

Birthplace and Early Life

was the chief official in the household of a medieval prince or noble and had the superintendence of feasts and ceremonies. These must have been frequent and luxurious at the court of James II., for Aragon, previous to the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, enjoyed the most liberal government of Europe. According to one authority, "the genius and maxims of the court were purely republican." The kings were elective, while the real exercise of power was in the hands of the Cortes, an assembly consisting of the nobility, the equestrian order, the representatives of cities, and the clergy. A succession of twenty sovereigns reigned from the year 1035 to 1516. At such a court and amid such an assemblage, probably in the capital town of Zaragoza (Sargossa), Lull spent several years of his life. He was early addicted to music and played the cithern with skill. But he was yet more celebrated as a court poet. Accord-