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... a symbol, in itself, is a mere dream; it does not show what it is talking about. It needs to be connected with its object. For that purpose, an index is indispensable. No other kind of sign will answer the purpose. That a word cannot in strictness of speech be an index is evident from this, that a word is general - it occurs often, and every time it occurs, it is the same word, and if it has any meaning as a word, it has the same meaning every time it occurs; while an index is essentially an affair of here and now, its office being to bring the thought to a particular experience, or series of experiences connected by dynamical relations. A meaning is the associations of a word with images, its dream exciting power. An index has nothing to do with meanings; it has to bring the hearer to share the experience of the speaker by showing what he is talking about.


References: CP 4.56

Date of Quote: 1893-1895 [c.]

URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-division-iii-substantial-study-logic-chapter-vi-essence-reasoning