

(from the production of overtones of high pitch), and how it brings out the pure tones of the string instruments. The various instruments in an orchestra sound better. Everything is reduced in proportion, and, to use an illustration from art, it is like passing from one of Etty's huge pictures to a delicate and beautiful Messonier, in which one sees and appreciates every detail in an area of small dimensions.

JOHN G. MCKENDRICK.

#### A New Variety of Zebra.

Will you kindly allow me a little space to direct attention to a new and very interesting variety of Grant's zebra, shown in the accompanying photograph sent me by my friend Mr. C. W. Hobley, C.M.G., commissioner at Nairobi, East Africa? The specimen, writes Mr. Hobley, "was obtained by Mr. G. H. Goldfinch, assistant game ranger of the East African Protectorate, a few months ago in the neighbourhood of the Rift Valley. The



animal has a "big white patch in the middle of the back, and it came out of a herd which were all the same. I suppose it is a Mendelian 'sport,' which has become dominant in that particular herd, like the white waterbuck on the Euaso Nyiro, north of Kenya."

I propose to call this variety in Mr. Pocock's terminology, *E. quagga*, var. Goldfinchi, or in the old terminology, *E. Burchelli*, var. Goldfinchi. Mr. Hobley adds that the print is a little dark, as "the stripeless saddle on the body is very markedly white in the skin itself."

April 11.

WILLIAM RIDGEWAY.

#### Implements of Moustierian Type from the Rock of Gibraltar.

In a paper read before the Royal Anthropological Institute on March 7 (*NATURE*, March 16, pp. 100-101) I gave an account of recent cave-exploration at Gibraltar. In one of the caves thus described, the discovery of various mammalian remains was recorded, together with that of human bones, pottery, and stone implements.

In regard to the latter, a close comparison was made with cave implements, and the similarity of certain examples to implements of the Moustierian type was remarked. But a guarded opinion was given, and this caution, I am now glad to state, seems to have been excessive.

On March 31 Dr. Allen Sturge very kindly examined the specimens with me, and he allows me to record his opinion on four implements submitted to him. The con-

NO. 2164, VOL. 86]

clusions were fully borne out by comparisons with specimens in Dr. Sturge's magnificent collection. Of the four implements, three (Nos. 2, 7, 13) are judged to be definitely of Moustierian type; the remaining one (No. 15) is either "Moustierian" or "early Aurignacian" (the next and following stage).

Thus out of eleven stone objects (from the cave in question), that are undoubtedly implements and not mere splinters, four are distinctly Palaeolithic, and of an early period. So far as I know, Palaeolithic implements have not been previously recognised or recorded in connection with the caves of Gibraltar. Moreover, those now mentioned were not accompanied by any polished implements or by any metal objects.

The recognition of Palaeoliths of the Moustierian type gives some ground for hope that eventually the whole series of cultural epochs may be established for the caves at Gibraltar, as has been done elsewhere. Further, the discovery of a human skeleton of that period might throw a flood of light on the significance of the Forbes Quarry skull. In any case, exploration will be resumed with increased zest in view of these possibilities.

In conclusion, I would point out that Obermaier seems to hold the opinion that the associations of culture with fauna will be found to differ in the Mediterranean area and in western or central Europe (*L'Anthropologie*, 1909, Tome xx., p. 520). My investigations have already suggested a marked similarity between the Gibraltar caves and some of those at Mentone. Probably the northern limit will be found to include Les Eyzies. Lastly, the preceding remarks are written with full appreciation of the weight of Compton's remarks (1910) as to the significance of isolated examples of implements referable to a particular age.

W. L. H. DUCKWORTH.

Anthropological Laboratory, New Museums,  
Cambridge, April 5.

#### Damage done to Skulls and Bones by Termites.

THE extensive damage done to skulls and bones generally in many of the graves of Egypt and Nubia has been attributed to beetles, the bodies of these animals having been found in the earth which is invariably associated with the damaged area, the latter being, in fact, always covered with earth unless it has been knocked off during removal of the skull from the grave.

There is good reason, however, for believing that the damage is the work, not of beetles, but of termites, which still exist in these countries.

These animals, as is well known, never work without covering all their operations with a tunnel or ramification of tunnels composed of earth or grains of sand firmly stuck together by some secretion from the ants themselves. Under cover of these earthworks, they devour whatever substance they have built over, and the destruction is sometimes so complete that nothing but a shell of earth remains, the substructure having been entirely eaten away. In such cases the original form of the destroyed article may be distinctly seen, as the mud covers it in a fairly thin uniform layer, following all its lines and contours. A good example of this was seen at Koshtamna in Nubia, about seventy miles south of Aswan. Here a small wooden statue of a king was still standing in its original position in a tomb chamber, but the crown and more prominent features of the face, completely covered though they were with mud, still preserved the outlines of the form beneath. When, however, the mud was removed, it was found that the statue upon which it had been built was almost completely destroyed, only fragments of the wood being left here and there.

In the case of skulls and bones precisely the same thing happens. A skull is found covered with mud firmly stuck on, and with the traces of the white ants' tunnels running through. If the mud is removed, large areas of the cranial walls may be found to have disappeared altogether. In less exaggerated cases, holes will be seen with white, gnawed edges, or perhaps only the surface of the bone has been attacked. The cranial sutures are a favourite site for the commencement of the termites' operations.

The presence in some cases of the dead bodies of small reddish beetles embedded in the mud on such skulls led to the not unnatural conclusion that they were the authors of