

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT, OF ORANGE PARK, FLORIDA.

UPHOLSTERING MATERIAL AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 264,231, dated September 12, 1882.

Application filed June 29, 1882. (No specimens.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT, a resident of Orange Park, in the county of Clay and State of Florida, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Upholstering Material and Method of Manufacturing the Same; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, which will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention consists in the method of producing the upholstering material hereinafter described and claimed, which material I have denominated as "aromo-pompine" fiber, and which is specially adapted for mattresses, although it may be used in lieu of curled hair and similar fiber in any kind of upholstery.

It is well known that the aroma of pine leaves or needles has considerable medical or curative properties; also makes the driest bedding material known. To cure the pine leaves or needles in such manner as to retain this aroma to the greatest extent is one object of my invention. Another object is to make an upholstering material or fiber, which shall be clean, cool, healthful, and permanently elastic. To this end I have adopted the following process: I strip from the branches of the pine-tree (preferably the long-leaved southern or Florida pine) the needles or leaves. These needles are preferably not stripped entirely apart, but are left united together at their base as they grow, which is in small clumps or clusters of three or four leaves or needles secured together by a bit of balsamic resin. The twigs or woody matter, however, should be entirely removed. The needles, as soon as pulled from the branches, must be carefully excluded from dampness or sunlight. Moisture will tend to rot the fiber, while sunlight changes the color to a dull red, also renders the needles brittle. The needles may be stripped from the boughs in the field, but must be at once taken to the wilting-house. The wilting or curing house is a building with ventilators so arranged as to admit the air but exclude the light. In this building I arrange the fiber on racks or frames, or in other suitable manner, so that it may be well exposed to the air. It should be often turned to avoid heating and to secure even wilting or drying.

The fiber is left in the wilting-house one to two weeks, according to temperature and moisture of the atmosphere, or until so thoroughly cured as to avoid much danger of heating in process of preparation, but must not be fully dried. In its wilted condition the fiber will be somewhat tough, but not as firm as when fully dried. The fiber is then spun into a rope in the manner practiced in spinning curled hair or in any suitable manner. One manner of spinning is described in my Patent No. 203,177. The spinning must be done at the time the fiber is partially dried. If too green, it will heat and sour after it is compacted into the rope. If too dry, the fiber will not take the curl to advantage in spinning; but being too dry or stiff will make a rough or "frizzy" rope, and when picked apart from the rope the fiber will have too little kink or curl, and will have a tendency to lose even that. The fiber must be kept from the light as much as possible while spinning, and after being spun into ropes of suitable length (I have found about one hundred feet in length and, say, two inches in diameter to make a convenient rope for commercial purposes) the ropes are hung up in a dark house to complete the drying. The ropes must now be thoroughly dried, so that they may not heat and sour, and so destroy the aromatic odor, which is one of the greatest advantages of my aromo-pompine fiber. The drying also sets the kink or curl, so that the fiber retains its kink or curl for an indefinite time after it is picked from the rope. The sunlight must be carefully excluded from the fiber or it will become red and brittle.

The ropes when fully dried may be pressed into bales for shipment, or picked apart for use in upholstery in the same manner that curled hair is used.

In a former patent (No. 205,035) I have described a mixture of pine and palmetto fiber. In that mixed fiber, which I manufacture under the name of "pino-palmine," I place reliance on the palmetto part to a great extent to secure elasticity, and I had not discovered at the time of making application for that patent the extreme necessity of carefully excluding the sunlight from the pino.

My aromo-pompine fiber manufactured by the process above described is of a light-green

color, possesses the aromatic odor of pine in a marked degree, is set into a permanent curl or kink, is much firmer or stiffer than curled hair, so that it will not easily mat or compact, is quite tough, and, having a large curl, is very elastic.

I am aware that pine fiber has been heretofore used for bedding, and I have former patents, in one or more of which it is described as forming part of an upholstery material. I am also aware of Patent No. 235,310, of December 7, 1880, and I claim nothing therein described as new. My principal improvements, as above described, consist in the wilting and in the exclusion of light from the fiber, also retaining the balsamic gums thoroughly preserved.

What I claim is—

1. The method hereinbefore described of curing pine fiber for upholstery purposes, which consists in stripping the pine-needles from the boughs, wilting the same for some

days until the fiber is tough and pliable, then twisting into rope, and finally drying the rope until the fiber is completely kinked and dried, as set forth.

2. The method hereinbefore described of curing pine fiber for upholstery purposes, which consists in stripping the pine-needles from the boughs, partially wilting the same in a dark room, twisting the same into rope, and then drying the rope in dark room, as described.

3. A pine fiber for upholstery purposes, which is light green in color, strongly aromatic in odor, and which has a permanent kink or curl, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in presence of two witnesses.

WASHINGTON G. BENEDICT.

Witnesses:

JOSEPH E. MERRILL,
DWIGHT B. RICH.