

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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PROCESS FOR MOISTENING TOBACCO.

949,701.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Feb. 15, 1910.

No Drawing.

Application filed March 18, 1908. Serial No. 421,915.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, HARRY WARD FOOTE and EDWIN KINMOUTH SMITH, citizens of the United States, and residing, respectively, in New Haven, county of New Haven, State of Connecticut, and Morristown, Morris county, State of New Jersey, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Processes for Moistening Tobacco, of which the following is such a full, clear, and exact description as will enable any one skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

Our invention relates to a process for moistening tobacco, and more particularly smoking tobacco, cigars and cigarettes, and for maintaining the same in a suitable and desirable condition for use.

In carrying out our process, the tobacco to be treated may either have been previously dried in any suitable manner, for example, by drying it over sulfuric acid, or may have been brought to a good condition for smoking by means of moisture applied by a wet sponge, or it may have been made too moist by the same means. The tobacco in this condition is placed in a closed vessel, such as an ordinary covered jar, and within the same vessel is placed a quantity of a salt containing water of crystallization. This salt is preferably placed in a small open vessel within the closed one and its presence serves to keep the tobacco in an excellent moist condition. In practicing our process, we have used partially dehydrated sodium phosphate, sodium sulfate (Glauber salt), sodium carbonate, and sodium bicarbonate (crystallized borax).

We find that if an open vessel containing sodium phosphate, $\text{HNa}_2\text{PO}_4 \cdot 12\text{H}_2\text{O}$, partially dehydrated, is placed in a covered jar with some very dry tobacco, after two or three days the tobacco has absorbed enough water vapor from the salt, to be in good condition for smoking. If an open vessel of sodium phosphate, partially dehydrated, is placed in a closed jar of tobacco in good smoking condition, the tobacco retains its condition indefinitely, showing no tendency to dry, even if the jar is repeatedly opened in order to remove some of its contents. If a package of sodium phosphate, partially dehydrated, is placed over a very moist tobacco, it absorbs part of the

moisture, leaving the right amount for smoking.

In operating a moistener or humidifier of this character, we propose to use any and all salts having water of crystallization, or hydrated salts, either alone or mixed with other substances, a small package of which when placed in a closed receptacle with tobacco in good condition, would keep that tobacco unchanged and which when placed in a closed receptacle with tobacco too dry to smoke, would give up sufficient of its water of crystallization to bring the tobacco to a smokable condition, and which when placed in a closed receptacle with tobacco too damp to smoke, would absorb some of its moisture, so that it could be smoked. The particular salt or salts thus used in the process may be placed in any convenient receptacle or arranged in any convenient form of package which will adapt it to be conveniently placed within the vessel containing the tobacco and in order that the salt may have free access to the air within the closed vessel in order to act upon the tobacco therein.

We are aware that prior to our invention, hygroscopic bodies, sponges and plaster of paris, have been used for keeping tobacco moist, but we do not claim the process carried out by any of the same.

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

1. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of a salt or salts containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up said water of crystallization in the presence of the tobacco.

2. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of a sodium salt containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up said water of crystallization in the presence of the tobacco.

3. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of a partially dehydrated sodium salt or salts containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up said

water of crystallization in the presence of the tobacco.

4. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of a partially dehydrated salt or salts containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up said water of crystallization in the presence of the tobacco.

5. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of sodium phosphate containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up the same in the presence of the tobacco.

6. The improved process of moistening tobacco which consists in placing the tobacco in a closed vessel in the presence of partially dehydrated sodium phosphate containing water of crystallization and capable of parting with and taking up the same in the presence of the tobacco.

In testimony whereof, we have hereunto set our hands in the presence of the two subscribing witnesses.

HARRY WARD FOOTE.
EDWIN KINMOUTH SMITH.

Witnesses:

MARY M. MAYER,
JANE A. FORBES.