

before it enters the mandibular foramen. It descends in a groove on the deep surface of the ramus of the mandible, and reaching the under surface of the Mylohyoideus supplies this muscle and the anterior belly of the Digastricus.

The **dental branches** supply the molar and premolar teeth. They correspond in number to the roots of those teeth; each nerve entering the orifice at the point of the root, and supplying the pulp of the tooth; above the alveolar nerve they form an **inferior dental plexus**.

The **incisive branch** is continued onward within the bone, and supplies the canine and incisor teeth.

The **mental nerve** (*n. mentalis*) emerges at the mental foramen, and divides beneath the Triangularis muscle into three branches; one descends to the skin of the chin, and two ascend to the skin and mucous membrane of the lower lip; these branches communicate freely with the facial nerve.

Two small ganglia, the **otic** and the **submaxillary**, are connected with the mandibular nerve.

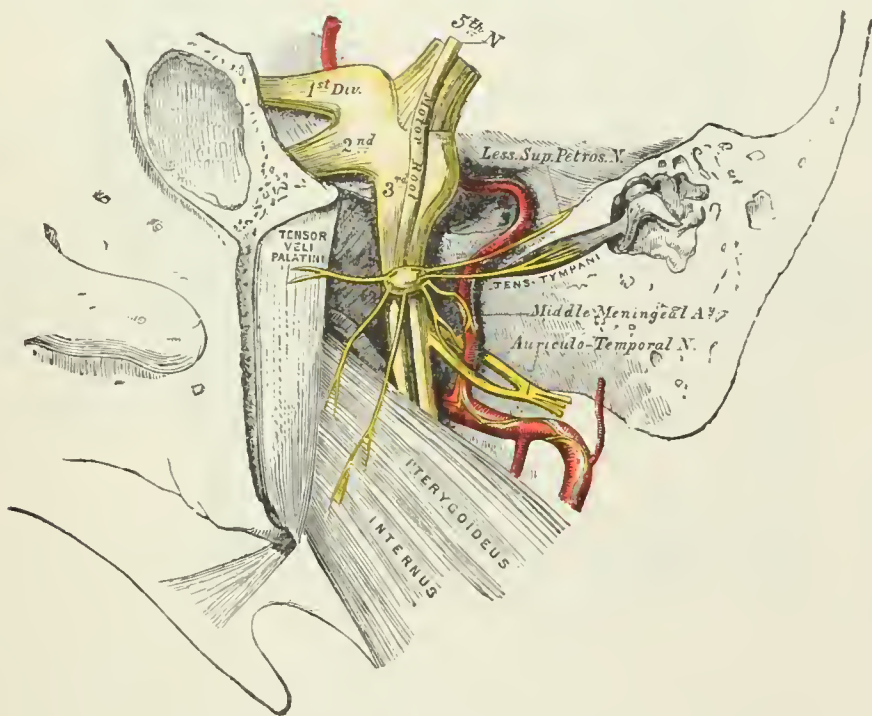


FIG. 783.—The otic ganglion and its branches.

Otic Ganglion (*ganglion oticum*) (Fig. 783).—The otic ganglion is a small, oval-shaped, flattened ganglion of a reddish-gray color, situated immediately below the foramen ovale; it lies on the medial surface of the mandibular nerve, and surrounds the origin of the nerve to the Pterygoideus internus. It is in relation, *laterally*, with the trunk of the mandibular nerve at the point where the motor and sensory roots join; *medially*, with the cartilaginous part of the auditory tube, and the origin of the Tensor veli palatini; *posteriorly*, with the middle meningeal artery.

Branches of Communication.—It is connected by two or three short filaments with the nerve to the Pterygoideus internus, from which it may obtain a motor, and possibly a sensory root. It communicates with the glossopharyngeal and facial nerves, through the lesser superficial petrosal nerve continued from the tympanic plexus, and through this nerve it probably receives a root from the glossopharyngeal and a motor root from the facial; its sympathetic root consists of a filament from the plexus surrounding the middle meningeal artery. The fibers from the glossopharyngeal which pass to the otic ganglion in the small superficial petrosal are supposed to be sympathetic efferent (preganglionic) fibers from the