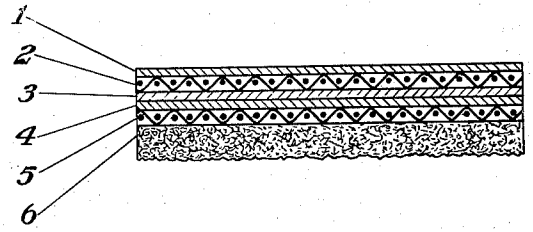
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DINING TABLE EQUIPMENT

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DINING TABLE EQUIPMENT

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This invention relates to a rubberized fabric and, more particularly, to a rubberized fabric to be used as a dining table underlay, and for similar purposes.

In setting the dining table it is customary to place a padding on the table before spreading the cloth. This pad functions as a heat insulator to prevent marring of the finish on the surface when placing hot dishes thereon, serves as a sound deadener by absorbing the noises created by placing dishes and silverware on the table, and also gives the table surface a pleasant, cushiony, or soft feel which materially adds to the attractiveness of a well set dining table. The types of padding used heretofore are of several kinds, such as heavy woven cotton or other fibrous materials, quilted cotton pads, asbestos fiber matted into sheets ¼" to ⅜" thick, and other similar materials. These table pads are objectionable in that they become soiled very easily by absorption of foodstuffs spilled on the table. The very nature of their construction offers an excellent absorbing medium and breeding place for bacteria and a lodging for products of decomposing foodstuffs. It has been found that even frequent laundering is not a satisfactory solution, inasmuch as the average public dining room, restaurant, and the like, do not find it practical or economical to launder these pads every day, which would be the only assurance of sanitary conditions. As a result of the prevailing practice, the table top directly beneath the top cloth is therefore the dirtiest, most unsightly, and most unsanitary part of an otherwise clean and wholesome dining room, restaurant, or other public eating place, which fact is, or should be, of considerable concern to the management of these places.

It is an object of this invention to provide a dining table underlay and silencing pad which is sanitary, easily removable, and readily cleaned. A further object is to provide a table underlay and silencing pad which will stay in place and which, without fastening by any mechanical means, will not slide about the table top. A still further object is to provide a table underlay pad of attractive appearance, so that when a table is changed in the presence of a diner it will not be in any way offensive.

These objects are accomplished by the following invention which comprises a fabric coated with sponge rubber on one side and an attractive, non-porous, non-absorbing, washable coating on the other. The sponge coated surface is laid on the table top and the decorative surface is that over which the cloth is spread.

The drawing indicates diagrammatically a cross section through the material of the invention. In the single figure, 1 represents a surface coating comprising a cellulose derivative and 2 represents a fabric which carries the coating 1 and coating 3, which is a hydrophillic colloid composition such as casein. The layer 3 acts to prevent migration of the antioxidant into the cellulose derivative coating so that discoloration is minimized. 4 indicates a thin film of rubber cement which joins the combined layers represented by 1, 2, and 3, to fabric 5 and rubber composition 6 having a cellular structure.

The one coating consists of about ⅛" thickness of medium sized celled sponge rubber, the surface of which is quite rough in appearance due to the various sizes of the cells. These cells are, as a whole, unbroken, so that the surface is not absorbent and does not present a series of pockets for lodgment of foreign matter, that is, the surface skin is unbroken. The sponge coating is placed on a fabric such as drill, sheeting, duck, whipcord, et cetera, as is usual in any type of rubber coated fabrics. The type of fabric is of no importance. On the reverse side of the sponge rubber coated fabric, a completely non-absorbent, washable coating is applied, which may be pyroxylin, oil, or rubber in any color, embossed or decorated in any manner desired. A preferred method of carrying out this invention is as follows:

Example 1.—A sheet 54" wide and running 2.10 yards to the pound, is calender coated with 40½ ounces per running yard of the following rubber compound, in the usual manner known to those skilled in the art:

	Pounds	Ounces
Rubber	39	12
Green color pigment	—	8
Zinc oxide	2	—
Whiting superfine	41	12
Agerite white	—	8
Stearic acid	4	—
Trimene base	2	6
Sulfur	1	2
Ammonium bicarbonate	4	—
Petrolatum	4	—
	100 lbs.	

A water varnish of the following composition is applied on the surface to prevent tack and

consequent difficulty in handling during subsequent operations:

Bleached shellac dissolved in alcohol (2 lbs. per gal.)	9 pints
Water	2 gallons
Ammonia	½ pint
Soap chips	4 ounces
Aluminum flake	1 pound

The rubber compound is now vulcanized by festooning the fabric in the usual manner in a dry heat oven of the type used for this purpose. During the cure the ammonium bicarbonate volatilizes and forms the cells causing the structure of the coating commonly known as sponge rubber.

A pyroxylin coated sheeting is now prepared as follows: A sheeting 54" wide and weighing 2.60 yards to the pound is coated with pyroxylin to a total of 11 ounces per 54" yard. The coating composition is a typical cellulose nitrate coating consisting of:

	Percent
Cellulose nitrate	26.67
Pigment	31.11
Softener	42.22

The softener is either raw or blown castor oil.

