

CHAPTER XV

WITH THE SHIELD OR ON IT

OUR best deeds we often do unconsciously. Certain it is that nothing was further from my mind than pushing my friend's cause with the great man of the Railway Company for which I flourished my brush. But it is equally certain that as I turned over my sketches of scenes from camp life with the lumbermen and miners, I found myself talking with full enthusiasm of the two men who filled my imagination as the greatest of all men I had yet met. The railway man kept me talking of Graeme for an hour and then said: 'Bring your friend to see me to-morrow,' which I did to the mutual and lasting advantage of them both. For when Graeme came back to me after his interview with the great man he greeted me with a thumping whack and demanded to know with what yarns I had been regaling his chief's ears.

'Chief?' I asked in delighted surprise.

'So! But how did you do it?' he replied. 'With what material did you pack him?'

'Pack him? not at all. I simply gave him a few yarns and showed him some sketches.'