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THE CARE OF VULCANIZERS.

In spite of the fact that the vulcanizers sold by reliable manufacturers are submitted to severe tests by hydrostatic pressure—some of them to a pressure of nine hundred pounds to the inch—explosions have not been unfrequent, generally due to the ignorance of the assistants who watch them, or pretend to watch them, during the process of vulcanization, and not a little to the carelessness of the dentists themselves, who fail to impress upon the students that these little steam boilers require as much attention as boilers of a greater capacity. In the first place, it does not pay to use cheap vulcanizers any more than cheap German tools and instruments, or the cheaper grades of artificial teeth. In the next place, one should familiarize himself with every part of the machine: realize the importance of keeping it and its belongings clean, and adhere strictly to the rules laid down by the manufacturers. Where thermometers are used it ought not to be forgotten that too rapid and too great heat at starting, especially if the flame is allowed to surround and reach the top cover, may deceive, and that the thermometer at 320° may really indicate only the temperature of the cover, and not that of the flask inside. The safety disk used on some modern vulcanizers should not be forced on too tight, as this weakens them. The boiler should on no account ever be perfectly full of water: at least, one inch or more of steam room should be left above the water. When the heat is first applied, the valve for the escape of steam should be opened for a few minutes to allow a free escape of steam, as this leaves in the boiler, after the valve is closed, an atmosphere of pure steam, and precaution should be taken not to use any more force in closing the valve than is necessary to make it steam-tight. We are warned, too, not to daub too much blacklead or soapstone powder about the packing. In fact, it is better never to use any if it can be avoided. Oil should never be used, as it rots the rubber packing, and may become gummy and cement the core to the pot, to the damage of the rubber packing. Too frequent use of the blacklead and soapstone wears away the screw thread. In heating up, the flame should not be larger than will