by masonry. This was only the beginning of the over-
weight to be carried ultimately. Again, at very low tides,
the overweight caused by them was equal to the weight of
a volume of water one hundred and sixty-eight, by one hun-
dred and two, by seven feet, amounting to three thousand
seven hundred tons alone.

Blowing Out of Water Shaft.

The overweight kept slowly increasing until one Sunday
morning about six A.M., the south water shaft blew out
every particle of compressed air, leaving the caisson in an
instant. To say that this occurrence was an accident would
certainly be wrong, because not one accident in a hundred
deserves the name. In this case it was simply the legiti-
mate result of carelessness, brought about by an over confi-
dence in supposing that matters would take care of them-
selves. The immediate cause of the blowing out lay in the
washing away of the dam around the pool under the shaft.
These dams washed away frequently at subsequent periods,
but we had had our experience and our lesson, and were
prepared for it. There was unfortunately no man in the
caisson at the time, so that experience is lost. Eye wit-
tnesses outside state that a dense column of water, fog, mud,
and stones were thrown up five hundred feet into the air,
accompanied by a terrific roar and a shower of falling frag-
ments covering the houses for squares around. This column
was seen a mile off. The noise was so frightful that the
whole neighborhood was stampeded and made a rush up
Fulton street. Even the toll collectors at the ferry aban-
doned their tills. There were three men on the caisson at
the time including the watchman. He reports that the cur-
rent of air rushing toward the blowing water shaft was so
strong as to knock him down; while down he was hit on the
back with a stone and further than that he does not remem-
ber. One of the other men jumped into the river, and the
third buried himself in a coal pile. It was all over in a min-
ute. Both doors of the air lock fell open. The dry
bottom was visible through the air and water shaft; not a