

popularity were the things for which he and those like him had bargained away their integrity, prophesying with conscious falsehood to the deluded people. His "lovers" are his partisans, who eagerly welcomed his presages of peace and prosperity, and doubtless actively opposed Jeremiah with ridicule and threats. The last detail is remarkable, for we do not otherwise know that Pashchur affected to prophesy. If it be not meant simply that Pashchur accepted and lent the weight of his official sanction to the false prophets, and especially those who uttered their divinations in the name of "the Baal," that is to say, either Molech, or the popular and delusive conception of the God of Israel, we see in this man one who combined a steady professional opposition to Jeremiah with power to enforce his hostility by legalized acts of violence. The conduct of Hananiah on a later occasion (xxviii. 10), clearly proves that, where the power was present, the will for such acts was not wanting in Jeremiah's professional adversaries.

It is generally taken for granted that the name of "Pashchur" has been substituted for that of "Malchijah" in the list of the priestly families which returned with Zerubbabel from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra ii. 38; Neh. vii. 41; cf. 1 Chron. xxiv. 9); but it seems quite possible that "the sons of Pashchur" were a subdivision of the family of Immer, which had increased largely during the Exile. In that case, the list affords evidence of the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prediction to Pashchur. The prophet elsewhere mentions another Pashchur, who was also a priest, of the course or guild of Malchijah (xxi. 1, xxxviii. 1), which was the designation of the fifth class of the priests, as "Immer" was that of the sixteenth (1 Chron. xxiv. 9, 14). The