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\text{ 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\text{ 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