

down by the testicle nor pulled down by the gubernaculum, but is an outgrowth of the peritoneum. In practically all cases the processus vaginalis is not obliterated, and hence hernia is a very frequent complication. Not infrequently the hernia occupies the inguinal canal, its further descent to the scrotum being apparently hindered by the presence of the testicle. Even when no hernia can be detected, it is extremely probable that a patent processus vaginalis will be found at the operation. When the testis is abnormally placed in Scarpa's triangle, or is displaced towards the anterior superior spine, the condition of the tunica vaginalis is similar, and there will probably be a co-existing actual or potential hernia. In perineal and penile ectopia, both of which are very rare, a hernia is unusual.

The testicle itself is generally smaller than the normally placed organ when the imperfect descent is unilateral, and smaller than it should be at the age of the patient when the condition is bilateral; it is also softer to the touch. Occasionally it is but little, if any, smaller than the normal organ, but, on the other hand, it may have undergone atrophy to such an extent that it is only the size of a bean or, indeed, it may disappear, leaving no trace except upon histological examination. I met with such a case about a year ago. The patient was a man about twenty-five years of age, with a right inguinal hernia; the right testicle was missing from the scrotum, and, as far as the patient was aware, there had never been any evidence of its existence. There was, however, in the inguinal canal, an ill-defined, slightly tender mass, which was thought to be the missing organ. At the operation no trace of the testicle could be found, even by a finger introduced through the neck of the sac into the peritoneal cavity. A cord-like structure at the upper end of the sac was thought to be the vas, and this could be felt to pass over the brim of the pelvis in the usual manner. On tracing the vas downwards, it gradually got smaller and at last disappeared, without any trace of the testicle being met with. The whole sac, and with it the vas, was removed accordingly. Histological examination of the upper part showed the presence of a normal, but rather small, vas; sections of the lower end showed the presence of a number of tubules in