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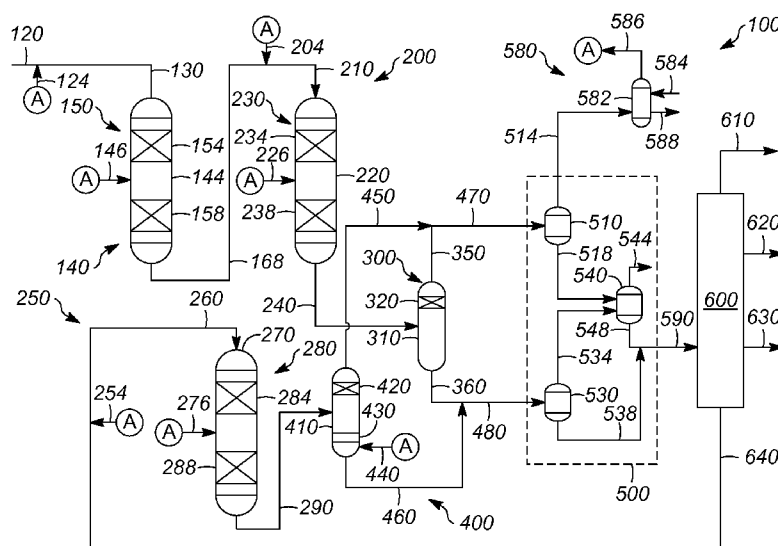


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: One exemplary embodiment can be a process for a hydrocarbon feed. The process can include passing a stream through a separation zone forming a void for separating one or more gases from one or more liquids and at least partially containing a catalyst. The catalyst may include at least one group VIII noble metal. Typically, the separation zone is downstream of a hydrocracking zone for reducing the operating pressure in the hydrocracking zone.

PROCESS, SYSTEM, AND APPARATUS FOR A HYDROCRACKING ZONE

PRIORITY CLAIM OF EARLIER NATIONAL APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Application No. 12/710,128 filed on February 22, 2010.

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention generally relates to a process, system and apparatus for a hydrocarbon stream, and more particularly to a separation zone for a hydrocracking zone.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATED ART

[0003] A hydrocracking apparatus can treat one or more feedstocks. Often, the hydrocracking apparatus can produce multiple products. However, if the hydrocracking apparatus has to meet multiple specifications for these products, the apparatus may operate at a higher severity condition to ensure that the most rigorous product specification may be met. As an example, if the apparatus has a kerosene smoke target, the hydrogen partial pressure can be increased to meet that specification. However, such a rigorous operation may be unnecessary to meet other specifications, such as hydrotreating to meet a maximum sulfur specification or cetane number for, e.g., a diesel fuel.

[0004] In some hydrocracking units, the pressure can be set greater than 14,000 kPa. Typically, the aromatic saturation of the kerosene can be equilibrium limited, and as such, pressure may be used to force the reaction to obtain a targeted overall aromatic saturation. However, higher pressures generally require sturdier equipment and vessels, and such higher pressure may not be required to meet other targets, such as sulfur level. Because the amount of materials, such as steel, has a direct bearing on cost, the higher system pressure generally requires a greater capital cost. Hence, an improved design that can reduce system pressure may not only provide flexibility, but reduce initial capital expenditures and operating expenses.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] One exemplary embodiment can be a process for a hydrocarbon feed. The process can include passing a stream through a separation zone forming a void for separating one or

more gases from one or more liquids and at least partially containing a catalyst. The catalyst may include at least one group VIII noble metal. Typically, the separation zone is downstream of a hydrocracking zone for reducing the operating pressure in the hydrocracking zone.

5 [0006] Another exemplary embodiment may be a system for hydroprocessing a hydrocarbon feed. The system may include a first hydrocracking zone, a first separation zone, a second hydrocracking zone, and a second separation zone. The first hydrocracking zone may produce a first hydrocracked effluent. Generally, the first separation zone produces a first stream including one or more gases and a second stream including one or more liquids. 10 Usually, a second hydrocracking zone produces a second hydrocracked effluent. Typically, a second separation zone produces a third stream including one or more gases and a fourth stream including one or more liquids. The second separation zone can contain a catalyst including one or more group VIII noble metals.

