

'Retrospective Science' (pub. 30.04.15-16:49). Quote in M. Bergman & S. Paavola (Eds.), *The Commens Dictionary: Peirce's Terms in His Own Words. New Edition*. Retrieved from <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-minute-logic-chapter-ii-prelogical-notions-section-i-classification-scienc-13>.

---

**Term:** Retrospective Science

**Quote:** We can now no longer postpone the recognition of a second Sub-branch of theoretical science. It is a department perfectly well recognized. It belongs by virtue of its purpose to the branch of Theory; yet varies enough in its purpose from the active science to be erected into a Sub-branch. It is the subject of Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Comte's *Philosophie Positive*, and Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*. It is science *en retraite*, *Wissenschaft a.D.* Its design is to sum up the results of all the theoretical sciences and to study them as forming one system. It may be called *retrospective* in contradistinction to *active science*.

**Source:** Peirce, C. S. (1902). *Minute Logic: Chapter II. Prelogical Notions. Section I. Classification of the Sciences (Logic II)*. MS [R] 427.

**References:** MS [R] 427:83-84

**Date of** 1902

**Quote:**

**Editorial** The editors of the *Collected Papers* added "or science of review" after Peirce's  
**Annotations** designation "retrospective" at CP 1.256. In a variant of the passage in question,  
:  
Peirce did use the term "reviewing science", so the attribution of synonymity appears to be justified.

**URL:** <http://www.commens.org/dictionary/entry/quote-minute-logic-chapter-ii-prelogical-notions-section-i-classification-scienc-13>