

and palatine bones. The **anterior border** is the longest and slopes downward and forward. Its upper half is fused with the perpendicular plate of the ethmoid; its lower half is grooved for the inferior margin of the septal cartilage of the nose. The **posterior border** is free, concave, and separates the choanæ. It is thick and bifid above, thin below.

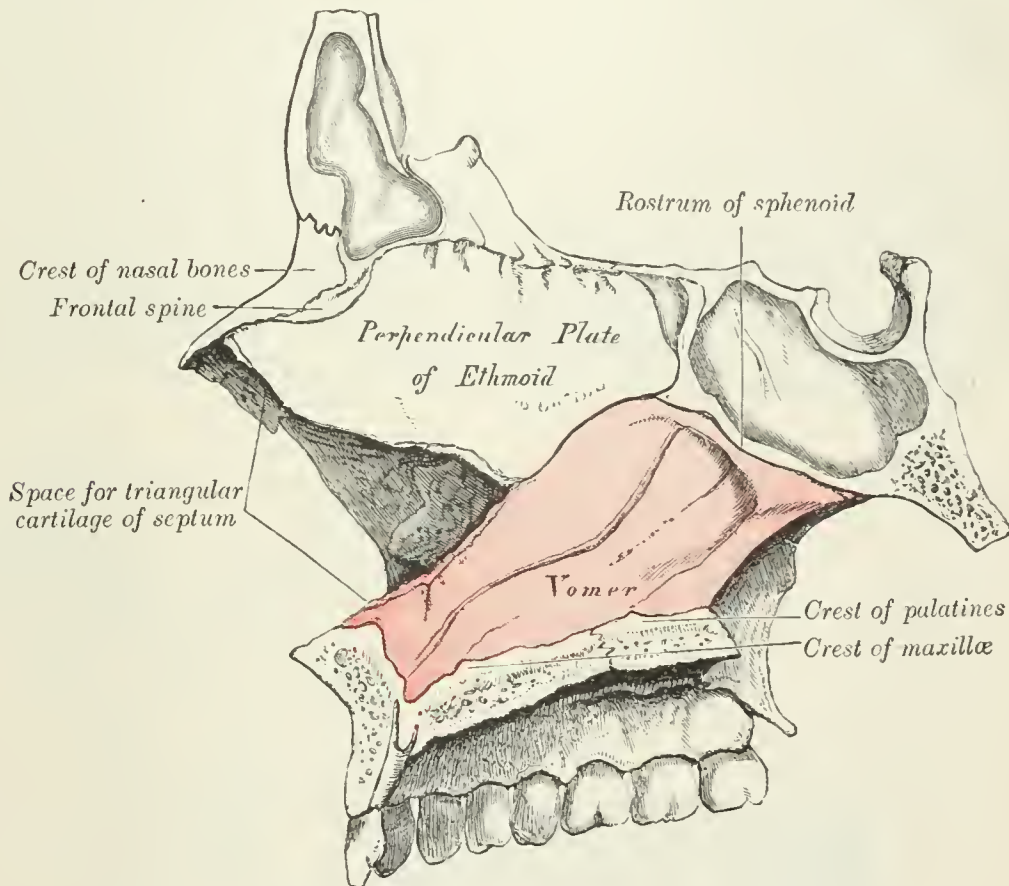


FIG. 173.—Median wall of left nasal cavity showing vomer *in situ*.

Ossification.—At an early period the septum of the nose consists of a plate of cartilage, the *ethmovomerine cartilage*. The postero-superior part of this cartilage is ossified to form the perpendicular plate of the ethmoid; its antero-inferior portion persists as the septal cartilage, while the vomer is ossified in the membrane covering its postero-inferior part. Two ossific centers, one on either side of the middle line, appear about the eighth week of fetal life in this part of the membrane, and hence the vomer consists primarily of two lamellæ. About the third month

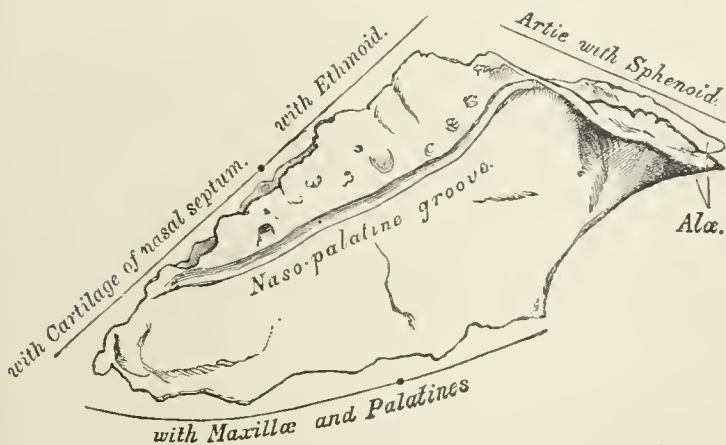


FIG. 174.—The vomer.

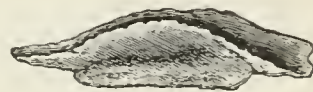


FIG. 175.—Vomer of infant.

these unite below, and thus a deep groove is formed in which the cartilage is lodged. As growth proceeds, the union of the lamellæ extends upward and forward, and at the same time the intervening plate of cartilage undergoes absorption. By the age of puberty the lamellæ are almost completely united to form a median plate, but evidence of the bilaminar origin of the bone is seen in the everted alæ of its upper border and the groove on its anterior margin.