

"It's evident you're not accustomed to native servants, Mr Dyson," said Jack, laughing.

"There, you are mistaken, Jack, my boy. I was born in India, and I'm dashed if the coolies don't knock spots out of these beggars. I will not be sorry to see the Commissioner back, for a meal in the Suva Club Hotel will be a treat. Not that I am epicurean, mind, but I draw the line at kerosene in my coffee and tobacco in my soup. Yes; when young Teddy Frame was here last Sunday he fished a long leaf out of his soup-plate, observing he was surprised to see

the island. We want the Commissioner," observed Dyson earnestly.

"I should not be surprised if the Commissioner never returns," replied Jack, solemnly.

"No? And why, pray?"

"Everything was against the barque before they left. And, by Jove, I wonder they didn't sink going off to her in the first place. Then she drifted on the patch, all through that infernal fool of a captain not putting out another anchor when told. Then this queer warning the people have had! You have heard it, too."

Dyson burst out laughing.



Waters, photo.,

A Rotu nan Kava Party.

Fiji.

cabbage in this place, had I any tinned? Enoki had dropped his roll of tobacco leaf from his ear while cooking," mournfully drawled Dyson.

"With what effects?" asked Jack.

"Well, you see, nicotine and I are seasoned chums. As to Teddy, he declared the floor was trying to hit him in the face."

Jack was highly amused.

"I wish that ship would show up. I do not like this epidemic which seems to be spreading on

"Oh, Jack, you and your native superstitions! Here, take a Manila. It'll calm your nerves, old man."

Jack's tongue, now loosened by the whisky, continued to argue about the strange chopping.

"I tell you not a native will pass the Residency without a light. I know. Isn't my mother one of them? You know that the chopping sound comes at twelve every night. Well, it means something!"

"It means a land case; someone is stealing old Marafu's firewood or nuts."