

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

### THE HISTORY OF PEIRCE'S 1894 LOGIC BOOK

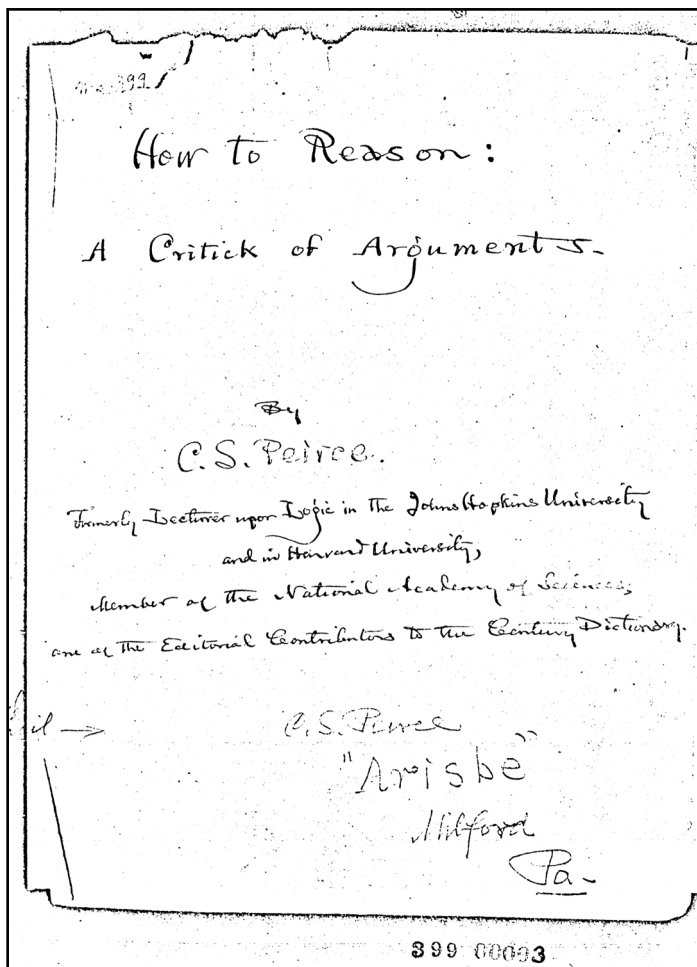
I had a great ambition to some day write a Popular Logic for the Million—But I must be upon my guard against things I have an inclination for. (CSP to Jem, 3 March 1895)

Volume 10 of the *Writings* will be a standalone volume containing Peirce's 1894 unpublished logic book *How to Reason: A Critick of Arguments*, often referred to as the *Grand Logic*. Although the title *Grand Logic* contrasts nicely with Peirce's later *Minute Logic*, it is doubtful that he himself used this title. Peirce makes no mention of it in his correspondence, and all instances of this title in the Harvard manuscripts were written on them after Peirce's death.

#### Historical Background

*How to Reason* is in part the outcome of several earlier projects that failed. In 1892, the Open Court Publishing Company offered to publish in book form the series of articles called "The Critic of Arguments," which Peirce had begun writing for the weekly *The Open Court*. However, due to complex interpersonal relations, fueled in part by Peirce's misguided suspicions, this enterprise fell through. Peirce wrote several installments for this series, of which only the first two were published.

Title page for *How to Reason*



In 1893, Peirce refocused his attention on a volume containing revised versions of his published papers, entitled *Search for a Method*. R 1583:2 contains a table of contents for that work. Most items on that table of contents, called "essays" by Peirce, are checked off, which might indicate that he finished revising them. Some of these essays have survived, albeit sometimes in a chaotic or fragmentary state, but others were recycled for *How to Reason*. For instance, chapter 15 of *How to Reason* was formerly marked "Essay III," and illustrations for "Essay I" have been cut out and glued on the manuscript of chapter 9. Due to Peirce's extensive recycling, not enough material survives to allow us to fully reconstruct *Search for a Method*. Moreover, overlaps between the earlier papers that compose *Search for a Method* and the later *How to Reason* weigh against the inclusion of this 1893 project in the *Writings*.

Shortly thereafter, perhaps inspired by the great success of Herbert Spencer's multivolume *Synthetic Philosophy*, Peirce embarked on an equally ambitious enterprise. In November 1893, he wrote to publisher Henry Holt that he planned to write a series of small books under the title *Tractates of Synechism or Synechistic Philosophy*, and he envisioned producing about four volumes a year. A few weeks later, this project developed into the better known *The Principles of Philosophy: Or, Logic, Physics and Psychics, Considered as a Unity, in the Light of the Nineteenth Century*, a series of twelve volumes for which Peirce had a circular and a syllabus printed. The plan was to sell the series by subscription. Although Peirce received some subscriptions for the series, the project never really got off the ground.

On 26 December 1893, Peirce wrote a letter to William James, asking him to endorse this project, adding, "the first two volumes are nearly ready; the first needs a month's work." In the syllabus, Peirce further indicated that the first volume was "nearly ready" and the second "substantially ready." It is this second volume, entitled *Theory of Demonstrative Reasoning*, that concerns us most here, as it is probably his work on this volume that eventually became *How to Reason*. Peirce described the volume as "a plain, elementary account of formal logic, ordinary and relative ... carefully adapted to the use of young persons of mediocre capacities." It is hard to estimate exactly what Peirce meant by the volume being "substantially ready." It is likely, however, that he continued to work extensively on it during the first half of 1894. In June of that year he sent the manuscript for *How to Reason* to the Boston office of Ginn & Co., a textbook publisher. They rejected the manuscript on the grounds that it was not suitable as a college textbook. The next mention of the manuscript occurs in a letter from Peirce to Francis Russell early in September. Peirce wrote Russell that he was holding back on the manuscript "to make some alterations which I have no time to make at present." A few days later, on September 8, he wrote Russell again, reaffirming that the volume was now "completely ready for the press; though I am anxious to make some alterations in it."

In the same month Peirce received a letter from George Plimpton from the New York office of Ginn & Co. in which he invited Peirce to submit a short logic book "after the plan of Jevons." Of this work, which he called the "Short Logic," Peirce