By a thing I mean an object whose occurrence in any universe of reality or fiction is not ipso facto constituted by any law or reason, but is an act, which however agreeable to law and reason, is, as an act, arbitrary. An act takes place hic et nunc and cannot be generalized without losing its vitality as act. a generalized act is a law; but a law, without an arbitrary act to carry it out in each instance, remains an impotent formula. It is a legislature without an executive, a judge without a sheriff. Because an act is thus anti-general, and a thing is constituted by an act, a thing is necessarily individual.

References: MS [R] 142:1
Date of Quote: 1899-1900 [c.]
URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-notes-topical-geometry-8