UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHAPMAN JOHNSON SYME, OF PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.

METHOD OF TREATING TOBACCO-LEAVES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 435,952, dated September 9, 1890.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHAPMAN JOHNSON SYME, a citizen of the United States, residing at Petersburg, in the county of Dinwiddie and State of Virginia, have invented a new and useful Method of Treating Tobacco-Leaves, of which the following is a specification.

This invention has relation to a method for producing wrappers from the natural leaf of tobacco for plug-tobacco.

The objects of the invention are to destroy the essential oils of the leaf, thus leaving merely the pulp or fiber, and this to be in a bleached state. By a leaf thus altered an appropriate, neat-appearing, and convenient wrapper is produced, one capable of being wrapped around a plug of tobacco and snugly folded without danger of breaking, and containing none of the oils of the tobacco, whereby dust and dirt will not readily adhere thereto, as in the natural state.

With the above objects in view the invention consists in subjecting the leaves which it is desired to convert into plug-tobacco wrappers to a bath in a solution of sulphuric acid and saltpeter, and subsequently subjecting them to a second bath of tartaric acid and warm water, and finally to a bath of cold water for removing the effects of the treatment heretofore described.

In practicing my invention I take either the natural or artificially-cured tobacco-leaves and place them carefully in a suitable vat containing a sufficient quantity of sulphuric acid and saltpeter to cover the contents of the vat.

By experience I have found that the best results accrue from a bath proportioned about as follows: To one and one-half pints of sulphuric acid add six gallons of water, preferably cold, and after dissolving add about one-quarter of a pound of saltpeter. These proportions may, however, be varied to secure different shades of color for the leaves; but care must be taken not to make the solution too strong, or, in other words, of sufficient strength to destroy the texture of the leaf itself. The proportion of the saltpeter may be varied to modify the shades. The tobacco-leaves are now removed from the vat in which the solution is contained and are transferred to a second vat containing warm water and tartaric acid in suitable proportions, by which means all traces of the sulphuric-acid solution are removed. The leaves are now subjected to a bath of cold water, which removes all trace of the tartaric acid, after which the leaves are hung up to dry. By this process all the essential oils of the tobacco, together with the gummy coating of the same, are removed, leaving only the pulp or fiber of the leaves, which pulp or fiber, it is observed, is bleached to a desired color or shade, said leaves being left either light or dark golden and extremely pliable, so that they may be readily folded about the plugs of tobacco. The sulphuric acid acts to soften the gum and remove the oil from the tobacco-leaf, and at the same time so loosens the gum, by the aid of the smoke by which the tobacco is cured, that it is prepared for the action of the saltpeter. After the tobacco has been prepared by the action of the acid, as described above, the saltpeter thoroughly removes the gums and oils and all effects of the smoking, leaving the tobacco bleached.

Having described my method, what I claim is—

1. The herein-described method of bleaching tobacco-leaves for the production of wrappers for plug-tobacco, consisting of subjecting them to a bath of sulphuric acid and saltpeter made into a solution, subsequently treating the same to a bath of tartaric acid and water, and finally rinsing in clear water, substantially as specified.

2. A step in the method of treating tobacco-leaves for the purpose of producing wrappers for plug-tobacco, which consists in subjecting them to the chemical action of a solution of sulphuric acid and saltpeter, and subsequently subjecting the leaves to a cleansing-bath, substantially as specified.

3. The herein-described method of treating tobacco-leaves for producing wrappers for plug-tobacco, which consists in subjecting them to a bath of sulphuric acid, water, and saltpeter in about the proportions specified from three to six hours, then subjecting them to a second bath of tartaric acid and warm water, and finally rinsing them in cold water, substantially as specified.

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

CHAPMAN JOHNSON SYME.

Witnesses:

S. A. JORDAN,

C. H. MARSHALL.