

by masonry. This was only the beginning of the overweight 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 hundred 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 legitimate result of carelessness, brought about by an over confidence in supposing that matters would take care of themselves. 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 witnesses 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 fragments 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 abandoned their tills. There were three men on the caisson at the time including the watchman. He reports that the current 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 remember. One of the other men jumped into the river, and the third buried himself in a coal pile. It was all over in a minute. Both doors of the air lock fell open. The dry bottom was visible through the air and water shaft; not a