[0007] A further exemplary embodiment may be a hydroprocessing apparatus. The 15 apparatus can include a hydrotreating zone, a first hydrocracking zone, a first separation zone, a fractionation zone, a second hydrocracking zone, and a second separation zone. The hydrotreating zone may be adapted to receive a feed. Generally, the first hydrocracking zone is adapted to receive at least a portion of an effluent from the hydrotreating zone. Usually, a first separation zone is adapted to receive at least a portion of an effluent from the first 20 hydrocracking zone. Furthermore, the fractionation zone can be adapted to receive at least a portion of an effluent from the first separation zone and may produce a bottom stream. Typically, a second hydrocracking zone is adapted to receive at least a portion of the bottom stream and produces an effluent. Generally, a second separation zone is adapted to receive at least a portion of the effluent from the second hydrocracking zone. The second separation 25 zone may include a separation vessel containing a catalyst having at least one group VIII noble metal.

[0008] The embodiments disclosed herein can provide a process for reducing saturated aromatics in a kerosene product while not requiring increased pressure in an apparatus. Instead, a separation zone can include a noble metal catalyst and receive a hydrogen stream to 30 saturate aromatics. Thus, the entire unit can have flexibility in operation to meet product specifications without requiring rigorous operation of the entire unit. Hence, increased capital expense for equipment and increased operating expenses may be avoided.

DEFINITIONS

[0009] As used herein, the term “stream” can include various hydrocarbon molecules, such as straight-chain, branched, or cyclic alkanes, alkenes, alkadienes, and alkynes, and optionally other substances, such as gases, e.g., hydrogen, or impurities, such as heavy
5 metals, and sulfur and nitrogen compounds. The stream can also include aromatic and non-aromatic hydrocarbons.

[0010] As used herein, the term “zone” can refer to an area including one or more equipment items and/or one or more sub-zones. Equipment items can include one or more reactors or reactor vessels, heaters, exchangers, pipes, pumps, compressors, and controllers.

10 Additionally, an equipment item, such as a reactor, dryer, or vessel, can further include one or more zones or sub-zones.

[0011] As used herein, the term “rich” can mean an amount of at least generally 50%, and preferably 70%, by mole, of a compound or class of compounds in a stream.

[0012] As used herein, the term “substantially” can mean an amount of at least generally
15 80%, preferably 90%, and optimally 99%, by mole, of a compound or class of compounds in a stream.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1 is a schematic depiction of an exemplary hydroprocessing apparatus or system.

20 [0014] FIG. 2 is a schematic, cross-sectional depiction of an exemplary second separation zone.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a schematic, cross-sectional depiction of another exemplary second separation zone.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

25 [0016] Referring to FIG. 1, a hydroprocessing apparatus or system 100 can include a hydrotreating zone 140, a first hydrocracking zone 200, a second hydrocracking zone 250, a first separation zone 300, a second separation zone 400, a flash zone 500, a scrubber zone 580, and a fractionation zone 600. The hydrotreating zone 140 can receive a hydrocarbon feed 120. Typically, the hydrocarbon feed 120 can have components boiling in the range of

170° to 650°C. Usually, these feeds can include at least one of a vacuum gas oil, a vacuum distillation unit product, a heavy gas oil, a catalytic residue upgrading unit product, a deasphalted oil, a solvent deasphalting unit product, a cycle oil, a fluid catalytic cracking unit product, a lube oil extract, a solvent extraction lube base oil unit product, a coking unit product, and a thermal cracking unit product, such as a Visbreaking product. Typically, the hydrocarbon feed 120 can receive a stream 124 including hydrogen from “A”, which can be at least a part of a hydrogen manifold as described hereinafter, to form a combined feed 130. This combined feed 130 can be provided to the hydrotreating zone 140. As depicted, process flow lines in the figures can be referred to as streams, feeds, products, or effluents.

