

**BRIEF RECORDS OF THE INDEPENDENT
CHURCH, AT BECCLES, SUFFOLK;
INCLUDING BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES
OF ITS MINISTERS, AND SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE RISE OF NONCONFORMITY IN
THE EAST ANGLIAN COUNTIES**

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Brief Records of the Independent Church, at Beccles, Suffolk; Including Biographical Notices of Its Ministers, and Some Account of the Rise of Nonconformity in the East Anglian Counties by Samuel Wilton Rix

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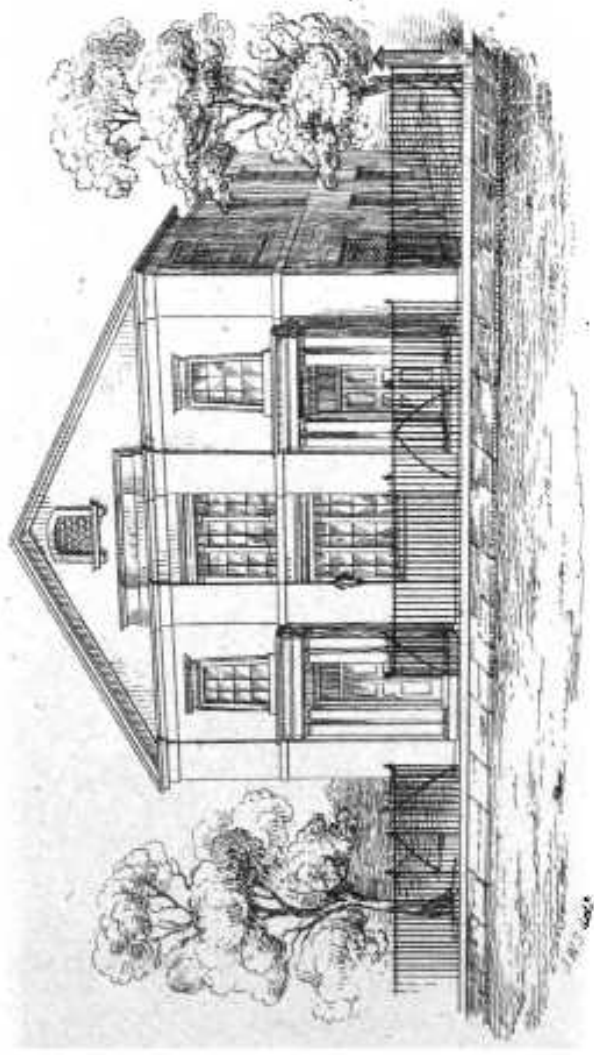
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INDEPENDENT CHAPEL. BECCLES.

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MDCCLXXXVII.

"The churches in those early times were entirely Independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws."

MOSHEIM, Cent. I.

"Indeed this way of examining all things by the Word . . . is a course I would admonish all to beware of who would avoid the danger of being made Independents."

OWEN ON SCHISM.

WILLIAM LENNY, PRINTER, BECCLES.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

ARE INSCRIBED

TO THE YOUNG PERSONS

OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

AT BECCLES.



PREFACE.

MANY months ago, I was favoured with a perusal of the earliest records of the Independent church at Beccles. An interest in the subject once excited, I went on to collect such other materials for its history as fell in my way: and the re-opening of its place of worship, after considerable alteration, appeared a suitable time for offering these records to notice, in a permanent and connected form.

Publications of dissenting church history have not usually received extensive encouragement. That circumstance is, I believe, chiefly attributable to the anxiety of dissenting ministers and parents, in general, to inculcate and maintain the principles of personal religion, rather than the peculiarities of nonconformity. A just preference, unquestionably,—but which has betrayed many into a neglect of topics immensely, though not supremely, important. The youth of dissenting families too frequently

grow up in ignorance of any other reason for their non-conformity than parental example. The natural result is, that "by and by, when persecution ariseth," or when fashion, or emolument, or the attractive pomp of the national worship, allures, they forsake the ground which their ancestors maintained at the peril of liberty, and of life itself.

Viewed in this light, the prevalent disregard of such subjects becomes a powerful inducement to invite attention to them. Nor am I altogether without hope that local associations and attachments, may, in the present instance, be subservient to such a purpose. At all events, I am desirous that my humble compilation should not be regarded as a *mere* depository of what is curious; but should tend to encourage a thoughtful and candid investigation of the history and principles of nonconformity, as they are developed in works of wider interest and higher literary pretensions.*

* In addition to the books referred to in the subsequent pages, may be mentioned Towgood's *Letters to White*; Furneaux's *Letters to Blackstone*; Robinson's *Plan of Lectures on Nonconformity*; Graham on *Ecclesiastical Establishments*; Marshall's "*Ecclesiastical Establishments considered*," and "*Ecclesiastical Establishments*