Induction is that mode of reasoning which adopts a conclusion as approximate, because it results from a method of inference which must generally lead to the truth in the long run. For example, a ship enters port laden with coffee. I go aboard and sample the coffee. Perhaps I do not examine over a hundred beans, but they have been taken from the middle, top, and bottom of bags in every part of the hold. I conclude by induction that the whole cargo has approximately the same value per bean as the hundred beans of my sample. All that induction can do is to ascertain the value of a ratio.

References: CP 1.67
Date of Quote: 1896 [c.]
URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-lessons-history-science-2