

Biography of Raymund Lull

“We do not need to be reminded that Beatrice’s adorer had a wife and children, or that Laura’s poet owned a son and daughter by a concubine.” Nor were Dante and Petrarch exceptions among medieval poets in this respect. It was a dark world.

The thirteenth century was also an age of superstition, an age of ghosts and visions and miracles and fanaticism. The “Flagellants” wandered from city to city calling on the people to repent. Girded with ropes, in scant clothing or entirely naked, they scourged themselves in the open streets. The sect spread like contagion from Italy to Poland, propagating extravagant doctrines and often causing sedition and murder. Catherine of Sienna and Francis of Assisi in the fervor of their love saw visions. The latter bore the *stigmata* and died of the wounds of Christ, which are said to have impressed themselves on