Term: Hypothesis [as a form of reasoning]

Quote: Corresponding to induction, we have the following mode of inference: [—]

Hypothesis.

M has, for example, the numerous marks \( P', P'', P''', \) etc.,
S has the proportion \( r \) of the marks \( P', P'', P''', \) etc.;
Hence, probably and approximately, \( S \) has an \( r \)-likeness to \( M. \)

Thus, we know, that the ancient Mound-builders of North America present, in all those respects in which we have been able to make the comparison, a limited degree of resemblance with the Pueblo Indians. The inference is, then, that in all respects there is about the same degree of resemblance between these races.

If I am permitted the extended sense which I have given to the word "induction," this argument is simply an induction respecting qualities instead of respecting things. [—]

I call this induction of characters hypothetic inference, or, briefly, hypothesis.


References: CP 2.706-707

Date of Quote: 1883

URL: http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-theory-probable-inference-0