

nity, as he completed Tayna's cross by a vertical movement of a stubby thumb in the direction of his own wish-bone of a breast.

Hampstead looked relieved.

"But," affirmed Tayna stoutly, "they are not play secrets. They are real secrets. Aren't they?"

John looked up at his motto again.

"Yes," he said in a low, determined voice. "They are real secrets."

"And," half-declared, half-questioned Dick, "if you aren't President, you are going to be some other kind of a very great man?"

"Aren't you?" the boy persisted, when Hampstead was silent.

"Tell you to-morrow," laughed John. "Good night, ghosts!" and with a swift assault of his lips upon the cheeks of either, he gently impelled them toward the door.

"Good night your Excellency!" giggled Tayna.

"Good night, my counselors," responded Hampstead, reaching for his book.

An hour later Hampstead was still reading. Another hour later he was still reading. But something like a quarter of an hour beyond that, when it might have been, say, near half-past eleven, he was not reading. He was turning his head strangely from side to side and digging a knuckle into his eyes. A surprising thing had happened. He could no longer see the lines upon the page — nor the page itself — nor the book — nor anything!

His first impression was that the gas had gone out; but this swiftly gave way to the conviction that he had gone blind — stone blind! — and so suddenly that it happened right between the beheading of one of the queens of Henry the Eighth and the marrying of another. He was now tardily conscious that for some time his eyes had been giving him pain, that he had rubbed them periodi-