for a period of three years. These Indians, called the "Hell Gates," always seek winter quarters away from the river, back in the mountains, but return to the stream early in the spring. When, therefore, news reached me late in March that a party of from seventy-five to a hundred of these dangerous customers had assem-

bled on the river near my cache below Hell Gate, I naturally felt anxious for the safety of my outfit, and lost no time in hurrying to the spot.

When Larrived there, after a long and difficult return journey over the snow, I found the place, much to my astonishment, quite deserted. The men I had left in charge of the cache were nowhere to be My first found. thought was that they had been murdered, but, failing to find any trace of their bodies, and, on closer inspection, discovering that the contents of the cache had not been disturbed. I

was forced to the conclusion that they had deserted of their own accord. Even Powder, an Indian medicine-man I brought back with me from the north, deserted me the morning after our arrival, so I was left alone, with only my faithful sledge-dog, Zilla, for a companion, to cope as best I might with my unwelcome and murderous neighbors. What became of Powder and the guards I never knew, nor did I much

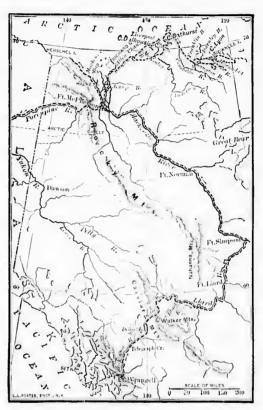
care. In the dangerous position in which I was placed it was sufficient compensation to know that the outfit and provisions, upon which the success of future expeditions depended, were still intact.

The reason why the cache had not been disturbed was soon made clear. The Indians had not yet become aware of its ex-

istence. Upon my arrival, however, several of the renegades made bold to approach me, and, discovering eache, to ask what it contained. I put them off as well as I could with evasive answers, which I could readily see were far from leaving upon them the desired impression. I was resolved, however, in case of attack, to risk my life, if necessary, in the protection of the cache and its contents.

On the supposition that in all probability there would be more danger by night than by day, my first idea was to arrange a safe and suitable place to

sleep. Around the cache I had previously cleared a considerable space by cutting down trees for firewood. In the centre of this clearing two large spruce trees were still standing. Under these I determined to spread my blankets. In this way, by abandoning my tent altogether and sleeping in the open air, I should be enabled, I thought, by the light of a good fire, to command an uninterrupted view



MAP OF NORTHWESTERN BRITISH AMERICA.

Showing Mr. Stone's route and his geographical discoveries,