

If the writer of the preceding letter intended to tell the truth, he was either extremely ignorant, or extremely unfortunate in the choice of words to convey his ideas, as the following brief narrative of facts will show. Queen Anne's chapel, as has already been shown, was originally built for a congregational meeting-house, but the builders, finding that both town and state refused to allow them to use it for such a purpose in that place, afterward converted it into an Episcopal church, which they called queen Ann's chapel. The bell, which was regularly used from the time of its arrival till 1766, with the exception of a few of the last years, when it was used but once in a month, had on it the following label: 'presented to queen Anne's chapel by the bishop of London.' The discontinuance of public worship in the chapel, three sabbaths out of four, induced those who lived in the vicinity, a greater part of whom had attended the chapel, to form a new parish, build a meeting-house, which was raised June twenty-third, 1761, constitute a new church, and settle a congregational minister. In 1766, public worship ceased entirely in the chapel, which, 'being thus deserted, went to decay.'* 'The christening basin, which is of silver, is in the possession of St. Paul's church.'* The bible was given, by a Mr. Jackman, to the church in Boscawen, New Hampshire, and the communion cloth was worn, as a shawl, by a Mrs. Palmer; the bell remained for ten years unnolesed, and apparently unclaimed by any person or society, in the belfry of the deserted chapel, when the steeple was blown down, about a year before the fall of the house, throwing the bell into the street. Seeing this, Mr. David Whitmore, an innholder in the neighborhood, wheeled it into his barn, where it remained for some time, unnolesed and unclaimed, till, at the request of Mr. Whitmore, colonel Josiah Little removed it to his own house, where it remained, unnolesed, as is well known, till the building of the Belleville school-house, where it was used, both for school-house and meeting-house, ready to be delivered to any person or society legally or equitably entitled to it. Requests were made to Mr. Little to give up, or sell, the bell to St. Paul's church. To all these requests, Mr. Little's uniform answer was, in substance, this: 'The bell is not mine to give or sell. Any person or society, claiming it, can have it by substantiating the claim.' Satisfied that no such claim could be legally made, certain persons, who they were, or for what motive, I pretend not to say or know, determined to obtain possession of the bell, and accordingly, as it would seem, employed, for that purpose, some stupid agent or agents, whose organs of acquisitiveness must have vastly exceeded those of locality, as they did not appear to know the difference between Kent street school-house in Newburyport, and Pilsbury's lane in Newbury. They accordingly made a sad mistake, and instead of taking queen Anne's chapel bell, carried off the Kent street school-house bell, which has the following label: 'Joseph Joyet fecit 1757. Lebean alia grande ange,' which they, no doubt, supposed meant, being interpreted, 'presented to queen Ann's chapel by the bishop of London.' The selectmen of Newburyport, however, thought differently, and, in the course of the day, reclaimed the bell. Having failed in this attempt to obtain the right bell, the thieves, having studied topography for over two months, and having selected what they doubtless deemed a suitable time for the accomplishment of their design, determined to try again.

* Reverend doctor Morss.