

he would speak, he might be said to have called them together.

Remonstrances and entreaties were equally useless, and, with extreme unwillingness, they committed him to Bedford gaol to wait for the sessions.

It is not for us to say that Bunyan was too precise. He was himself the best judge of what his conscience and his situation required. To himself, at any rate, his trial was at the moment most severe. He had been left a widower a year or two before, with four young children, one of them blind. He had lately married a second time. His wife was pregnant. The agitation at her husband's arrest brought on premature labour, and she was lying in his house in great danger. He was an affectionate man, and the separation at such a time was peculiarly distressing. After some weeks the Quarter Sessions came on. Bunyan was indicted under the usual form, that he, "being a person of such and such condition, had, since such a time, devilishly and pertinaciously abstained from coming to church to hear Divine service, and was a common upholder of unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom, contrary to the laws of our Sovereign Lord the King."

There seems to have been a wish to avoid giving him a formal trial. He was not required to plead, and it may have been thought that he had been punished sufficiently. He was asked why he did not go to church? He said that the Prayer-book was made by man; he was ordered in the Bible to pray with the spirit and the understanding, not with the spirit and the Prayer-book. The magistrates, referring to another Act of Parliament, cautioned Bunyan against finding fault with the Prayer-book, or he would