

After this the wings and head are cut off, and the bird is split open, and looks exactly like a miniature fat pig. It is then put into strong brine, or dry salted for two days, and carefully smoked. When eaten, the flesh somewhat resembles salt fish, and is pronounced by many to be most delicious. I have seen a bird cut up and eaten by children without bread, they ate the fat and skin, sucked the bones, and wanted more. After smoking, the packing begins, and poha or kelp-bags are

undressed flax basket with handles, and covering about one-third of the length of the pohatiti. The pohatiti is then marked with the number of birds it contains, ranging from twenty to seventy, and the owner's name. Directly the season is over the camps break up, and preparations are made for the homeward journey. During the following months the lucky hunters have, no doubt, many a feast on mutton birds, and they invariably form a highly-appreciated



WHARE, WITH TITIS HANGING ON RAILS.

prepared. Large pieces of rock-kelp are cut into pieces according to the size required. The kelp is tough outside and fibrous inside, and a space is easily made by splitting. These bags are then lined with leaves and packed with preserved birds, melted fat being poured into the interstices until the poha is full. The end is then sewn up, and the pohatiti is encased in a covering of totara bark, presenting a neatly-arranged and conical shape, and the base is inserted into an

portion of the presents of food sent on state occasions to other tribes. When the supplies of this much-esteemed delicacy run low the Maoris look forward impatiently to the time when the *titi* will be again ready for preserving.

The accompanying snapshots were taken by Mr. Ayson, Inspector of New Zealand Fisheries, to whom I am also indebted for many of the details concerning mutton-birding on Stewart Island.