

It is conical in shape, being narrow above and broad below, flattened from before backward, and longer behind than in front. It is somewhat reniform on transverse section on account of the projection of the vertebral bodies into the cavity.

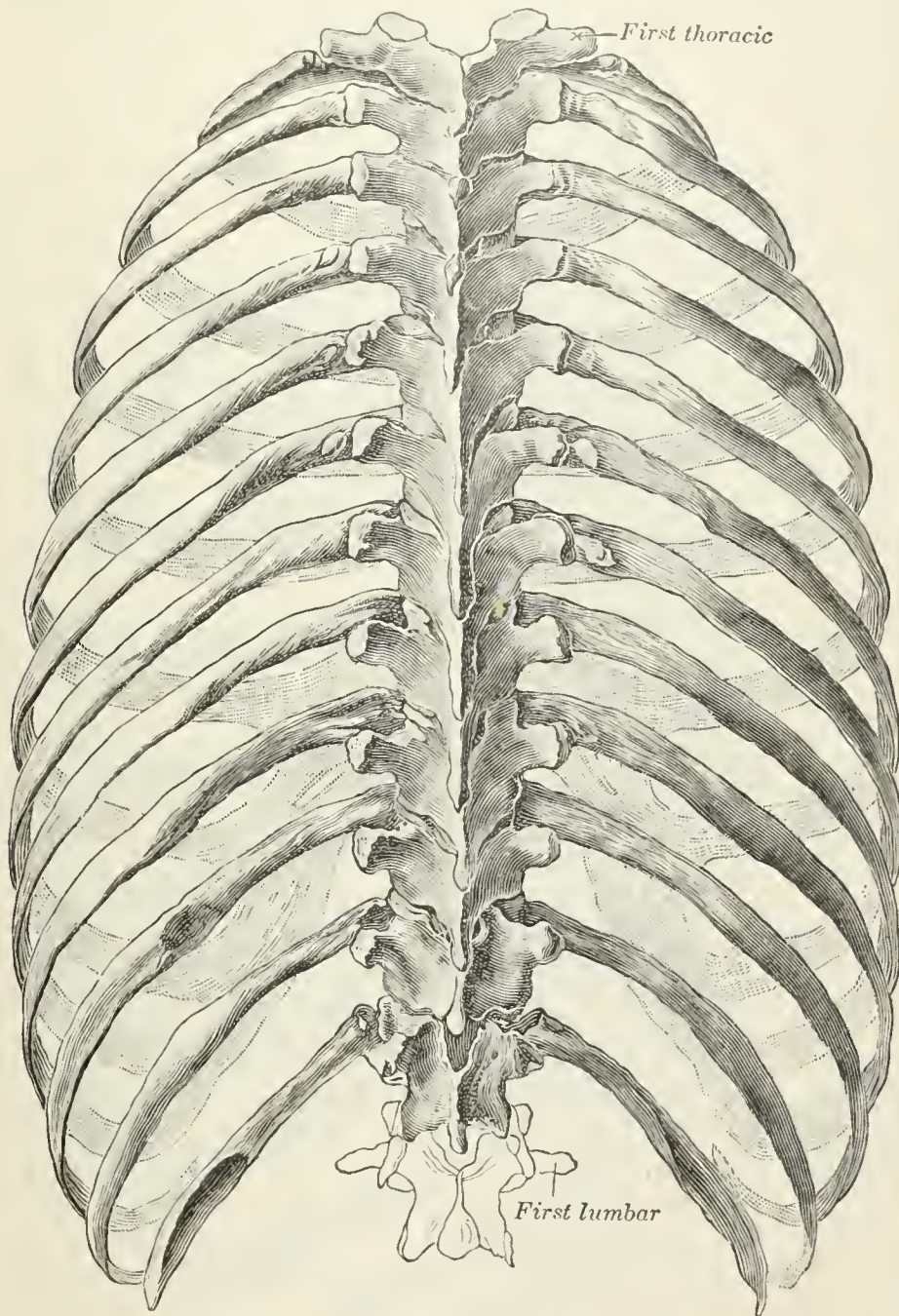


FIG. 113 —The thorax from behind. (Spalteholz.)

Boundaries.—The **posterior surface** is formed by the twelve thoracic vertebræ and the posterior parts of the ribs. It is convex from above downward, and presents on either side of the middle line a deep groove, in consequence of the lateral and backward direction which the ribs take from their vertebral extremities to their angles. The **anterior surface**, formed by the sternum and costal cartilages, is flattened or slightly convex, and inclined from above downward and forward. The **lateral surfaces** are convex; they are formed by the ribs, separated from each other by the intercostal spaces, eleven in number, which are occupied by the Intercostal muscles and membranes.

The **upper opening** of the thorax is reniform in shape, being broader from side to side than from before backward. It is formed by the first thoracic vertebra behind, the upper margin of the sternum in front, and the first rib on either side.