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COMB

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1 Claim. (Cl. 132-149)

The present invention relates to combs and, more particularly, to a comb adapted to be used in the various operations performed in the dressings of hair.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved comb for the dressing of hair.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a comb that performs a dual function of straightening or unsnarling hair and of selecting varying amounts of hair for subsequent sculpturing or setting.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide in a comb of the "rat-tail" type an integral hair separating means and an integral gripping means advantageously located on the "rat-tail" of the comb.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved "rat-tail" comb embodying in its "rat-tail" a hair separating means and a gripping means so located relative to the teeth of the comb and the hair separating means that hair may be alternately combed and separated by a simple manipulation of the wrist and fingers of the user.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a new and improved "rat-tail" comb wherein hair-separating means are embodied in the "rat-tail" to extend in the same plane and in the same direction as the teeth of the comb, thereby facilitating the use of the new and improved comb.

The above and other objects are realized in accordance with the features of the present invention by providing a new and improved comb of the "rat-tail" type. Briefly, the comb comprises a conventional teeth section provided with a plurality of spaced apart teeth for straightening and untangling hair by passing the teeth section through the hair in a conventional manner. In addition, a "rat-tail" extends from the end of the teeth section and includes a generally curved hair-separating portion which extends in the same general direction as the teeth of the comb. To permit alternate use of the teeth section and the hair-separating means, a gripping means is provided on the "rat-tail" intermediate the teeth section and the hair-separating means. When hair is being straightened by the teeth section, the hair-engaging means is conveniently stored in the palm of the hand of the user and, in order to use that hair-separating means, the wrist is simply turned and the fingers are manipulated to move the hair-separating means into an exposed or operative position. Irrespective of the use of the comb, the comb is held at the gripping means in substantially the same manner by the user, thereby to avoid regripping of the comb at different places during the different uses of the comb.

The invention, both as to its organization and method of operation, taken with further objects and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of a comb embodying the principles of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a bottom plan view of the comb of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the comb being used to straighten hair; and

FIG. 4 is a perspective view illustrating the comb being used to separate hair.

Referring now to the drawing and in particular to FIG. 1, a comb embodying the features of the present invention is illustrated and is identified generally by reference numeral 10. The comb 10 briefly comprises a teeth section

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12 consisting of a plurality of teeth 28 extending transversely from a comb body 16. Integrally related to the right end of the comb body 16 is a "rat-tail" 18 embodying a gripping means 20 and a hair-separating means 22, described in greater detail hereinbelow.

Considering now the teeth section 12 of the comb 10, it comprises an elongated molded body 16, sometimes referred to as a shank, interconnecting a pair of generally conically shaped, enlarged teeth 24 and 26 which extend downwardly as viewed in FIG. 1. Disposed intermediate the enlarged teeth 24 and 26 are a plurality of finely-divided, evenly spaced teeth 28 extending downwardly from the body 16, as seen in FIG. 1. The enlarged teeth 24, 26, the fine teeth 28, and the body 16 are generally coplanar, while the teeth 24, 26 and 28 are so dimensioned that their ends lie along a straight line, in a manner well known. The comb section 12 is used in the conventional manner to straighten, unsnarl, or untangle hair, so that the teeth 24, 26 and 28 specifically embrace or coat with individual strands of hair during movement of the teeth section 16 through the hair.

In the art of hairdressing, it is currently fashionable to have a woman's hair sculptured, i.e., to have hair combed into a formation or a setting with an objective of producing either curls or waves in the hair, without the aid of pin curlers or waving combs. In a typical sculpturing operation, a suitable hair setting material is applied to the hair and the comb is passed several times through the entire hair to be worked. When the hair is properly straightened and untangled, a part of the hair is selected and grasped with the left hand of the operator. Thereafter, the selected hair is combed and is artistically worked by the teeth section of the comb to produce either a wave or a curl.

In order that the operator or hairdresser quickly and easily sculpts an entire head of hair, a new and improved hair-separating means 22 and gripping means 20 are embodied in the "rat-tail" 18 of the comb 10. More specifically, the "rat-tail" 18 comprises an extension of and extends rightwardly from the right end of the comb body 16, as viewed in FIG. 1 to be coplanar with the teeth section 12, i.e., coplanar with the teeth 24, 26 and 28. As best seen in FIG. 1, the left end of the "rat-tail" is generally straight while the center portion and the right end of the "rat-tail" 18 is gradually curved downwardly, as viewed in FIG. 1, to define a curved and pointed claw 30. The claw 30 tapers toward the tip 32 of the "rat-tail" 18, i.e., becomes progressively narrower toward the tip 32, thereby providing a relatively sharp tip 32 for easily penetrating and gathering strands of hair. As shown, the extreme upper part of the claw 30 forms a continuous and uninterrupted surface which is curved toward the tip 32. The claw 30 is illustrated as being inclined approximately 45° relative to the teeth 24, 26, and 28, but it should be appreciated that hair is equally well separated when the claw is oriented between approximately 35° and 65°.

