easy to meet. It was exacting, often bitter externally, in a nervous sort of way; while all the while he might be most passionately desirous of the good-will and intimacy made almost impossible by such content. Bitter tears of shame and loneliness did this failing of his temperament cost him! Not till rather late in his life could he get the better of it in part. Perglas and he were presently separated by duties. Their friendship became one by letters. Some of those from Perglas were impassioned enough: as when he declares that he “cannot exist” without Platen. Perglas died in 1820. Platen was preoccupied with other affairs at that time. We may note here that though he speaks of the absence of physical desire in any intimacy of this period, yet he uses one expression concerning his relations with Perglas that show

that he was far from being quite unsophisticated or unexpectant. But the two friends seem never to have taken what Platen termed “the last step,” even in their passionately affectionate days.

Of himself, at this period Platen writes (June 1813): “I saw no women except of that artificial class that comes to a Court. These could not attract me. So may it have been that my first warmer inclinations went out to a man. I will not say that I had not any understanding of unplatonic love; still, I would rather call what I felt an intense, inner respect than a special sexual inclination.” The “special sexual” attraction for him was to become evident to him presently.

For verily his third homosexual love (distinguished from any contemporary friendships, even if ardent) was certainly of the real fruition: albeit again we have it in far more a process and spell of idealizing, of dreaming, than of interest based on even a slight personal knowledge of the object. It was a wholly one-sided sentiment, due solely to another man’s beauty of face and figure. But it was a powerful and unhappy passion. It had a distinct and lasting connection with Platen’s sentimental life. It entered immediately into his earlier poetical aspirations. He had become an officer in Munich. As it happened, that winter found him unusually solitary, several intimate friends being on duty elsewhere. He speaks of himself as having grown especially indifferent to some recent episodes the recollection of the young painter Issel, the little fer-follet glow of his feeling for Euphrasie de Boisesson both were completely past. He writes: “In this mood of ardently longing for love, it happened that at a concert on November 12, 1814, was present a young officer of the —— Regiment, who caught my attention.” The young officer was a certain Captain Friedrich von Brandenstein, a cuirassier. He was blond, quiet-mannered,
of excellent family, and of a type that, as we find, suggested to Platen the vanished Count Mercy d’Argenteau. Platen writes: "From this accident developed a long love, which defied all separation, to every impression of which I surrendered myself, and which filled my heart with a cloud of dreams. The officer mentioned was that ‘Federigo’ who in my later pages often is so named.

"A cloud of dreams", indeed! For we find that Platen never exchanged more than a few utterly insignificant words with Captain ‘Federigo’ von Brandenstein. He never was on terms of writing or of other real acquaintance with Brandenstein: was part of the time—most of it unknown to Brandenstein even as a street-acquaintance or fellow-officer. But Platen thus nourished, wholly by a process of idealism, what really did become a life-long love: such even amid many other realities of like sexualism. Once again Platen had met his fatal "type," in outward shape at least; and he gave himself up to an obsessive longing for it, like a woman. In reviewing this Brandenstein affair, awhile later, Platen mentions that the various occasions when he saw Brandenstein, as on the street or at parade or in a café, "served to strengthen my madness, and to establish a perfect passion in me—mild in its general characteristics[?] though often amounting to a heated longing." But he insists that in all this incoherent emotion he had not at this time any idea that a punishable [i.e. physical] relation between two men could exist; otherwise I would probably have been frightened back from it. Some time later, I found man-to-man love outlined in several literary works, and referred to these my awakening to a notice of the topic—and to his Plutarch readings. "But at this same date, I was still ignorant that sensual-sexual passion could come into play here—that unholly secret was first clear to me by reading some indecent verses by Piron... Never did lust desecrate my feeling for Federigo."

