

15

ZOOM VERSION

PHOENIX TO YUMA BY WATER.

The Gila River Navigable?—Arrival of a Skiff and Three Bold Navigators.

Whether the Gila river is available for navigation is a question which was never settled in the affirmative; although the steambot Uncle Sam used to run up for some distance, and bring down loads of wood. Last week the advocates of navigation of the Gila obtained a solid fact from the arrival here of Messrs. Charles Hamilton, R. W. Jordan and E. R. Halesworth; who built a skiff at Phoenix, at an expense of \$10, and paddled it down here to Yuma, with all their accoutrements and *impedimenta*, (classic for "grub and blankets;" see Commentaries: Bell: Gall.) They report the river perfectly practicable for navigation, except at one spot, about ten miles above Gila Bend; there the channel was obstructed by rocks, leaving a passage only some eight feet wide. This obstruction, they say, can be easily removed by a few small blasts. The river would then have easily floated down a flat-boat loaded with grain, pumpkins, or other fruits of the "Orchard of Arizona," and drawing two feet of water. The geodetic distance from here to Phoenix is 170 miles, but following the turns of the river, the actual distance paddled by the aforesaid navigators must have been over 300 miles. In no place is the river narrowed down into anything like a box-cañon; though below Oatman Flat its valley is hemmed in by precipitous walls of basaltic lava. So far as known here, to the three gentlemen named belongs the honor of being the first white men to successfully navigate 300 continuous miles of the Gila river. It is now incumbent upon the enterprising citizens of Phoenix to make a pioneer shipment of produce to Yuma by water. From Yuma, down the Colorado, to tide-water at Port Isabel, navigation is easy; from there to New York or London, Phoenix has ocean transportation for her products. By demonstrating that she has water communication with the markets of the world, Phoenix can just make Prescott turn green and "bust" with envy; by doing this she can oppose a check to the exactions of the "monster monopoly;" if her citizens will not stand the extortionate fares (ten cents a mile by rail, twenty by stage) they can navigate the Gila—or walk.

