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METHOD OF MAKING SUEDE LEATHER HAVING A HIGH POLISH, AND SUEDE LEATHER OF THIS TYPE

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My invention relates to a new and improved method of making suede leather having a high polish, and to a new and improved suede leather of this type.

One of the objects of my invention is to provide a simple and improved method for producing a high-lustre leather of this type, so that the leather will be suitable for manufacturing pocketbooks and other highgrade products.

Another object of my invention is to produce a product of this type having a high and uniform lustre, which is free from any greasy smears.

Another object is to produce a leather of this type in which the polished surface shall retain its life and lustre for a long period of time.

Other objects of my invention will be set forth in the following description, in which I set forth a preferred embodiment thereof.

According to my invention I prefer to make the improved suede leather by using Spanish lamb skins as the starting material as I have found that this produces the best type of product. However, I can use as the starting material Turkish lamb skins, French lamb skins, and lamb skins from Serbia and other Balkan countries. Generally speaking the invention is not to be limited to any particular kind of lamb skin or sheepskin. It also applies to calf and to goat skins.

These skins are tanned by the "chrome" tanning process, the tanning bath containing chromic acid or chromic compounds of any suitable type.

Previous to tanning, the skins or hides are subjected to the usual treatments, such as unhairing, bating or puering, drenching, etc.

I may tan the leather either by the two-bath process or by the one-bath process.

The tanning bath contains a suitable proportion of fat liquor. This proportion is preferably very small, just enough to render the tanned leather pliable. While I do not wish to be limited to the use of the tanning bath which is specified below, the following is given as a practical example of one of the tanning baths which may be used, the proportions being by weight:

The tanning bath may contain about 11% of the active chromium compound, and about ½ per cent of a suitable "fat liquor", which is preferably sulphonated castor oil. This is commonly known as Turkey red oil, and this oil is readily absorbed by the fibres of the leather, during the tanning operation. While I prefer to use sulphonated castor oil as the "fat liquor", I may use other sulphonated oils, which can be readily absorbed by the leather, and I generally include "fat liquors", and other materials having like properties, within the scope of the invention.

It will be noted that the percentage of fat liquor in the bath is very small, so that while the leather is rendered pliable, it does not take up an excess of fat liquor or else a smeary effect is secured upon the leather, instead of the desired high lustre. Likewise, the leather can be treated with the fat liquor at any suitable time, so that it takes up not more than one per cent of its weight of the fat liquor.

After the tanning has been completed, and after the skins have then been finished and dyed in the ordinary manner, the skins are then subjected to a buffing operation. In finishing suede leather, it is well known to use an abrasive in order to raise a nap, and I use a buffing wheel, and polishing material in order to produce a final sheen or polish on said nap. For this purpose I may use circular revolving buffs having plush surfaces, said surfaces being treated with beeswax or other suitable polishing material. The beeswax is supplied to the plush polishing surface in small quantities, so that the fibres of the plush are not matted.

This buffing operation finally produces the desired high lustre, which is due to the use of the fat liquor. I do not wish to be restricted to the specific percentage of fat liquor which has been previously mentioned, as there may be some variations in proportions due to the different properties of different skins and some variation is generally permissible without departing from the invention.

Ordinarily, from 6 to 10% of fat liquor is used in the tanning bath, the higher percentage being used for leather which must have greater pliability, such as glove leather, and the like. The lower percentage of fat liquor is used for leather which does not require so much pliability, as shoe leather, for example. According to my invention, the percentage of fat liquor is very much smaller than the ordinary practice, so that the leather can be given the desired high polish without producing a greasy smear. The improved leather which I have produced can be made thin enough for the manufacture of pocketbooks, and it has

the full pliability which is necessary for this purpose.

The sulphonated castor oil is partially soluble in water, and I can use other oil derivatives as the fat liquor which are partially or wholly soluble in water, such as various oil soaps, etc.

I have shown a preferred embodiment of my invention, but it is clear that numerous changes and omissions can be made without departing from its spirit.

I claim:

1. In the art of producing a suede leather having a high polish on its nap side, those steps which consist in causing the leather to take up fat liquor in a proportion which does not substantially exceed one-half per cent of the weight of the leather, and then buffing the nap face of the leather with polishing material, in order to produce a final polish on the nap of the leather, said polishing material being wax.

2. A method of producing suede leather comprising fat liquoring the leather with less than one per cent of fat liquor on the weight of the leather and finally buffing with a leather polishing compound on a soft surface material.

3. A method of producing suede leather comprising fat liquoring the leather and finally buffing with a leather polishing compound on a soft surface material, the quantity of fat liquor being essentially less than the quantity which will cause a grease defect to appear during the polishing.

4. A method of producing suede leather comprising fat liquoring the leather with less than one per cent of fat liquor on the weight of the leather and finally buffing with beeswax on a fabric surface.

5. Suede leather having less than one per cent of fat liquor contained therein and having a wax polish upon the nap thereof.

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