

chance would John the Baptist have in denouncing the sins of those who pressed forward to hear him? "O, generation of vipers." By the present rule of interpretation, John the Baptist must have been wrong. True, he proved his words to be correct; true they were a generation of vipers whom he addressed; true they were guilty of all with which he charged them. But his words were too strong. If he had been right he would not have used them. Such at least is the interpretation that would have been put upon them by our modern men of refinement. As the supercilious Pharisee came with head erect, with nostril dilated, with eye scornful; with words full of praise of self and contempt of others, it is easy to picture what would be said by the haters of blunt speech as the words of John reached their ears directed towards the great leader of the Church, so unceremoniously accosted. They would, no doubt, say the charge was untrue, the words were rough and therefore not to be believed. Has not the name of this Pha-isee been known as that of an eloquent speaker at the Sanhedrim; as one who has filled a large space in the public history of the country; who has been for many years the leading figure wherever religious meetings took place. He is not one of the generation of vipers, and for saying so we will not take the part of the Baptist but of the man with whom he finds fault.

Such reflections may not be without their uses. The very sayings which we have pictured as possible, nay, even as probable, in the Baptist's time, have been heard over and over again in the present day. In discussing the causes which led to the secession of so many of our brethren, it has been necessary to give the full honour to those to whom the honour was due of leading this secession. By the most indisputable proof we have shown the course followed by some who professed to be ministers of our Church; who were filling her charges; occupying prominent positions, and all the time plotting her destruction. We showed clearly that some of these men had not only done nothing for the Church, but had actually trampled out every effort for the extension of her bounds. Yet, in spite of the abundance of proof, we have been told that some members of our Church make it an excuse for having left her communion, that we spoke too openly, and that, therefore, we must be wrong, and the men who were too clearly proved to have been guilty of the conduct with which we charged them must be right. Would these gentlemen act up to these convictions if placed on a jury to try a criminal. The proof, they might say, is so overwhelming that the prisoner cannot be guilty. The crown prosecutor must be wrong, because he has spoken strongly. True, the crime is a heinous one, but no man should use strong language, however deeply he feels. We find the prisoner not guilty for that reason. And on the theory of the man to whom we have referred they would be right.

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#### UNITED PRESBYTERIANS.

Poor Hector McIntyre! How he writhed and flew into a passion every time his Uncle Monkbarns referred to his unfortunate attempt to capture the *phoca* or seal.