
**Term:** Retroduction

**Quote:**

... the second figure reads:

Anything of the nature of M would have the character \( \{p\} \), taken haphazard, 
S has the character \( \{p\} \); 
\( \therefore \) Provisionally, we may suppose S to be of the nature of M.

Still more convenient is the following conditional form of statement:

If \( \{m\} \) were true, \( \{p\}, \{p\}', \{p\}'' \) would follow as miscellaneous consequences 
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But \( \{p\}, \{p\}', \{p\}'' \) are in fact true; 
\( \therefore \) Provisionally, we may suppose that \( \{m\} \) is true.

This kind of reasoning is very often called *adopting a hypothesis for the sake of its explanation of known facts*.


**References:** RLT 140

**Date of Quote:** 1898

**URL:** http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-cambridge-lectures-reasoning-and-logic-things-types-reasoning-2