This composition represents solids, the cellulose nitrate, pigment, and softener being, of course, dispersed in a suitable dispersing medium before application to the fabric by means of a doctor knife, four coats being necessary. A final coat of cellulose nitrate dispersed in a suitable dispersing medium is applied, and after drying, the material is subjected to embossing in any particular design. The pyroxylin coated fabric is then coated on the reverse side with a sizing or protective coating of a hydrophillic colloid, such as casein, which will not allow migration of the antioxidant into the pyroxylin, lest discoloration of light colored pyroxylin result. The two coated fabrics as described above are each coated with one coat of pure rubber cement and combined, the combined material then consisting of a sponge rubber coating on one side and a pyroxylin coating on the other side.

Whereas the above is an exact description of a preferred embodiment of the invention, the invention is not limited thereto. Any type of flexible fabric may be used, such as drills, whipcords, ducks, dyed or in the gray, napped or unnapped, et cetera. The sponge rubber coating composition may be varied in accordance with the general practice in the art, as the same results may be obtained by many types of compositions. The sponge rubber coating may be of any weight or thickness; the surface may even be of an open cellular construction and still be of very considerable advantage. The pyroxylin coating may consist of any of the compositions used as a facing upon fabric in the manufacture of artificial leather, or may be replaced by a coating of cellulose acetate, rubber, oil, or any other washable, non-absorbing surface. It may be coated directly on the reverse side of the sponge rubber coated fabric, or coated separately on another fabric and combined, as described. If desired, as an added protection, a fungicide or disinfectant can be incorporated in the rubber compounds and fabrics to further insure sanitary conditions.

The material of this invention is not limited to use as an underlay for dining cloths. It may serve as a heat and water resistant pad even without the use of table cloths and may serve, for example, as a pad beneath hot equipment, such as coffee or tea pots, toasters, grills, and the like, which are used directly on the table, or as a coaster for cold beverages to prevent marring of the table top by liquid condensed thereon, et cetera.

The dining table underlay of the present invention has the desired cushioning effect, heat insulation, and silencing properties present in the materials now being used, and, in addition, provides a table pad obtainable in roll form which can be cut to the exact shape and size of the table. The sponge rubber surface being of a "pimply" nature gives to the product a non-slip property causing it to stay in place without fastening; this obviates a decided annoyance of prior art materials which can only be overcome by tacking or tying, which in itself is objectionable as discouraging the practice of frequent removal and cleaning. A further advantage of the present invention resides in the non-absorbent nature of the material, which affords no lodging place for decomposing foodstuffs, nor breeding place for bacteria. If foodstuffs are spilled on the table cloth, the pyroxylin surface can be easily and quickly wiped with a damp cloth when the soiled top cloth is removed. A further esthetic advantage of considerable importance is the sanitary and attractive appearance of the table cloth should it be removed in the presence of guests. An advantage of considerable importance from the public health standpoint resides in the fact that these pads can be removed daily and run through a dishwashing, or similar type of machine, and washed with comparative ease and speed compared to the present type of pad, hung up for a few minutes to dry and returned to the table with only a very slight total lapse of time.

Although this invention has its greatest advantage in railroad dining cars, hotel dining rooms, restaurants, and other public eating places, because of its sanitary, non-slipping, and easily cleanable nature, it has a further advantage for home use in that it can be purchased when needed, cut to fit the table from a roll material, and is economical in not requiring a particular size or shape to be made up specially, as is the case in most of the present types of material.

As many apparently widely different embodiments of this invention may be made without departing from the spirit and scope thereof, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the specific embodiments thereof except as defined in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A table pad comprising a fabric sheet having a layer of sponge rubber anchored on one side thereof, the exposed surface of said sponge rubber presenting a substantially continuous, non-porous surface, and a second fabric sheet united to said first fabric sheet by a film of rubber cement, a film of a hydrophillic colloid being interposed between said second fabric sheet and said film of rubber cement, and said second fabric sheet carrying a waterproof surface film comprising cellulose nitrate.

2. A heat and water-resistant composite sheet material which comprises a fabric layer, a layer of sponge rubber anchored on one side of the fabric, a protective coating on the other side which is capable of preventing the migration of rubber antioxidants into pyroxylin, and on the

protective coating an unbroken fabric carrying a cellulose ester and having an exposed surfacing which is washable, non-porous and non-absorbent to foods and the liquids thereof.

3. A heat and water-resistant composite sheet material which comprises a fabric layer, a layer of sponge rubber anchored on one side of the fabric, a protective coating of casein colloid on the other side, and on the protective coating an unbroken fabric carrying cellulose nitrate and having an exposed surfacing which is washable, non-porous and non-absorbent.

4. As an article of manufacture a dining table cover obtainable in roll form from which suitable lengths may be readily cut and presenting both top and bottom surfaces of non-absorbent nature for preventing lodgment of decomposing foodstuffs and the breeding of bacteria, said dining table cover comprising a flexible fabric sheeting carrying on one side a layer of sponge rubber for anchorage to the table top and on the other side a smooth, completely non-absorbent, readily cleanable, water-resistant coating.

5. The article set forth in claim 4 in which the said water-resistant coating comprises a film of cellulose nitrate.

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