

It slopes downward and forward, so that the anterior part of the opening is on a lower level than the posterior. Its antero-posterior diameter is about 5 cm., and its transverse diameter about 10 cm. The **lower opening** is formed by the twelfth thoracic vertebra behind, by the eleventh and twelfth ribs at the sides, and in front by the cartilages of the tenth, ninth, eighth, and seventh ribs, which ascend on either side and form an angle, the **subcostal angle**, into the apex of which the

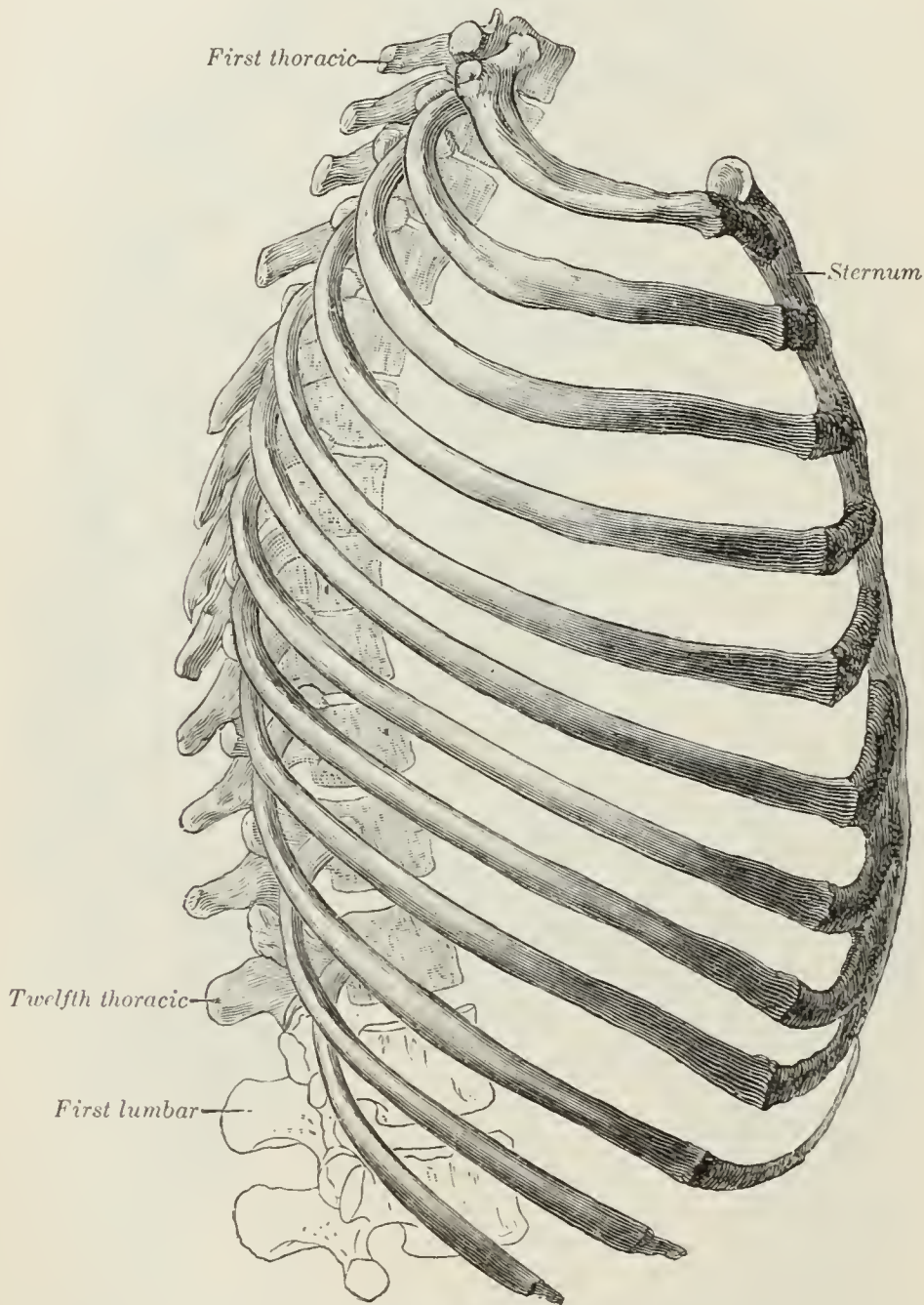


FIG. 114 —The thorax from the right. (Spalteholz.)

xiphoid process projects. The lower opening is wider transversely than from before backward, and slopes obliquely downward and backward, it is closed by the diaphragm which forms the floor of the thorax.

The thorax of the female differs from that of the male as follows: 1. Its capacity is less. 2. The sternum is shorter. 3. The upper margin of the sternum is on a level with the lower part of the body of the third thoracic vertebra, whereas in the male it is on a level with the lower part of the body of the second. 4. The upper ribs are more movable, and so allow a greater enlargement of the upper part of the thorax.