

—is curved like the cavity itself: this curve corresponds to the concavity of the sacrum and coccyx, the extremities being indicated by the central points of the superior and inferior apertures. A knowledge of the direction of these axes serves to explain the course of the fetus in its passage through the pelvis during parturition.

Position of the Pelvis (Fig. 240).—In the erect posture, the pelvis is placed obliquely with regard to the trunk: the plane of the superior aperture forms an angle of from 50° to 60° , and that of the inferior aperture one of about 15° with the horizontal plane. The pelvic surface of the symphysis pubis looks upward and backward, the concavity of the sacrum and coccyx downward and forward. The position of the pelvis in the erect posture may be indicated by holding it so that the anterior superior iliac spines and the front of the top of the symphysis pubis are in the same vertical plane.

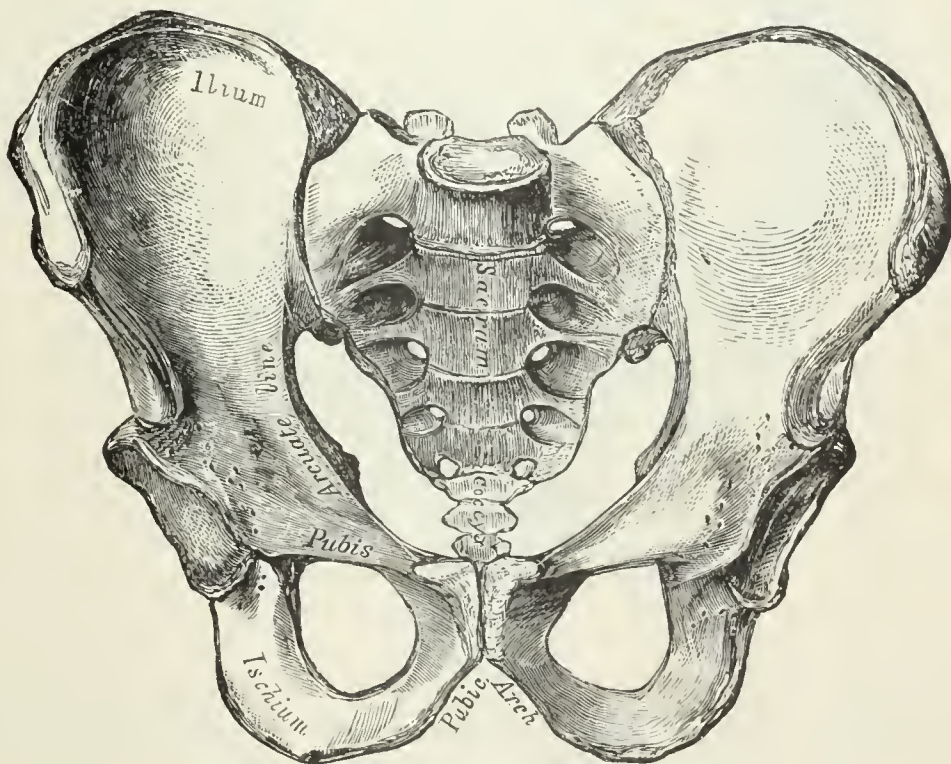


FIG. 241.—Male pelvis.

Differences between the Male and Female Pelves.—The *female* pelvis (Fig. 242) is distinguished from that of the *male* (Fig. 241) by its bones being more delicate and its depth less. The whole pelvis is less massive, and its muscular impressions are slightly marked. The ilia are less sloped, and the anterior iliac spines more widely separated; hence the greater lateral prominence of the hips. The preauricular sulcus is more commonly present and better marked. The superior aperture of the lesser pelvis is larger in the female than in the male; it is more nearly circular, and its obliquity is greater. The cavity is shallower and wider; the sacrum is shorter wider, and its upper part is less curved; the obturator foramina are triangular in shape and smaller in size than in the male. The inferior aperture is larger and the coccyx more movable. The sciatic notches are wider and shallower, and the spines of the ischia project less inward. The acetabula are smaller and look more distinctly forward (Derry¹). The ischial tuberosities and the acetabula are wider apart, and the former are more everted. The pubic symphysis is less deep, and the pubic arch is wider and more rounded than in the male, where it is an angle rather than an arch.

¹ Journal of Anatomy and Physiology, vol. xliii.