

FLOOD ROCK SHATTE RED.

A Girl's Hand Unlocking the Mighty Force.

Three hundred thousand pounds of rock and dynamite, the greatest single charge of explosives ever used, thundered on Sunday morning of last week, in the depths of the East River, and Flood Rock, the great barrier that stood at the entrance of Long Island Sound, was shattered into fragments. The long labor and thoughtful study of Gen. John Newton and his corps of assistants culminated in a momentary but magnificent display of upheaved waters, and another triumph of human skill over the resistance of nature was recorded. The explosion took place within a few minutes of the appointed time without a hitch, without an accident, and without a disappointment to the expectations of those engaged in the work. The calculations of the experts who superintended the labor were verified, for everything happened as they said it would happen. The thousands who went out to see the explosion beheld an inexpressively grand and impressive spectacle, none the less remarkable because it passed like the drawing of a breath, and with little more shock to those who witnessed it.

Over nine acres of obstructing rock formed the barrier which was lately destroyed. Just 21,670 feet of tunnelling, in galleries whose floors lay from 50 to 64 feet below mean low tide, with walls from 10 to 24 feet thick between them, and supported by 467 columns of rock, each 15 feet square, had been charged with cartridges filled with explosives. In an instant the tremendous convulsion of an explosion reaching through those four miles of galleries tore the solid rocks asunder and hurled them in broken masses into the waters of the river. And when those shattered pieces have been gathered up and taken away by the dredgers Hell Gate will have lost its dangers and the wrinkled front of navigation through the Sound will have been smoothed into an inviting smile. Ocean steamers will find 26 feet of good, clear water over the once treacherous bottom and a new highway will be open for the commerce of the world.

A few minutes after 10 o'clock the steamer Castleton, carrying a large number of invited guests, and the Chester A. Arthur, loaded with Government officers and other dignitaries, came steaming up the East River. Gen. Newton's boat, the Runaway, was steaming busily about, running from Flood Rock to the Astoria shore and back. Every one of the spectators who were gathered in such masses now began to look anxiously toward the flag that waved over the shaft. At 10:35 o'clock the General Humphreys took the flatboat with its derrick away from the moorings beside the rocks and towed them over to the Astoria landing. "Now it's going," said the men who knew it all. No, there were figures moving over the surface of the rocks yet. Hither and thither they went, putting the final touches to the great work. Then the Runaway went gliding down to the rocks again. At 10:55 the flag that had been floating over the shaft was hauled down.

The spectators began to breathe fast. There was a little excitement in this thing after all. It didn't look so much like a picnic as it had. Men were seen leaving the foot of the hoisting apparatus. At 11:09 the Humphreys and the Runaway steamed out from the rock and glided toward the Astoria landing. The Humphreys blew three long blasts on her whistle. It was her parting salute to Flood Rock as it was. She ran to the landing at Astoria and then moved out a short distance into the stream. People held their breath. Eyes were strained and riveted on the bare brown rock. There was a deathlike silence. No one saw her, but over on the Astoria shore a young girl, the daughter of Gen. Newton, was preparing to free the imprisoned forces. Nine years ago, when but a prattling babe, her tiny finger had performed the same office. Then she could not know what she did. But on this occasion what did she think?

Away it flew, that viewless spark, to loose three hundred thousand chained demons buried in darkness and the cold, salt waves under the iron rocks. A deep rumble, then a dull boom, like the smothered bursting of a hundred mighty guns far away beyond the blue horizon, rolled across the yellow river. Up, up, and still up into the frightened air soared a great, gastly, writhing wall of white and silver and gray. Fifty gigantic geysers, linked together by shivering, twisting masses of spray, soared upward, their shining pinnacles, with dome-like summits, looming like shattered floods, of molten silver against the azure sky. Three magnificent monuments of solid water sprang far above the rest of the

mass, the most westerly of them still rising after all else had begun to fall, till it towered nearly 200 feet in air. To east and west the waters rose, a long blinding sheet of white. Far and wide the great wall spread, defying the human eye to take in its breadth and height and thickness. The contortion of the wreathed waters was like the dumb agony of some stricken thing.

For a trembling moment the sublime spectacle stood sharp against the sky, like a mighty vision of distant snow-capped mountains. Then down, down, and still down the enormous mass rushed with a wild hissing, as if ten thousand huge steam valves had been opened. The yellow waters of the river were riven and torn into immense boiling masses of white foam. Great waves, ten feet high, rolled outward. Big streaks and spots of deep brown mingled with the white and made ominous shadows under the silver lights. All around the rocks the river swirled and rolled and leaped upward like the whirlpool of Niagara.

The New York "Sun" on the Ever-growing Expensiveness of the Public School System.

Possibly a largely increased tax levy on account of the schools may stir up the public to inquire more seriously as to the working of the system of education which costs so many millions annually. As it is now, it is astonishing how little is known about the schools and their practical conduct, although their expenses have increased to \$4,000,000 a year, and must rapidly become greater.

Are the School Commissioners pursuing the most economical and efficient methods? Do they give the most desirable education for the majority of the pupils? Are the schools fulfilling the purpose for which they were established, or are they forcing the children under a uniform system of instruction which the people never intended to set up? These are questions which have been often discussed in the Sun, and the radical defects of the common school education have been pointed out by us for years past. Yet the Board of Education goes on without reform and without change, and the evils become more and more serious, the cost greater and greater.

How long will the people stand this indifference to palpable defects? How long will they go on paying for a sort of education for which the demand is only slight, while the great majority fail to get the training they need for success in life? We hardly believe that it will be much longer, for the burden is becoming so heavy that those who pay must soon cry out.

Wise Words.

Novelty is the great parent of pleasure. It is easier to retain health than to regain it.

The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat one's self.

Simplicity of character is the natural result of profound thoughts.

The rays of happiness, like those of light, are colorless when unbroken.

Count on the infidelity of the man who carries his heart in his hand and wears his soul in his face.

Cheerfulness is an excellent wearing quality. It has been called the bright weather of the heart.

A contented mind—heart-sunshine—takes a glory out of gloom, and can turn the most untoward events so that they will prove a faithful spring of unmeasured joy.

Witty sayings are as easily lost as the pearl's slipping off a broken string; but a word of kindness is seldom spoken in vain. It is a seed which, even when dropped by chance, springs up into a flower.

In vain they talk of happiness who never subdued an impulse in obedience to a principle. He who never sacrificed a present to a future good, or a personal to a general one, can speak of happiness only as the blind do of colors.

Do not examine too minutely the action of your friends nor the motives which actuated them. If they have acted with a want of delicacy, appear not to understand it; or, what is more simple, think that it was a mistake on their part.

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