

Obituary of Pastor James E. Seneker.

– F. Kuegele.

After His unsearchable, but wise and good counsel it pleased the Lord to call from our side our beloved brother and fellow-servant, James E. Seneker, after an illness of only five day's duration. Pastor Seneker was born in Scott County, Virginia, near the Tennessee boundary on January 21, 1829. His education for the ministry he received with pastors of the Tennessee Synod, in which Synod he was also ordained to the ministry. After officiating for some time in North Carolina, he removed to Virginia, and receiving a call from Koiner's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation ministered to it eleven years. Although he had not enjoyed the advantages of a regular course of study and was not acquainted with either the German or Latin languages, he, nevertheless, by diligent study became thoroughly versed in the Lutheran doctrine. He was one of the three organizers of the Concordia Synod of Virginia, which Synod, after standing independent for some years, connected itself with the Synodical Conference and became a district of the Joint Synod of Ohio. For upwards of two years Pastor Seneker served congregations in the State of Ohio, when he accepted a call tendered him by congregations in Shenandoah County, Virginia, to which he ministered until the withdrawal of the Ohio Synod from the Synodical Conference. In the controversy on election he took a decided stand for the Confessional doctrine. When the Ohio Synod made the explanations of the fathers its confession, he declared his determination to withdraw from that body, and as his congregations would not go with him, because they were influenced by the secret machinations of the district president, he resigned his position. Besides ourselves Seneker was the only English pastor in the Ohio Synod who remained faithful to the doctrine of the Confessions, and what persecutions and revilings he endured because of his fidelity to the truth is, to some extent, known to the readers of the W_{ITNESS}. But he was willing to suffer for the truth's sake. When we proposed to procure for him pecuniary assistance, he declined it, assigning as reason that his hands could labor. Since two years he supported his family by teaching in winter and as a day-laborer in summer. Also this winter he was teaching school some four miles from his residence. On the 8th of January, being under way between the schoolhouse and his boarding-place, he slipped on snow-covered

ice and falling backward hurt himself inwardly, of which, however, he was not aware at the time, but the next morning he was unable to rise and, in addition to the hurt, pneumonia set in. At first the attack not appearing so serious his wife was sent for only after two days. From that time he sank rapidly. Of his death he spoke composedly, and under continual prayer he committed his soul into the hands of his Savior. On January 14th, in the morning at three o'clock, he departed this life. His body was conveyed to this place and buried in the Trinity cemetery on the spot where the pulpit in the old church had been, from which he proclaimed the Word of reconciliation for a number of years. Notwithstanding the short notice a large concourse of people had gathered, to whom the writer of this spoke on the words Daniel 12:3. He leaves a mourning widow and five children, the youngest not yet two years old. We know, that the Lord will not forsake the offspring of His servants who fought to glorify Him upon earth.

James E. Seneker had become dear to our soul, because in the time of trial we came to know him as a sincere lover of God's Word; and we know no other man who in the late controversy, had endured greater revilings and made more sacrifices for the truth of God than he did. Yet he was always resigned to the will of God. For the great grace of God given him his memory shall remain with us in honor.

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