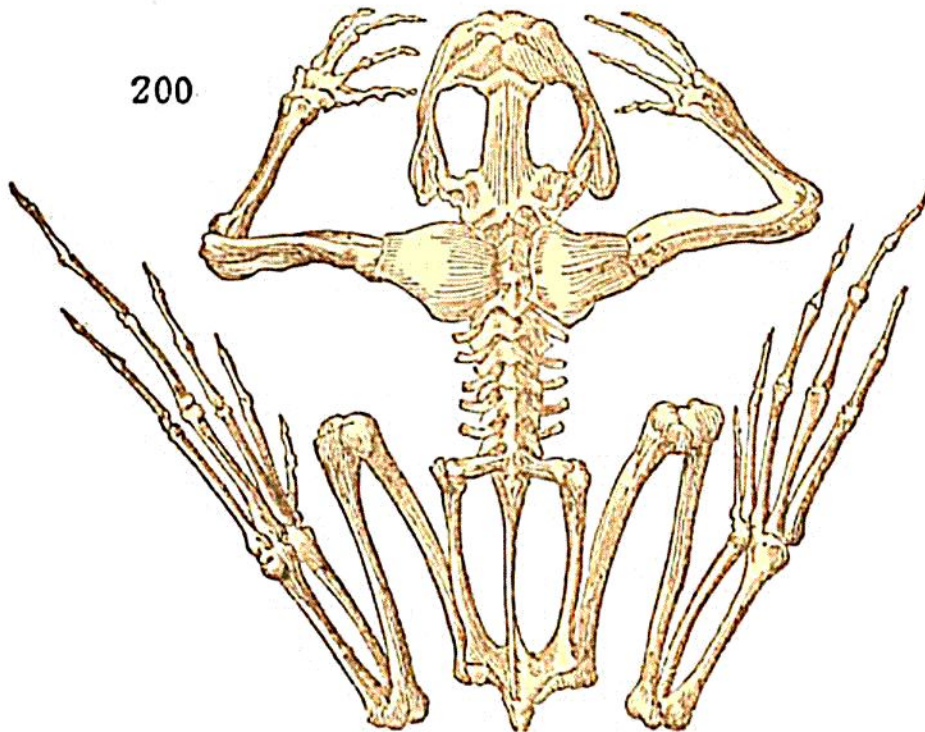


its wants, of its habits, of its functions, and of its very constitution. I shall have occasion to notice several of these transitions when reviewing the other functions of the animal economy: but at present our concern is chiefly with the structure of the frame in its mechanical relations to progressive motion. In order to form a correct idea of these relations, it will be necessary to notice the leading peculiarities of the skeletons of this tribe of animals.

The skeleton of the adult frog is shown in Fig. 200; from which it will be seen that the spinal column is comparatively



much shorter than that of fishes, or, indeed, of any other class of animals; for it consists of only eight vertebræ, exclusive of those which have united to form the os coccygis. It was evidently the intention of nature to consolidate the frame-work of the trunk, in which flexibility was not required for progressive motion: the performance of that function being transferred to the hind extremities, which are exceedingly large in proportion to the rest of the body. There is a tendency in every part of the skeleton to develop itself in a transverse direction, while the trunk is shortened as much as possible.

The mode in which the vertebræ are articulated together,