

The superficial branch (*ramus superficialis*) splits into a proper and a common digital nerve; the proper digital nerve supplies the lateral side of the little toe, the Flexor digiti quinti brevis, and the two Interossei of the fourth intermetatarsal space; the common digital nerve communicates with the third common digital branch of the medial plantar nerve and divides into two proper digital nerves which supply the adjoining sides of the fourth and fifth toes.

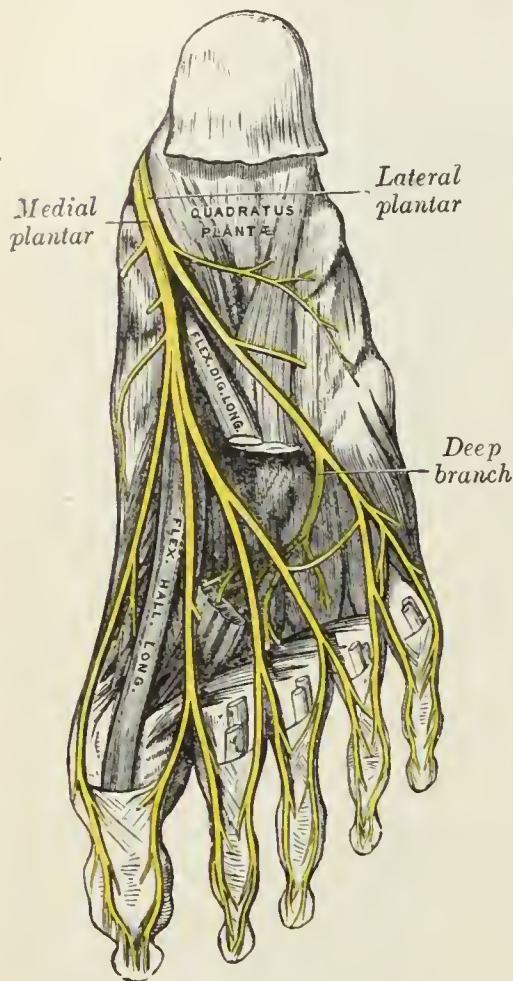


FIG. 833.—The plantar nerves.

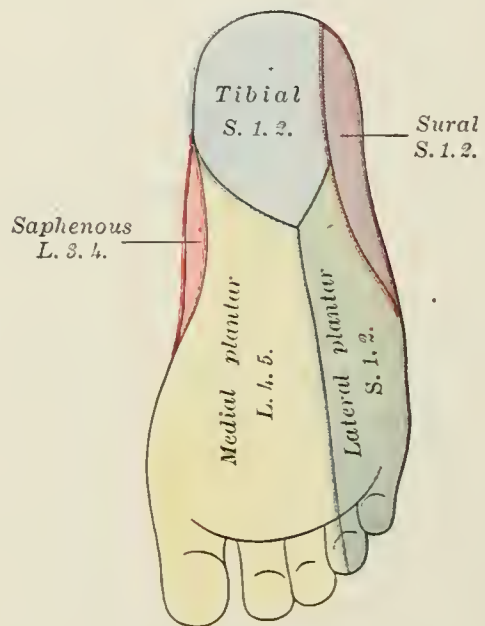


FIG. 834.—Diagram of the segmental distribution of the cutaneous nerves of the sole of the foot.

The **deep branch** (*ramus profundus; muscular branch*) accompanies the lateral plantar artery on the deep surface of the tendons of the Flexor muscles and the Adductor hallucis, and supplies all the Interossei (except those in the fourth metatarsal space), the second, third, and fourth Lumbricales, and the Adductor hallucis.

The **Common Peroneal Nerve** (*n. peronæus communis; external popliteal nerve; peroneal nerve*) (Fig. 832), about one-half the size of the tibial, is derived from the dorsal branches of the fourth and fifth lumbar and the first and second sacral nerves. It descends obliquely along the lateral side of the popliteal fossa to the head of the fibula, close to the medial margin of the Biceps femoris muscle. It lies between the tendon of the Biceps femoris and lateral head of the Gastrocnemius muscle, winds around the neck of the fibula, between the Peronæus longus and the bone, and divides beneath the muscle into the superficial and deep peroneal nerves. Previous to its division it gives off articular and lateral sural cutaneous nerves.

The **articular branches** (*rami articulares*) are three in number; two of these accompany the superior and inferior lateral genicular arteries to the knee; the upper one occasionally arises from the trunk of the sciatic nerve. The third (*recurrent*) articular nerve is given off at the point of division of the common peroneal nerve; it ascends with the anterior recurrent tibial artery through the Tibialis anterior to the front of the knee.

The **lateral sural cutaneous nerve** (*n. cutaneus suræ lateralis; lateral cutaneous branch*) supplies the skin on the posterior and lateral surfaces of the leg; one branch, the **peroneal anastomotic** (*n. communicans fibularis*), arises near the head of the fibula, crosses the lateral head of the Gastrocnemius to the middle of the