Particularly, a line can contain one or more streams, feeds, products or effluents, and one or more streams, feeds, products, or effluents can be contained by a line. Exemplary hydrotreating and hydrocracking zones are disclosed in, e.g., US 2008/0060976 A1.

[0017] Generally, the hydrotreating zone 140 can include a hydrotreating reactor 144 that can receive at least one stream 146 including hydrogen from “A” and can include at least one bed 150. Usually, the at least one bed 150 can include a first bed 154 containing a catalyst having at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal, and a second bed 158 containing a catalyst containing at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal. The at least one group VIII metal can include iron, cobalt, or nickel and the at least one group VIB metal can include molybdenum or tungsten. Generally, these metals are included on a support material, such as silica or alumina. Usually, the group VIII metal can be present in the amount of 2 to 20%, by weight, based on the weight of the catalyst, and the group VIB metal can be present in an amount of 1 to 25%, by weight, based on the weight of the catalyst.

[0018] Typically, the hydrotreating zone 140 can be operated at a temperature of 200° to 500°C and a pressure of 3.5 to 20.8 MPa. Although the hydrogen stream 146 is depicted being provided at the top of the reactor 144, it should be understood that the hydrogen stream 146 can be provided anywhere along the hydrotreating reactor 144 and multiple hydrogen streams may be provided. Afterwards, a hydrotreated effluent 168 can exit the hydrotreating reactor 144. At least a portion of the effluent 168 can combine with a stream 204 including hydrogen from “A” to form a combined feed 210 to the first hydrocracking zone 200.

[0019] The first hydrocracking zone 200 can include a first hydrocracking reactor 220 having at least one bed 230. The first hydrocracking reactor 220 can receive a stream 226

including hydrogen from "A". Although one stream 226 including hydrogen is depicted, it should be understood that multiple streams may be provided to the first hydrocracking reactor 220. The at least one bed 230 can include a first bed 234 containing a catalyst including at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal, and a second bed 238 containing
5 a catalyst including at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal. The at least one group VIII metal can include iron, cobalt, or nickel and the at least one group VIB metal can include molybdenum or tungsten. Typically, the amount of the metals can be 0.05 to 30%, by weight, based on the weight of the catalyst. The first hydrocracking zone 200 can operate at any suitable condition, such as a temperature of 200° to 500°C and a pressure of
10 3.5 to 21 MPa. At least a portion of an effluent 240 from the first hydrocracking zone 200 can pass to a first separation zone 300.

[0020] The first separation zone 300 can include a first separation vessel 310 with a hydrogenation zone 320. The hydrogenation zone 320 can include a catalyst of molybdenum and nickel or cobalt as base metals on any suitable support, such as alumina or silica, to
15 prevent mercaptan recombination in the naphtha product range. Preferably, the catalyst does not contain a noble metal due to the presence of one or more sulfur compounds that may poison the noble metal.

[0021] A first stream 350 including one or more gases can exit the first separation vessel 310 as well as a second stream 360 including one or more liquids. The stream 350 can be
20 combined with a third stream 450, as described hereinafter, to form a combined stream 470. Similarly, the liquid stream 360 can be combined with a fourth stream 460, as described hereinafter, to form a stream 480.

[0022] The streams 470 and 480 can enter the flash zone 500. The flash zone 500 can include a first flash drum 510, a second flash drum 530, and a third flash drum 540.
25 Typically, the flash drums 510, 530, and 540 can separate gases from liquids. Particularly, the first flash drum 510 can provide an overhead stream 514 including one or more gases and a bottom stream 518 including one or more liquids. Similarly, the second flash drum 530 can provide an overhead stream 534 including one or more gases and a bottom stream 538 including one or more liquids. The overhead stream 534 and the bottom stream 518 can be
30 received in the third flash drum 540. The third flash drum 540 can provide an overhead stream 544 including one or more gases that can be sent to any suitable destination, such as a flare or fuel gas, while the bottom stream 548 including one or more liquids can be combined

with the bottom stream 538. These combined streams 538 and 548 may be provided as a feed 590, which can include at least a portion of the stream 360, to the fractionation zone 600.

