

about the end of the third year, and finishing about the age of puberty. So whatever their function may be it is confined to the first few years of life. The position of the tonsil is full of significance. Placed as it is at the entrance to the respiratory and digestive systems, it must be there for some reason. It is a well known fact that young children tend to put everything in their mouth that they get their hands on, and also that they have a total disregard for bad odors and poisonous gases. Nature then to protect the life of the young has placed a ring of lymphoid tissue at the entrance to the body to absorb poisonous gases and destroy harmful organisms. As the child grows older, intelligence increases, and so there is not the same necessity for this lymphoid tissue in the throat and so it disappears. The scientific world to-day is very much interested in immunity, and the tonsils have been investigated along this line. The tonsillar crypts have been likened to culture tubes, the mucus they contain to culture medium, and from their very position they are always exposed to many different kinds of bacteria. So by a biochemical process antibodies, etc., are produced and so immunity. Naturally it is in early life that immunity from different diseases is required. So after this function is fulfilled they disappear. Of course immunity is only a relative term. Why some people take many infective diseases and others do not we cannot say. This immunity theory makes a nice picture, but there is not sufficient proof yet to accept it.

Many other functions have been attributed to the tonsils. One, that they produce an internal secretion like ductless glands, another that they aid in salivary digestion. By others they are considered to be a great source of the leucocytes in the young.

Indications for the removal of tonsils.

(a) *Local Conditions*:—Occasionally, apparently healthy tonsils require to be removed only on account of their enormous size. Their presence interferes with respiration and deglutition to such an extent as to be a serious hindrance to health, and even life itself. I once saw a child of four years old brought to the Hospital cyanosed and in great respiratory distress. The only thing that was found wrong was enormously enlarged tonsils and adenoids. They were immediately removed, no anæsthetic being given. Within a very short time the child was a good color and quite happy. Often children with enlarged tonsils make a peculiar noise when eating; this is relieved by removing the tonsils.

Frequent attacks of tonsillitis are an indication of unhealthy tonsils. The crypts become filled with septic material and quinsy or some variety of tonsillitis occasionally develops. Diseased crypts keep up a chronic