

SHAFT OF THE INFERIOR EXTREMITY.

Both the femur and the tibia were examined in the several skeletons to see if any peculiarities existed in the shape of the bones. M. Broca directed attention some years ago to some femora in which the middle third of the shaft was prismatic and triangular, the lateral surfaces being concave, and the *linea aspera* projecting posteriorly as a strong raised ridge. Bones of this shape were termed *femur à pilastre* or *femur à colonne*. The femora from Cro-Magnon, near Les Eyzies, and those of the Guanches in the Museum of the Anthropological Society of Paris, were illustrative of this shape of femur, and M. Topinard has found the femora of the New Caledonians to possess a similar form.

In my series of Australian skeletons this variety of femur was seen to great advantage in those from the Riverina, Eucla, Manly Cove, and Queensland. In the Riverina skeleton the transverse diameter of the middle of the shaft of the right femur was 25 mm., and the antero-posterior diameter was 33 mm., which gives an index of 132; in the Eucla, Manly Cove, and Queensland skeletons this index was respectively 120, 120, and 127. In almost all the Australian femora the ridge from the *linea aspera* to the great trochanter to which the *gluteus maximus* is attached, was strongly marked; in some it was raised so as to form a low trochanter tertius, and the projection was accentuated by an elongated depression parallel to its outer side. In one adult Andaman Islander the prismatic form of the femoral shaft was very pronounced, and the same character was seen in the Oahuan, Esquimaux, and Lapp skeletons. I have also sometimes seen the shaft of the femur in Europeans in my dissecting room prismatic in shape. In five of seven New Zealand femora a peculiar flattening of the upper third of the anterior surface of the shaft immediately below the great trochanter was recognised. This was associated with, and apparently due to the projection outwards of an infra-trochanteric ridge, extending downwards from below the outer side of the great trochanter; but in these bones the middle of the shaft was not prismatic. A similar flattening was also observed in an odd femur, which, though it was presented to the museum along with some New Zealand bones, was said to be Australian. In the femora from a skeleton, which I obtained a number of years ago in a cave at Oban, Argyllshire, an equally well-pronounced flattening of the upper third of the shaft was seen, and the infra-trochanteric ridge formed a definite bulging quite distinct from and in front of the ridge leading from the great trochanter to the *linea aspera*.¹ The *linea aspera* was strong, but not so projecting as in the Australians. In the Oahuan femora, and in the Lapp and Esquimaux skeletons, the flattened anterior surface of the upper third of the shaft with the prominent external infra-trochanteric ridge was also present. In some of the

¹ This form of femur apparently corresponds with that found in a femur from a sepulchral cave at Perthi-Chwaren in Denbighshire, described by Mr. Busk in *Journ. Ethnol. Soc. Lond.*, January 1871. I described this Oban cave to the Anthropological Department of the British Association in 1871 (see *Reports of Edinburgh meeting*, p. 160, 1871).