[0023] Generally, the fractionation zone 600 can produce a variety of products, and can include an overhead stream 610, a first side-stream 620, a second side-stream 630, and a bottom stream 640. Typically, the first side-stream 620 can include kerosene and the second side-stream 630 can include diesel. The kerosene can have a product specification, such as a smoke point, while the diesel product can have a product specification, such as a maximum sulfur target and minimum cetane target.

[0024] The flash zone 500 can provide the overhead stream 514, which can in turn be provided to a scrubber zone 580. The scrubber zone 580 can include a scrubber 582 and receive a stream 584 including a scrubbing fluid that can exit as a bottom liquid stream 588. The scrubbing fluid can be provided from any suitable unit and can include methyl diethyl amine and diethanol amine from an amine treating unit. Generally, the stream 514 can contain suitable levels of hydrogen and be recycled after being scrubbed in the scrubber 582 and exit as an overhead stream 586. Typically, the overhead stream 586 can be recycled to the hydrogen manifold "A". Usually, the hydrogen manifold can include a plurality of lines or pipes that can receive a variety of streams containing hydrogen, including make-up hydrogen from a hydrogen generation unit, and be provided to various processes in a refinery or chemical manufacturing plant.

[0025] Referring to the fractionation zone 600, at least a portion of the bottom stream 640 can be provided to the second hydrocracking zone 250. Typically, the bottom stream 640 is combined with a hydrogen stream 254 from "A" to form a combined feed 260. The second hydrocracking zone 250 can include a second hydrocracking reactor 270 that may receive at least one stream 276 from "A" including hydrogen. Generally, the second hydrocracking reactor 270 can receive several hydrogen streams at any suitable location. The second hydrocracking reactor 270 can include at least one bed 280 including a first bed 284 and a second bed 288. Typically, each of the first bed 284 and second bed 288 can contain a catalyst including at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal. The group VIII metal can include at least one of iron, cobalt, nickel, ruthenium, rhodium, palladium, osmium, iridium, and platinum. The at least one group VIB metal can include at least one of molybdenum and tungsten. Preferably, the group VIII metal can be iron, cobalt, or nickel, and the group VIB metal may be molybdenum or cobalt. Typically, the amount of the metals

can be 0.05 to 30%, by weight, based on the weight of the catalyst. If a noble metal is included, the catalyst may contain 0.01% to 5%, by weight, noble metal based on the weight of the catalyst. The second hydrocracking reactor 270 can operate at a temperature of 200° to 500°C, a pressure of 3.5 to 21 MPa, and a liquid hourly space velocity of 1 to 3 hr⁻¹, preferably 2 hr⁻¹. The second hydrocracking reactor 270 can provide at least a portion of a stream or an effluent 290 to the second separation zone 400.

[0026] The second separation zone 400 can operate at any suitable temperature and pressure, typically a temperature of 220° to 380°C and a pressure of 3,500 to 17,300 kPa. The second separation zone 400 can include a second separation vessel 410 that may receive a stream 440 including hydrogen from "A". Generally, the stream 440 includes an effective amount of hydrogen to saturate one or more aromatics, and optionally one or more sulfur compounds.

[0027] Referring to FIG. 2, the second separation vessel 410 can form a void 412 with an upper portion 414 and a lower portion 418. Generally, the upper portion 414 and the lower portion 418 can form two separate chambers within the second separation vessel 410 allowing fluid communication between the portions 414 and 418, as in FIG. 2. Typically, the lower portion 418 can include a packing 430, which can be mesh or one or more rings. In the upper portion 414, the hydrogenation zone 420 can include a catalyst including any suitable group VIII noble metal, such as platinum and/or palladium optionally provided on a support, such as a silica-alumina or an alumina. The catalyst may contain 0.01% to 5%, by weight, noble metal based on the weight of the catalyst.