But whether "lust" here was present or absent, this passion for Brandenstein was the kernel of Platen's psychic life in Munich, during many months. He haunted, usually in vain, the places where he could even get a look at Federigo, could see "that divine profile." He wrote Federigo epistles (all unsent) in verse, begging sympathy and "friendship," depicting what might be an intimacy between them. Page after page of the Diary has Brandenstein's "dear name," with little or nothing but thoughts for him, sighs for him. Several of the shorter and earlier poems of Platen that will be met in his published works relate to his love for this almost unknown comrade. Two highly characteristic Sonnets, written seven long years later, when much else had happened to Platen's heart— as we shall see—were the result of a chance glimpse of "Federigo". Both the young men were presently obliged to quit Munich, for the last chapter of the campaign against Napoleon. There was never any further meeting, even after each had returned to Bavaria. But that made no difference. Platen was fettered. Occasionally he fancied that Captain Brandenstein might be interested in him, in turn; and equally timid or too proud to begin an acquaintance!—a notion lacking any sufficient ground, to say least. Most likely, Brandenstein never had the remotest of what was going on in the soul of that quiet, taciturn young Platen: probably did not think a dozen thoughts of Platen during all the stay in Munich! Platen could worship in mute yearning... "Never were his features so attractive to me as this evening... I followed him through the street..." And later he says, writing on the night when Platen himself was ordered away from Munich,... "All is over. I have come from the Court-Concert. I have seen Federigo perhaps for the last time. Oh, I see too clearly he scorches me!... I must go without saying farewell... My heart is broken. I have been ready to go away from here, I was glad to do so, but now it seems to me as if I were..."
be bred and nourished any sort of love, heterosexual or homosexual: often purely such stuff as dreams are made of. As to the end of the "Federigo" affair, it never completely ended; as has been mentioned. The blessed image of the young curassier of Munich remained in Platen's heart all through his career, especially in Munich. Even at the Universities, it tormented him or thrilled him. It was a sort of permanent criterion of the depth of his sentiments for his later flames.

Just at this time, in Munich, and during the march to France, Platen's love friendship (the grade of that special feeling in Platen is hard to characterize here) with his brother-officer, Perglas was in course. As has been said, it was anything but a smooth course. Perglas and he could not part psychically, and did not, till death removed Perglas untimely from the world; but they never came really together. There is excellent reason to believe that a certain mysterious episode in Perglas's officer-life in Munich, rather later (in the winter of 1817) - his desertion from the garrison and from duty, for some days, his disappearance and his return, in a pitiful state of shattered nerves, was a meditated plan of suicide, because of sexual depression. It was an incident in which Platen beheld his friend with brotherly care and judgment. But to the last there is no record of a due degree of confidence between this strange pair, even when an hour of mutual disclosure might be expected.

But a new personage was now to appear on the scene for this idealistic poet-soldier. Like the matter of Mercé d'Argenteau, or of Prince-Oettingen-Wallerstein, or of Brandenstein, this affair was sheer idealism, concentrated on a handsome comrade's exterior. As much as a brief personal acquaintance really was at least the finale of it, it was a trifle more concrete than its predecessors. Among

held fast by chains of adamant." ... A poem of several hundred lines follows, being a romantic dialogue imagined between himself and Brandenstein. Well may Shakespeare's clown remark, "We that are true lovers run into strange capers!"

