

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ADOLPHE ROCK, OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.

IMPROVEMENT IN PROCESSES OF PREPARING MOSS FOR MATTRESS-STUFFING, &c.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 134,562, dated January 7, 1873.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ADOLPHE ROCK, of the city of New Orleans, in the parish of Orleans, State of Louisiana, have invented an Improved Process of Treating Moss, of which the following is a specification:

The object of this invention is to improve the quality and appearance of the moss used for stuffing mattresses, chair-seats, carriage-cushions, &c.

By the ordinary process the bark is removed from the moss by causing it to rot and fall from the fiber, leaving the fiber of all shades of color, from a whitish gray to a very dark brown, very coarse to the touch, easily pulverized by wear, and without that elasticity which is requisite for the purposes for which it is used.

This improved process is as follows: A bath of proto-acetate of iron is prepared by placing in a barrel of crude pyroligneous acid, old iron nails, filings, turnings, or iron chips of any kind, the rustier the better, in the proportion of ten pounds, more or less, to a barrel of forty gallons, and allowing the same to stand about twenty-four hours, when enough of proto-acetate of iron will be formed for the purpose in view. This liquid is then diluted with an equal or from an equal to twice the quantity of water. The moss, from which the bark has been previously rotted, is steeped in this liquid for from one-half hour to one and a half hour, as the case may be, the length of time depending upon the quantity of bark still adhering to the moss fiber, owing to the imperfect rotting out of the same. In most cases one hour will prove sufficient to impart a uniform black coloring. The moss is then removed, and after draining is steamed for about two hours, when the viscous semi-transparent matter contained in the cellules of the moss fiber will be fully coagulated, a gloss given the fiber, and an elasticity imparted to it much greater than that which it receives from passing through the coloring process to which it has been previously subjected. This steaming is accomplished most easily and cheaply by placing the moss in a tank provided with a double bottom, the upper one of which is perforated, and admitting the steam between them, when the moss, commencing at the lowest layers, will be gradually heated throughout. The steaming-tank should be covered, and the liquid formed by condensation of the steam be collected and used as diluted liquid for the next

operation. After steaming, the moss is dried, and is then ready for the market.

Moss thus prepared possesses the following advantages: It is of a uniform black color, owing, first, to the coloring process, and, secondly, to the steaming process. It is more elastic than the moss prepared by simply rotting out the bark, and the fiber is very much stronger. When mixed with hair it proves itself equal to it in respect to appearance, elasticity, and durability, and is free from liability to attacks from insects or infection from miasmas, owing to the empyreumatic and creosotic matters imbibed by the fiber from the pyroligneous acid, which were not separated from the same, as is usually the case when ordinary proto-acetate of iron is manufactured.

The iron (which may be left constantly in the acid) should be stirred from time to time, and should any coating of tarry matters be formed it should be cleaned, and this cleaning is best accomplished by heating the iron to a red heat. The particles thus deposited on the iron and burnt out will not weaken the acid to any appreciable degree, and the longer the liquid with iron in it is kept on hand the greater will be its coloring properties.

I am aware that in some instances prior to the date of my invention moss has been colored by the use of a logwood die, and has been in some cases also treated with preparations having a metallic base, and therefore I do not claim, broadly, the coloring of moss to prepare it for use; the merit of my invention consisting principally in the steaming of the moss after it has been colored, and, secondarily, in the improved process herein described, as a whole.

I claim as my invention—

1. The process of steaming moss for the purpose of imparting gloss and elasticity, after the same has been colored by the described or other process.

2. The method of treating moss by the use of the cleaning and coloring compound herein described, followed by steaming, substantially as specified.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I hereunder affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

ADOLPHE ROCK.

Witnesses:

B. F. KEEFE,  
B. F. HYNEM.