The Palatine Process (*processus palatinus; palatal process*).—The palatine process, thick and strong, is horizontal and projects medialward from the nasal surface of the bone. It forms a considerable part of the floor of the nose and the roof of the mouth and is much thicker in front than behind. Its *inferior surface* (Fig. 160) is concave, rough and uneven, and forms, with the palatine process of the opposite bone, the anterior three-fourths of the hard plate. It is perforated by numerous foramina for the passage of the nutrient vessels; is channelled at the back part of its lateral border by a groove, sometimes a canal, for the transmission of the descending palatine vessels and the anterior palatine nerve from the sphenopalatine ganglion; and presents little depressions for the lodgement of the palatine glands. When the two maxillæ are articulated, a funnel-shaped opening, the **incisive foramen**, is seen in the middle line, immediately behind the incisor teeth. In this opening the orifices of two lateral canals are visible; they are named the

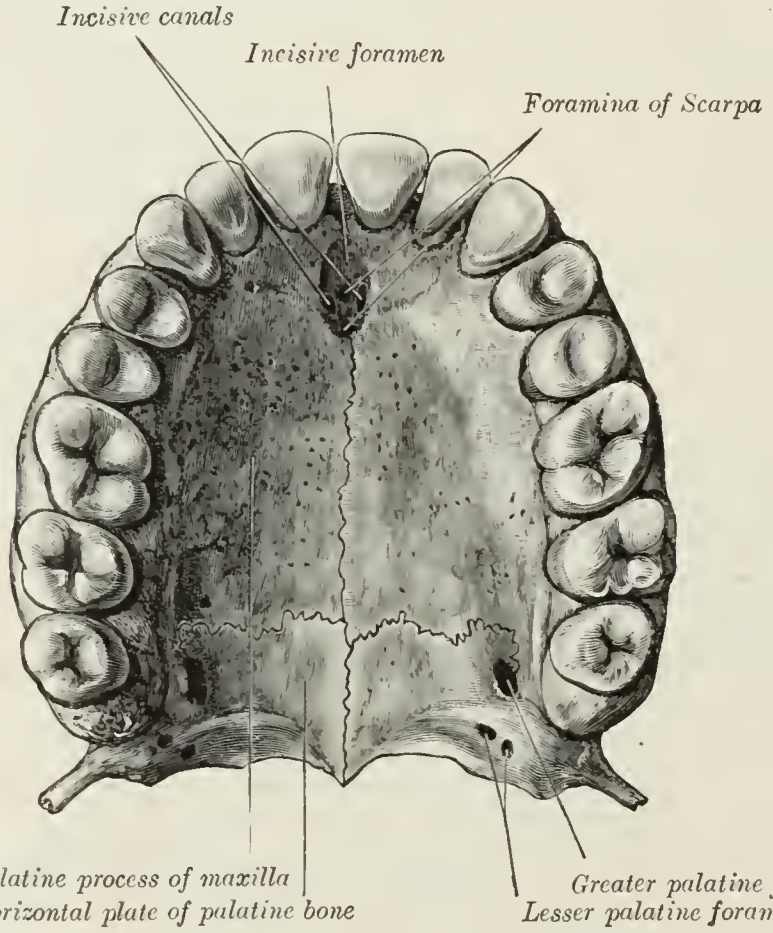

Fig. 160.—The bony palate and alveolar arch.

incisive canals or **foramina of Stenson**; through each of them passes the terminal branch of the descending palatine artery and the nasopalatine nerve. Occasionally two additional canals are present in the middle line; they are termed the **foramina of Scarpa**, and when present transmit the nasopalatine nerves, the left passing through the anterior, and the right through the posterior canal. On the under surface of the palatine process, a delicate linear suture, well seen in young skulls, may sometimes be noticed extending lateralward and forward on either side from the incisive foramen to the interval between the lateral incisor and the canine tooth. The small part in front of this suture constitutes the **premaxilla** (*os incisivum*), which in most vertebrates forms an independent bone; it includes the whole thickness of the alveolus, the corresponding part of the floor of the nose and the anterior nasal spine, and contains the sockets of the incisor teeth. The *upper surface* of the palatine process is concave from side to side, smooth, and forms the greater part of the floor of the nasal cavity. It presents, close to its medial margin, the