[0028] Typically, the effluent 290 enters the lower portion 418 and is distributed over a tray 424. The tray 424 typically forms one or more openings, and may include other devices to facilitate the distribution of liquid. The liquid from the tray 424 may be stripped with hydrogen from the stream 440 rising through the packing 430. The stream 440 can be provided to the separation vessel 410 and pass through a distributor 434 underneath the packing 430. The distributor 434 can be a pipe with a series of holes formed about its circumference and extending along a length of the pipe. The heavier liquid can drop down and exit as a fourth stream or effluent 460. Stripped gases may rise and pass from the lower portion 418 to the upper portion 414 and through the hydrogenation zone 420. The gases can then exit the second separation vessel 400 as a third stream or effluent 450 including one or more gases, typically saturated components boiling in the kerosene range. The second

separation vessel 410 can operate at a temperature of 220° to 380°C, a pressure of 3.5 to 17,300 kPa, and a liquid hourly space velocity of 8 to 10 hr⁻¹. Afterwards, the stream 450 can combine with the stream 350, as described above, to form the stream 470, and the stream 460 can combine with the stream 360 to form the stream 480, as described above. Generally, the
5 second hot stage separation vessel 410 can differ from the first hot stage separation vessel 310 by the inclusion of an aromatic saturation catalyst and adaptation for the intake of a hydrogen stream.

[0029] Referring to FIG. 3, an alternative embodiment for, e.g., a wide boiling distillate material, the second separation zone 400 can include a plurality of vessels 700. In one such
10 version, a first vessel 710 can receive the effluent 290 that may distribute over a tray 724, similar as the tray 424, as described above. The stream 440 including hydrogen from “A” may enter the first vessel 710 and pass through a distributor 734, which may be similar to the distributor 434, as described above. The effluent 290 can intermix with the hydrogen from the stream 440 passing through a packed bed 730, similar to the packed bed 430, as described
15 above. Generally, the heavier liquid drops down and exits as a stream 460. The stripped one or more fluids can then exit at the top as a stream 720 and pass to a second vessel 750.

[0030] The one or more fluids in the stream 720 may pass downward through a tray 754 and a hydrogenation zone 760. The tray 754 can be similar to the tray 424 and the hydrogenation zone 760 can be similar to the hydrogenation zone 420, as described above.
20 The operating conditions for the separation zone 400 can be similar as described above for the vessel 410. The saturated product can exit as a stream 450 and pass to the flash zone 500, as described above.

[0031] The embodiments disclosed herein can provide a higher aromatic reduction at the second stage as compared to the first stage to meet the kerosene smoke point, and thus
25 provide flexibility to operate the system 100 at a lower pressure and still meet product specifications for distillate products and unconverted oil. Hence, a pressure below 13,000 kPa may be obtained depending on feed quality and target conversion specifications, such as a pressure of 700 to 2,100 kPa. In some preferred embodiments, the pressure in the apparatus or system 100, such as the flash zone 500, particularly the first flash drum 510, can be
30 reduced by at least 4%, or even at least 5%, due to the embodiments disclosed herein. Moreover, it is advantageous placing noble metal catalyst in the second separation zone 400 to avoid sulfur poisoning as sulfur is significantly removed by the upstream hydrotreating and

hydrocracking zones. Typically, the second hydrocracking reactor 270 can have a volume of 5:1 to 10:1, typically 7:1, as compared to the second separation vessel 410. As a consequence, including a noble metal in the second hydrocracking reactor 270 can be prohibitively expensive. Thus, providing the noble metal catalyst in the second separation vessel 410 can be a more attractive alternative for controlling saturating aromatics for meeting a specification, such as a smoke target for kerosene.