During the long marching across into France, Platen's passion for Federigo, his frequent anxieties for Brandenstein's actual safety, his hopes, longings, reminiscences, all recur. When passing through Xityry, (August 15, 1815) we have this: ... "But the bitter certainty not even to hope for B's acquaintance and friendship brings me into a sort of despair. I must live days, months, years, without seeing him ... the darling of my heart for almost a year - the eternal object of the dreams of my fancy, he whom I so deeply love, he whose noble features recall to me the image of Mercé d'Argenteau, he whose acquaintance is the crown of my wishes ... etc. etc. The recurrent allusion to the haunting "Tyre" is noteworthy for psychologists in Uranism; as so often at the base of a homosexual admiration. When Platen was back again in Munich, he breaks out Jan. 15, 1816 g ... "O Federigo! If I am to be disappointed in you, why do I not find it out? If I am not to be so, why am I not made happy? I do not see you, I do not find you, I know nothing of you; but I love you, and if this pressure, this suspense, continue as now, the very tissue of my nerves will be torn to pieces." Here many pages of the Journal are cut out by Platen's own hand. Again ... "O Fritz! O Federigo! Knewest thou my love and my constancy, thou wouldst reward them." Another long and impassioned entry at this time is for Jan. 28, 1816 ... "Poor glowing heart..." and so on. And all this hyper-erotic state of mind was a matter of nearly complete idealism! Platen was in love, at sight, with the physique of another young man; on it he was building up a whole sentimental fabric of glowing sexual-psychic desire. But just so can
the Munich officer was a certain Captain Wilhelm von Hornstein, a remarkably good-looking officer, of rather notable family, as well as being a Knight of Malta—which Order, as the reader may remember, is one vowed to celibacy, not to say to chastity of every sort. Hornstein was a man of entirely mediocre, commonplace, matter-of-fact psychosis; not in the least intellectual or romantic. But unluckily Platen did not find this out till too late. Platen fell in love with him, vehemently. Between Platen’s own shyness and the difference in their ranks, with some other circumstances, Platen did not meet this new idol for a considerable while. During all the interim, the Diary is a daily witness to longings, dreams, doubts, hopes, fancies, rhapsodic outbursts, and so on; exactly as in the case of “Federigo.” Moreover, this Hornstein affair was growing just in the time that “Federigo” was so potent in Platen’s soul. Hence we find Platen that shows a good deal of the distress and surprise, natural to any fine and inexperienced nature, that a man can be in love with two human beings at once. This appeared to Platen a sort of mysterious monstrosity! He is ashamed to discover his “inconstancy” or—capacity. He does not understand how hearts are the subjects of “type-prepossessions,” over and over again—simultaneously. A plurality of loves seems to him disgraceful. On February 26, 1816 he writes: “My mood was never gloomier and heavier than yesterday evening. I was filled with the thoughts of only Wilhelm. Alone and lamenting, I sat at my writing-desk in the night.” And he reviews sadly how nearly he had met the beautiful Hornstein at last: “I came home and I threw myself on my bed, in a glowing longing. The sun and the new day have lightened only a little my yearning, along with a dream of Federigo. Is it not strange that I could dream of the latter, when I was so full of Wilhelm?” Then as in self-apology, he says: “I love the first-named still—always—but I have not the least hope of meeting him, and I see him nowhere now.” Platen’s self-contempt for what he thought was a sort of vapourish weakness in him, apart from moral questions involved, quite filled him with unhappiness. A few weeks later, perfectly worn out with self-introspection, he went and confided the whole story of his excited heart to his good and true friend, Schmitzlein. The step was dangerous. Many friends might have cast off the confessor of such “abnormal” passions. But not so young Schmitzlein. He did not pretend to understand Platen’s nature. He was wholly Dionian—we may infer. But his affection to Platen held firm. He gave him excellent advice: toward proper self-restraint, resolution and silence; and generally showed himself to be a model friend. In fact, all through Platen’s most detailed grandes passions we find that Schmitzlein and Max von Grüber were his best guides and guards.

Nevertheless, in spite of this relief by having such a confidant, Platen had many unhappy days and nights till the end of the Wilhelm von Hornstein love-passion. He came at last to a slight acquaintance with Hornstein; one of speaking terms only. He got no comfort from that, because he did not enter into any real acquaintance by it, and also because he saw no signs that Hornstein was in any wise attracted to himself. The entries of March and April, in this same year, are positively despairing. Several times Platen considers suicide. Filial duty and religion restrain him: “. . . O, if I could but mark one single sign of his kindly interest, or even of his notice of me! I am without rest! I cannot stay in this condition!—it disgusts me. I can think of only one thing. I may be called the weakest and most contemptible of men—I cannot help that.” Again we hear him exclaim (March 23, 1816): “I am lost! I see it clearly and plainly that I am lost! . . . Mock me, ridicule me, scorn me, ye men—I cannot help it. All my will, all my concentration, I have brought to bear—but only one subject can I think of, day and night. I spoke with him to-day,