

people and events carved in wood, ethnologists might find a written language which would throw some light on the past history of the Maori race.

The most recently-erected Wharepuni in New Zealand is Rauru, a house named in honour of the first great Maori carver. This house, although so lately erected, contains some carvings of great age. Its construction was in reality commenced by a chief named Te Waru, some fifty years since, but as several deaths occurred during

old white-headed *tohunga*, Tahan, who was chosen as almost, if not quite, the last of his race whose knowledge of ancient lore was sufficient to enable him to execute the sacred rites with becoming fidelity.

One of the panels in this fine Wharepuni represents Mani, the Maori Hercules, hauling up New Zealand from the bottom of the sea. The carved doorway is unique; it depicts Tupua—a demon in the shape of a woman who is said to inhabit the Tikitapu Lake.

Mr Nelson, who is a most enthusiastic



COLLECTION OF MAORI CARVINGS IN AUCKLAND MUSEUM.

The centre piece was carved to represent the Madonna and Child, for a Roman Catholic Church.

the building, the parts constructed were made tapu, and work was suspended. Mr. C. E. Nelson, of Whakarewarewa, who may be seen in front of the illustration given of the house, obtained the portions of the structure already carved from Wai o Tapu, and also secured many other most valuable old carvings. He then engaged three famous Arawa carvers who with much time and labour finished the construction of the building. It was recently opened with great ceremony. Not a single detail of the ancient Maori customs on such occasions was omitted by the venerable

authority on Maori subjects, went to great expense and trouble to get this historic house erected, and as, unfortunately, practically no attempt was made to keep it in the country, he recently accepted an offer of £1,600 from the Berlin Museum for it. As one of the few remaining examples of the artistic work of the old-time Maoris, and their method of recording and handing down their wonderful legends and the deeds of their most redoubtable warriors from generation to generation by picture writing, it is absolutely invaluable.