[0032] Without further elaboration, it is believed that one skilled in the art can, using the preceding description, utilize the present invention to its fullest extent. The preceding preferred specific embodiments are, therefore, to be construed as merely illustrative, and not limitative of the remainder of the disclosure in any way whatsoever.

[0033] In the foregoing, all temperatures are set forth in degrees Celsius and, all parts and percentages are by weight, unless otherwise indicated.

[0034] From the foregoing description, one skilled in the art can easily ascertain the essential characteristics of this invention and, without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, can make various changes and modifications of the invention to adapt it to various usages and conditions.

CLAIMS:

1. A process for a hydrocarbon feed, comprising:

A) passing a stream through a separation zone forming a void for separating one or more gases from one or more liquids and at least partially containing a catalyst comprising at least one noble group VIII metal; wherein the separation zone is downstream of a hydrocracking zone for reducing the operating pressure in the hydrocracking zone.

2. The process according to claim 1, wherein the separation zone further comprises a separation vessel wherein the separation vessel has an upper portion and a lower portion with the upper portion containing the at least one noble group VIII metal catalyst that the one or more gases pass upwards there-through.

3. The process according to claim 2, wherein the lower portion contains a packing.

4. The process according to claim 3, wherein the packing comprises one or more rings.

5. The process according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the hydrocracking zone comprises a catalyst comprising at least one group VIII metal and at least one group VIB metal.

6. The process according to claim 5, wherein the group VIII metal comprises at least one of iron, cobalt, and nickel, and the group VIB metal comprises at least one of molybdenum and tungsten.

7. The process according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the pressure in the hydrocracking zone can be reduced by at least 5%.

8. The process according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the at least one noble metal comprises at least one of platinum and palladium.

9. The process according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the separation zone operates at a pressure of 3,500 to 17,300 kPa and a temperature of 260° to 380°C.

10. The process according to claim 2, 3, or 4, further comprising communicating a stream comprising hydrogen to the separation vessel.

