

EDITORIAL REMARKS

The Annual Meeting of the association held on September 29, 2012, had for its purpose to answer the question “How are we to reconfigure the association for the next 115 years, the year 2012 being the 115th since the beginning of the work of the SSA in 1898”; cultural changes since the end of the nineteenth century require us to do this.

Following a short business meeting, the question was addressed by four panel speakers giving presentations on different aspects of the association’s work: Reuben Bell spoke especially to the cultural change; Erland Brock gave an historical review of the life and work of the association, including, as exhibits, published documents detailing the association’s birth—it is interesting to note how many of the names associated with that beginning are still represented in today’s membership; Oliver and Rachel Odhner addressed problems faced by the association arising from materialistic thought; and Joanna Hill spoke about ways to make Swedenborgian thought more accessible. After the talks, the floor was opened for comments and discussion.

Swedenborg’s concept of “influx,” of the influence by correspondence of higher planes of existence on lower ones, is an essential part of the structure of thought about all planes of existence presented in both the pre-theological and theological works. Erland Brock opens consideration of the subject in “Some Preliminary Thoughts on Swedenborg’s Concept of Influx.” This is followed by wide-ranging reflections on it in Karl Burjukov’s article titled “Influx.”

In the first of two parts of “The Philosophical Context of Swedenborg the Philosopher—Reason and Faith, Faith and Reason—a Human Project,” Jane Williams-Hogan provides details of that context through her treatment of René Descartes (1596–1650), Spinoza (1632–1677), Leibniz (1646–1716), and Christian Wolff (1679–1754), some of the major players that contributed to the cultural milieu that Swedenborg entered; issues raised by them became important subjects addressed by him.