

informed the stopping just put in was not quite tight at the Fan pit and therefore that the leakage there of air was in his hands on his arrival in September and could not have been then by him thought to be of the magnitude and importance his evidence in 1895 would make it appear. He also evidently forgot his correspondence of June, July and August, 1890, which clearly shows that the likelihood of spontaneous combustion had already been contemplated, although he implies differently in answers 6, 12 and 31.

Rejoinders to certain answers of Mr. Wills.

And again while the notes and comments submitted by the solicitor of the Lessor in pages 98 and 100 of the Report, erroneously stated on pages 8, 100 and 104 to have been presented by Mr. Poole, showed how faulty was Mr. Wills memory respecting the admission of air into the old workings it is thought will to here also make further comparison of what he actually wrote in 1891 and what he says in 1895 he did in 1891. In answers to questions 31 and 32 he says—“I then, February, 1891, proposed measures, which I considered absolutely necessary for the safety of the colliery, and which, were, of course (in part), to prevent the passage of air from the Foord pit workings into the old workings.” Yet so soon after as June 27th, 1891, he suggested the use of the air leakage into the old works for the purpose of working the old 9' 3" pillars. So it would seem that measures that he thought absolutely necessary for the safety of the colliery in February he no longer thought were so in June of the same year. In October, 1895, it would appear, however, he forgot the desire of June and his mind remembered only the necessity of the previous February. Such an illustration is sufficient alone to show how unreliable his memory in 1895 was of events in 1890—1.

Then in answer 16 he speaks of a fresh engagement made in the summer of 1892 with the President who vetoed, so he says, measures which the year before he considered *absolutely necessary* for the safety of the colliery. If he really felt at the time he made his re-engagement as he says he did in his statement made in 1895, it is hard to believe he would have risked a reputation by again taking office.

STATEMENTS WRONGLY HEADED.—On page 98 is given a statement entitled: “Presented by H. S. Poole, already examined as a witness.” This statement, together with the comments given on page 100 of the Report, were presented to Dr. Gilpin, not by H. S. Poole, but by the solicitor of the lessees to show why the “evidence” of Mr. Wills should not in justice to the lessees be published. Until subsequent to the presentation Mr. Poole was not aware what

Accuracy of the Commission impuned.