THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND
AUTHORITY

But the most effective enemy to knowledge, and that which hath done the greatest execution unto truth, hath been a peremptory adherence unto Authority, and especially the establishing of our beliefs upon the dictates of Antiquities. For (as every capacity may observe) most men of Ages present, so superstitiously do look upon Ages past, that the Authorities of the one excel the reasons of the other.—Sir Thomas Browne.

One who is ignorant of the history of science is ignorant of the struggle by which mankind has passed from routine and caprice, from superstitious subjecting to nature, from efforts to see it magically, to intellectual self-posses-sion.—John Dewey.

Discussion stimulates while controversy depresses.

—Dr. Florence Sabin.

The Scientific method must ultimately spread out to every human affair.—H. G. Wells.

A religion of authority gives rise to a scholastic theology; by the same necessity the religion of the spirit seeks to find form and expression in a theology which is increasingly scientific.—Auguste Sabatier.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. —St. Paul.

In every true searcher of nature there is a kind of religious reverence.—Einstein.

For who would keep an ancient form
Thro' which the spirit breathes no more?

—Tennyson.

The struggle between that spirit in man which urges him to seek an explanation of things as they are and that spirit which prefers to rest upon the slumber-wooing bosom of tradition has been the theme of many learned treatises and of innumerable disputations.

To Dr. John W. Draper it seemed best described as a conflict between science and religion.

When Andrew D. White came to tell the story of the actions and reactions between the desire to know and the will to believe he gave to the world his admirable "History of the Warfare between Science and Theology."

1 Address of the retiring vice-president of Section F—Zoology—American Association for the Advancement of Science—given at Kansas City, December 29, 1925.