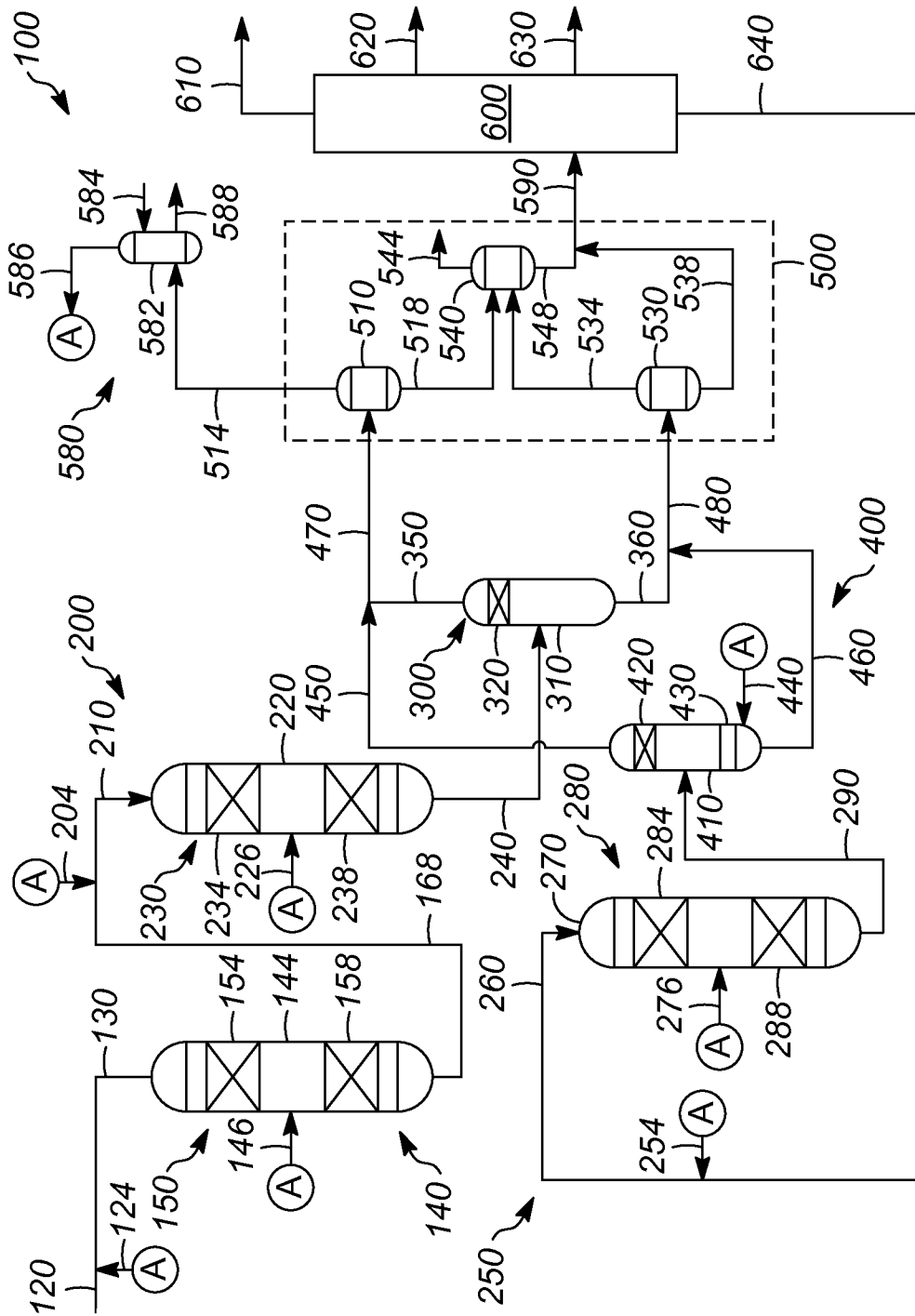


FIG. 1

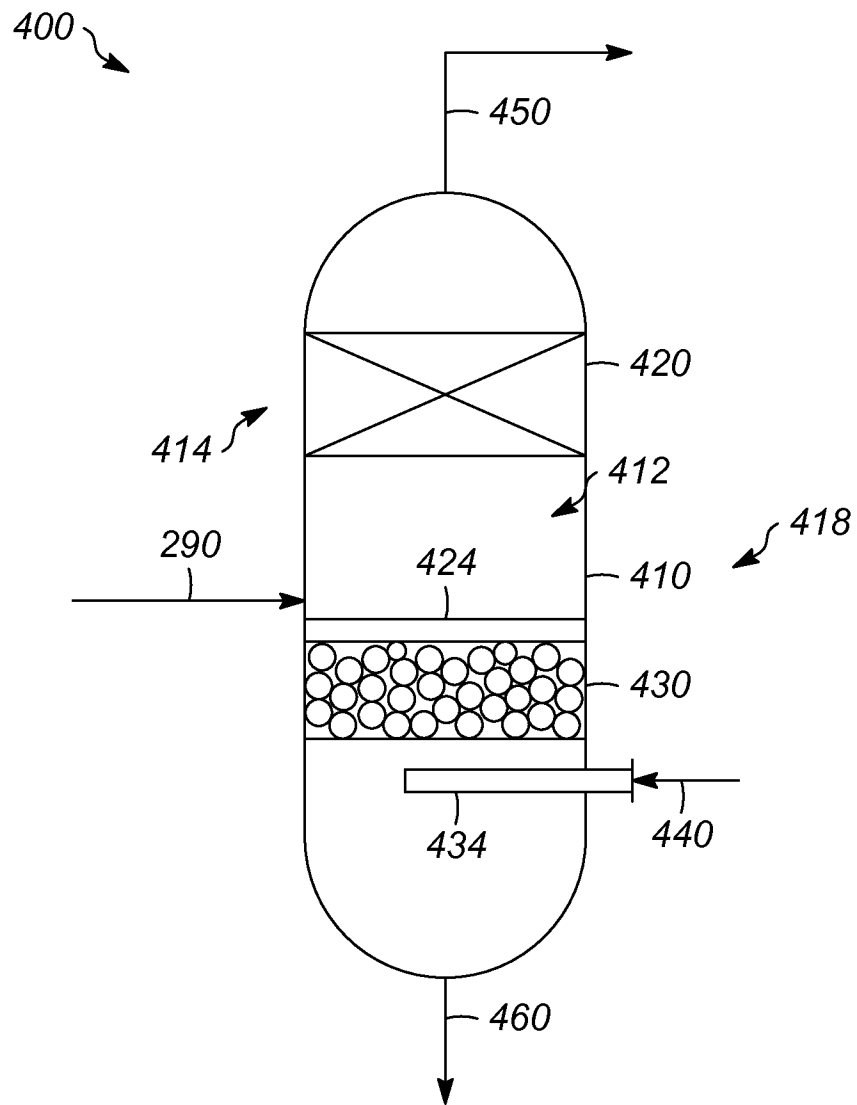


