United States Patent

[11] **3,590,444**

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[54] **CLASPS**
5 Claims, 7 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **24/248,** 132/48
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A45d 8/24**
[50] **Field of Search** ..... 132/46, 48; 24/49 P, 30.5, 248 HC, 259 HC

[56] **References Cited**

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ABSTRACT: A clasp adapted to be employed as a ponytail holder having a pair of arcuate pivotally interconnected 18 sheet metal parts 10, 16 provided with locking means 20, 22, spring means 24 and a guard portion 16*a*, 16*b* to house the free end A of the spring.

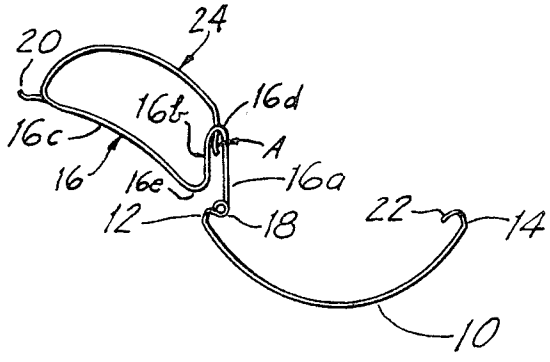


FIG. 1

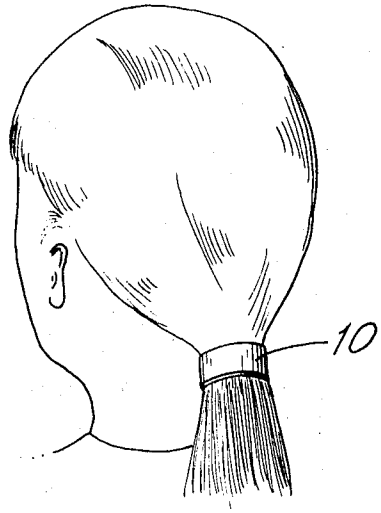
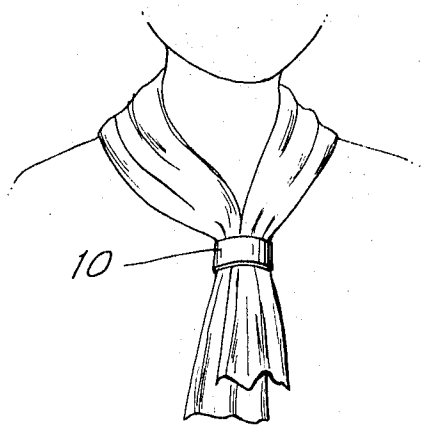


