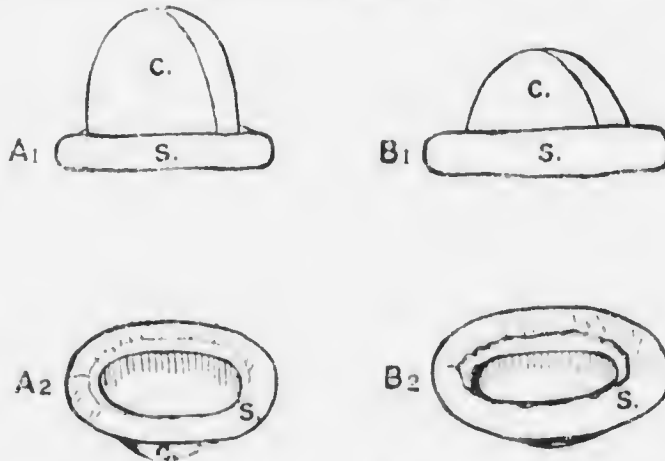


entry of the sperm. To ascertain that the line of junction is secure, the cap should be held up to the light and examined, preferably by a magnifying glass.

In figures A₂ and B₂ the caps are reversed and shown from underneath, and the line of junction between the soft cap C and the surrounding ring S is apparent. In A it will be noted that the junction is smooth and that the cap and ring merge into one another. But in B there is a comparatively rough welding of the thick raw edge of the cap C, which is—or may be—a very dangerous source of failure. No cap which is offered with such a rough interior should be accepted by a would-be purchaser.



It should be remembered that rubber tends to perish, even when not in use, and that to put away a cap dry for months or more, and then bring it into use may mean serious failure, owing to the development of small cracks. Rubber which is not in use is best kept under water, as it is in scientific laboratories. A small china or celluloid pot or jar with a lid should be available, filled with water, under which the cap is submerged after it has been washed out and dipped into a simple non-corrosive disinfectant solution. Time under water may discolour the cap somewhat, but should tend to preserve its essential pliability and usefulness.