Term: Retroduction

Quote: I am unable yet quite to prove that the three kinds of reasoning I mean are the only kinds of sound reasoning; though I can show reason to think that it can be proved, and very strong probable reasons for thinking that there is no fourth kind. I call the three, Deduction, Induction, and Retroduction; though the last only is a word invented by me.

A scientific inquiry must usually, if not always, begin with retroduction. An Induction can hardly be sound or at least is to be suspected usually, unless it has been preceded by a Retroductive reasoning to the same general effect.

References: NEM 3:177-178
Date of Quote: 1911
URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-letter-j-h-kehler-5