FIG. 2



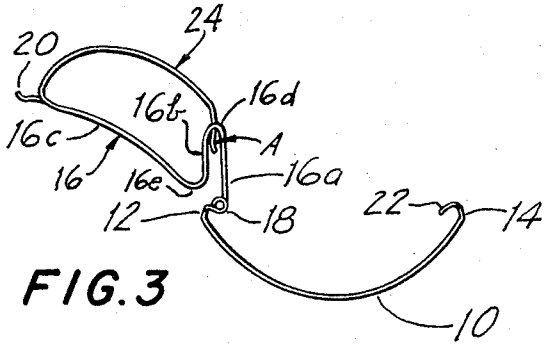


FIG. 3

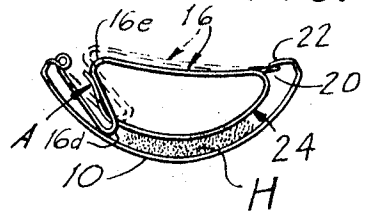


FIG. 4

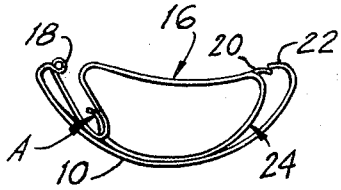


FIG. 5

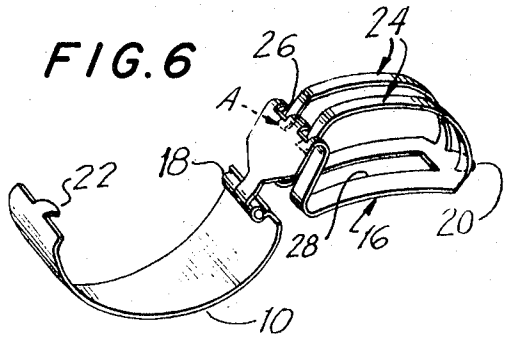


FIG. 6

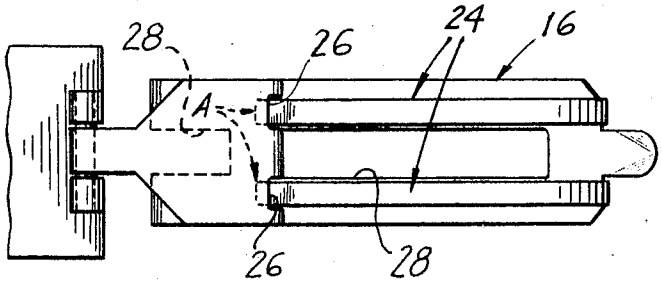


FIG. 7

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CLASPS

The present invention relates to clasps useful, for example, as a girl's ponytail holder and as a holder for a kerchief.

The clasp of the present invention is an attractive ornament, functioning also as a clasp. The material that is gripped by the clasp is gathered within a deeply arched body that extends around the front and sides of the gathered material. The outer face of the body is designed to be ornamental. In a simple form it is a polished, gold-plated semicylindrical surface. At the back of the body there is a clamping structure, and it is an object of the invention to provide a novel, economical and effective clamping structure for such a clasp, capable of securely gripping either a thin or a heavy lock of hair (especially a ponytail) or a kerchief, or the like. A related object of the invention resides in providing a clasp of this kind that largely avoids snagging of the hair or fabric. Another related object of the invention resides in providing a clasp of this kind having a clamping structure free of sharp projections extending to the rear, to avoid risk of injury to the wearer in case the clasp should be pressed against the wearer's person.

The nature of the invention and its further objects, novel features and advantages will be better understood and appreciated from the following description in detail of the illustrative embodiment that is shown in the accompany drawings.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a view of the illustrative clasp used by the wearer as a ponytail barrette;

FIG. 2 is a view of the illustrative clasp used by the wearer as a kerchief holder;

FIG. 3 is side view of an illustrative embodiment of the invention opened to receive the material to be gripped;

FIG. 4. is a side view of the embodiment in FIG. 3 closed on a ponytail part of the clasp appearing in dotted lines to show another position thereof;

FIG. 5 is a side view of the embodiment in FIG. 3 closed, to show the shapes of the parts when no material is being gripped;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the embodiment of FIGS. 3—5 reversed end-for-end as compared to FIG. 3 and viewed partly from the side and rear and one end thereof;

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary rear view of the embodiment of FIGS. 3—6, shown in the position of FIG. 6 and drawn to enlarged scale.

Referring now to the drawings, a novel clasp is illustrated having a deeply curved body **10** of sheet metal having turned-in extremities **12** and **14**. A hinge **18** connects one end of a tongue generally designated **16** to extremity **12** of body **10**. Cooperating tab **20** and detent **22**, extending integrally from the tongue **16** and extremity **14** of body **10**, act as a catch to hold the tongue closed as in FIGS. **4** and **5**. To open or close the clasp, the tongue is forced sidewise, so that tab **20** can move to one side of detent **22**, preparatory to opening the clasp if it was closed previously, or preparatory to latching the clasp closed. The portions of the clasp adjacent the hinge can yield sufficiently to accommodate this sidewise resilient distortion. When the clasp is closed, detent **22** overlies tab **20**. The catch parts **20** and **22** are held in alignment by the natural shapes of tongue **16** and body **10** and the connecting hinge **18**.

Tongue **16** has three parts **16***a*, **16***b* and **16***c* that have connecting bends **16***d* and **16***e*. Parts **16***a* and **16***b* and their connecting bend **16***d* represent a reverse-bent part of the tongue that has two purposes, to be described. With the clasp closed but empty as in FIG. **5**, part **16***a* extends along body **10** from hinge **18**. Bend **16***e* that joins tongue parts **16***b* and **16***c* is located close to hinge **18**. Tongue part **16***c* extends from bend **16***e* near hinge **18** to extremity **14** of the body. Between bend **16***e* and tab **20**, tongue part **16***c* arches toward body **10** slightly.

