

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE F. MILLER, OF JACKSONVILLE, AND WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT,
OF ORANGE PARK, FLA.; SAID MILLER ASSIGNOR TO SAID BENEDICT.

IMPROVEMENT IN TREATING PALMETTO FIBER FOR USE IN THE ARTS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **203,177**, dated April 30, 1878; application filed
March 30, 1878.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, GEORGE F. MILLER, of the city of Jacksonville, in the county of Duval and State of Florida, and WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT, of the villa of Orange Park, in the county of Clay and State of Florida, have jointly invented a new and useful Improvement in Curled Palmetto Fiber, and in process of preparing the same from all varieties of palmetto stalks, leaves, or buds, thereby producing an article hitherto unknown to commerce, to be used for and in the manufacture of bedding, and for all upholstering purposes, of which the following is a specification:

The nature of our invention consists in the treatment of the palmetto leaves, stalks, and buds in the manner hereinafter described, to make a superior elastic fiber for all upholstering purposes, filling mattresses, stuffing car-cushions, for sleeping-car beds, for bedding on ship-board, (as it does not absorb moisture,) for horse-collars, and all uses where an article is required of the nature of curled hair of commerce.

The palmetto fiber is prepared as follows: The material must be gathered while green, and put through a suitable machine to slit or shred it. Such a machine is shown in Patent No. 201,269, of March 12, 1878; but any other suitable machine may be used to carry out this part of our process. The fiber is then curled or kinked into a rope or braid by any well-known machine, similar to that used for curling hair or twisting rope. This curling or kinking can best be done while the material is only partially dry, as it takes the kink or curl best at this stage. After it is twisted into a rope it is subjected to the action of hot air until perfectly dry and the kink or twist thoroughly set. It can be dried by exposure

to the sun; but the time required is longer. It is then put in bales, similar to baled hay, for shipment.

In the hands of the consumer, it may be picked apart by hand or by a simple machine used by upholsterers for picking curled hair.

By our invention or discovery we bring into use a vast amount of material which has heretofore been neglected and useless for any purposes.

The material thus formed from palmetto leaves, stalks, and buds, when prepared for market as herein described, is a firm, compact, and elastic fiber, well calculated to resist the action of a damp atmosphere, and without smell or dust, and retains elasticity longer than any other upholstery material.

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. As a new article of manufacture, a palmetto fiber, when treated as herein described to produce a fine fiber, kinked or curled substantially as described, and for the purposes specified.

2. The process herein described of making an elastic fiber of palmetto for upholstering purposes, which consists in stripping the leaves, stalks, or buds of the palmetto into shreds, and then kinking, and afterward twisting the fiber into a rope.

3. The process, &c., which consists in stripping palmetto leaves, &c., into shreds, kinking, and afterward twisting the fiber into a rope while green or wet, then drying, and afterward picking apart for use.

GEORGE F. MILLER.

WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT.

Witnesses:

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ALBERT W. OWENS.