To facilitate gripping of the comb 10, the gripping means 20 is located on the "rat-tail" 18 intermediate the claw 30 and the right end of the comb body 16. The gripping means 20 is defined between and comprises a part of the enlarged tooth 26 and a downwardly extending peak 38 located approximately an inch to the right of the enlarged tooth 26. Both the continuously curved right side of the enlarged tooth 26 and the continuously curved left side of the peak 38 curve upwardly to meet one another and provide a continuous, uninterrupted gripping surface 34. It will be appreciated that when the comb is used either to straighten or separate hair, the third finger of the hand of the operator is wrapped around the "rat-tail" 18 to engage the gripping surface 34. The

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finger is snugly held in engagement with the gripping surface 34 by the coaction of the downwardly extending peak 38 and the enlarged tooth 26 and, thus movement of the finger along the "rat-tail" 18 is prevented. As shown, the right side of the peak 38 curves upwardly to meet the lower curved part of the claw 30, thereby to provide a continuously curved surface between the claw 30 and the finger gripping means 20.

The comb 10 is suitably manipulated by the operator to perform the necessary steps or operations involved in sculpturing the hair. Referring now to FIGS. 3 and 4, the comb 10 is illustrated in FIG. 3 in a position to straighten or unsnarl the hair 40 on the head 42 of a woman, for example, while the comb 10 is illustrated in FIG. 4 in a position to separate a part of the hair prior to forming a wave or a curl. As shown in FIG. 3, the comb 10 is held in a generally horizontal position to be substantially right angularly related to the individual strands of the hair 40. Thereafter the comb 10 is repeatedly passed downwardly through the hair 40 to align and straighten the individual strands of the hair 40. Particularly, the comb is held by the operator so that his thumb rests on the front surface (as seen in FIG. 3) of the right end of the comb body 16 while his forefinger, or second finger, rests on the rear surface of the right end of the comb body 16 while his forefinger, or second finger, rests on the rear surface of the right end of the comb body 16. Moreover, the middle, or third finger of the operator is curled about the gripping surface 34 between the enlarged tooth 26 and the downwardly extending peak 38. By this arrangement, the operator is able to lightly, yet firmly grasp the comb with his finger tips and, thus, may quickly and easily maneuver the teeth section 12 over the desired part of the hair 40.

In accordance with a feature of the present invention, the claw 30 is so constructed that when the teeth section 12 is used to comb the hair 40, the "rat-tail" 18 and specifically, the claw 30 rests in the palm of the hand of the operator and, in this manner, does not contact or engage either the hair or the scalp of the head 42 during a combing operation.

After the hair is untangled and straightened, a part of the hair is separated by using the comb 10. In brief, in order to condition the comb 10 to separate the hair 40 when it is in position to comb the hair 40, the wrist of the operator is merely turned and simultaneously his fingers are extended to move the comb from the position illustrated in FIG. 3 into a position illustrated in FIG. 4, whereby the comb 10 turns clockwise approximately 90° as viewed in FIG. 4. In less than a fraction of a second, the claw 30 is brought into its exposed or operative position to perform its intended function of separating the hair 42. When in this position, the claw 30 is angularly related to hair 40 and by moving the claw 30 toward the head 42 a portion of the hair is engaged or embraced by the claw 30. Preferably, although not necessarily, the wrist and the fingers of the operator are manipulated so that the embraced part of the hair is separated and re-

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moved from the rest of the hair 40. The separated hair, identified as 44, is then grasped by the left hand of the operator and the comb 10 is returned to the position shown in FIG. 3 by the operator simply turning his wrist and contracting his fingers. Thereafter, the separated hair 44 is sculptured by the teeth section 12 into the desired wave or curl.

Once the desired wave or curl of the selected hair 42 is produced, the wrist is again turned and the fingers again extended to move the comb from the position illustrated in FIG. 3 back to the position illustrated in FIG. 4. Thereafter, another part of the hair is separated and is sculptured as described above. An entire head of hair is sculptured by repeating the above-described operation and any desired coiffure may be quickly and easily produced.

From the foregoing description, it will be appreciated that the comb 10 can be moved back and forth between its combing position and its separating position within a fraction of a second, thereby substantially reducing the total time required to sculpture a head of hair. Therefore, by using the comb 10, a greater number of heads of hair may be sculptured within a normal working day, with greater profit to the operator or hairdresser.

While the embodiment described herein is at present considered to be preferred, it is understood that various modifications and improvements may be made therein, and it is intended to cover in the appended claim all such modifications and improvements as fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

What is desired to be claimed and secured by Letters Patent of the United States is:

A comb adapted to be grasped by the fingers of the hand to perform a hair sculpturing operation, said comb comprising a body portion, a plurality of spatially arranged teeth extending downwardly from said body portion, and an outwardly and downwardly extending claw located at one end of said body portion to be engageable by the palm of a hand when the comb is in a hair combing position, said claw including intersecting curvilinear portions on the underside thereof, the adjacent ends of said curvilinear portions forming a downwardly extending peak for separating the first finger from the remaining fingers of a hand when the hand grasps said claw, whereby the upper side of the claw is adapted to be engaged by at least one finger to quickly change from its hair combing position to its hair sculpturing position.

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