Two leaf springs **24** extend integrally from part **16***c* of the tongue adjacent to tab or catch part **20**, extending first toward body **10** (when the clasp is closed) and of such a contour as to clear extremity **14** of the body when opening and closing the clasp. Springs **24** are deeply arched or curved so as to extend along and press against body **10** when the clasp is closed (FIG. **5**). End portions A of the springs extend through holes **26** in bend **16***d* and into the space between tongue parts **16***a* and **16***b*. Springs **24** are integrally part of the same piece of springy sheet metal as that forming tongue **16**, but the springs **24** are much narrower strips than the tongue. As illustrated, tongue **16** has a long slot **28** cut out of it. The remainder of the tongue represents a relatively firm spring compared with springs **24**, primarily because what remains of tongue **16** is of greater width than the combined width of springs **24**.

The described clasp is useful as a barrette for a girl's ponytail. The exposed face of body **10** (as seen in FIG. **1**) is ornamental. In a simple form, body **10** is highly polished and gold-plated, and is most attractive. The hinge and the parts that form the catch are virtually concealed even when the clasp is viewed from its ends. Springs **24** clamp hair H against the concave side of body **10**. Ends A of the springs are always guided in holes **26**, both when the tongue is open and when the springs bear against hair H. Ends A of the springs move deeper into the space between tongue parts **16***a* and **16***b* when the tongue is swung closed to grip the hair. However, spring ends A of the clasp shown do not project outside that space when gripping all normal amounts of material. This is important here, where the ends of the deeply arched body **10** are directed toward the wearer. The shielded space for the spring ends provided by tongue parts **16***a* and **16***b* avoids that difficulty, and the arrangement avoids snagging of the hair or other gripped material.

Part **16***a* itself serves to complement springs **24** in gripping inserted material. In case the clasp were to be closed on material that extends to the space where tongue part **16***a* confronts body **10**, the clasp still works well. The dotted lines in FIG. **4** represent the tongue in a typical position when gripping material (not shown) between tongue part **16***a* and body **10**. Tongue **16** is resilient, and the part of the tongue between bend **16***d* and tab **20** is quite long. Parts **16***b* and **16***c* and bend **16***e* provide yielding but firm spring pressure for gripping the material in the clasp securely when the clasp is latched.

The clasp described is well suited for use as an ornamental kerchief holder (FIG. **2**). The same features that recommend it as a ponytail barrette are also effective in that application.

The foregoing represents an illustrative yet exemplary embodiment of the invention in its various aspects, but it is apparent that those skilled in the art will readily make modifications. Therefore, the invention should be construed in accordance with its full spirit and scope.

What I claim is:

1. A clasp, including a body that is prominently arched between first and second extremities thereof so as to provide a convex outer face and an inner concave side, a tongue at the concave side of said body, said tongue being connected to said body by a hinge at said first extremity, said tongue and said body having releasable catch means at said second extremity, at least one elongated spring extending from part of said tongue adjacent said catch means to a free end near but spaced from said hinge, said spring being arched toward the concave side of said body, and a portion of said tongue extending from said hinge along said body between said body and said free end of said tongue for shielding said free end of the spring.

2. A clasp in accordance with claim **1**, wherein said tongue has a first bend therein spaced from said hinge and marking the end of said shield portion, a second portion extending from said first bend to a second bend adjacent to said hinge, and a third portion extending from said second bend to said catch means.

3. A clasp in accordance with claim **1**, wherein the extremities of said body are turned-in so that said hinge and said catch means are concealed when viewed from the outer side of said body.

4. A clasp in accordance with claim **1**, wherein said catch means includes a catch part extending integrally from said tongue for cooperation with a companion catch part extend-

ing integrally from said body, and said clasp having two springs including said arched spring extending from said tongue at opposite sides of said catch part to respective free ends, said springs being shaped alike.

5. A clasp in accordance with claim 1, wherein said tongue includes a first portion extending from said hinge, a second portion connected to said first portion at a prominent first bend and a third portion connected at a second prominent bend to said second portion, said spring extending through an

aperture in said first bend, said free end of the spring projecting into the space between said first and second portions of the tongue to an extent that increases progressively with increased thickness of material gripped between said body and said spring, said tongue being resilient and flexing when the clasp is closed and material is gripped between said body and said first portion of said tongue.