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

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