FIG. 2

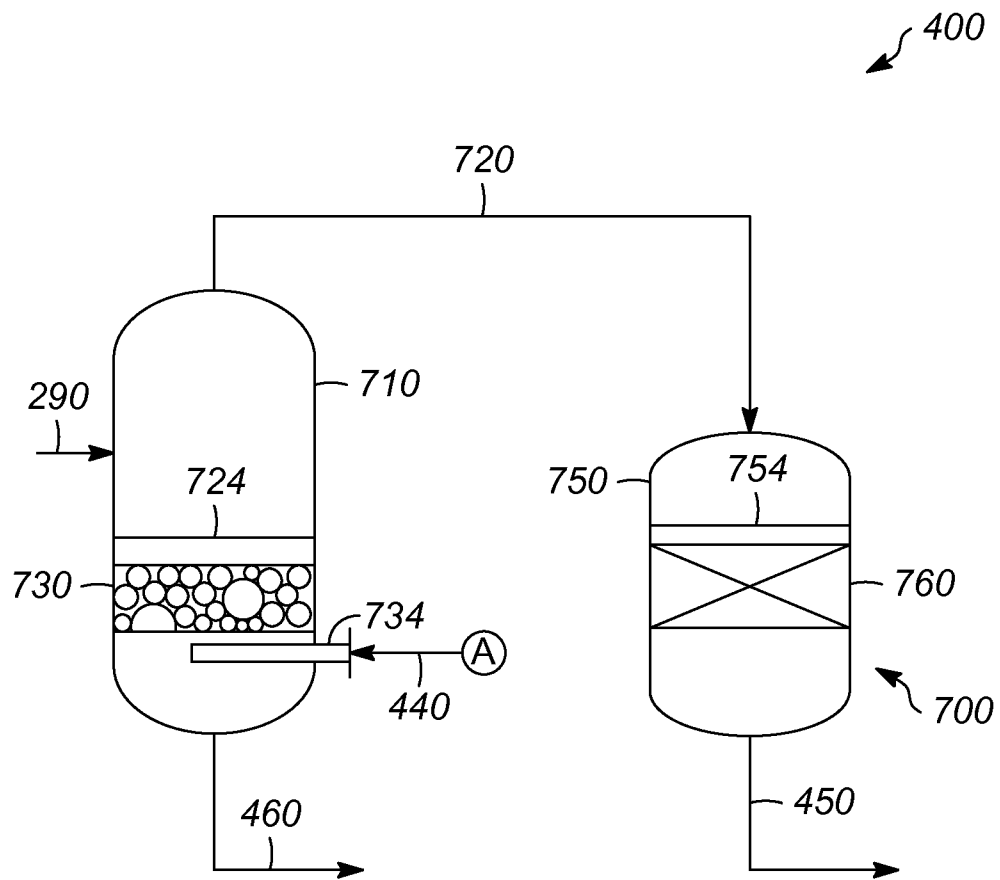


FIG. 3