The Swahili

The Watusi

The Baji

The Soulin

Male beauty parlors ready to enhance that faded image

by Walter Logan

Well, it's come. A beauty parlor for men.

You can have your hair scissor cut, razor cut, re-styled, shampooed, curled, straightened, darkened, lightened. You can have it brushed into a Harold Teen-like bun so you can be taller than she is. And if you haven't any hair they'll weave you a wig, a moustache, sideburns or a beard.

You can get your face washed, scrubbed, rubbed, sun-tanned, de-wrinkled, youthfulized, mudpacked, massaged, and your scalp treated, heated or knuckle dusted. They'll take out your blackheads and rub in skin toner that makes you look as if you had just come from the beach. A shave ($2.50) if you really want one.

It's part of the peacock revolution that began six or seven years ago and has suddenly gathered so much momentum you find some men in red velvet Nehru jackets and gold necklaces, daubing themselves with expensive scents and applying liberal quantities of perfumed deodorants.

There have been barber shops since time immemorial and in recent years hair stylists who do many of the above services. But one of New York's larger department stores, has installed an out and out beauty parlor for men.

It's called Gimbel's Salon for Men and is on a balcony directly across from Gimbel's Salon for Women. Both are reached by a common stairway and there is a common waiting room in between or, for the faint hearted, more waiting room inside.

The invitation said to "come over and enhance your image." There's a revolving barber pole outside the door of the men's salon but the announcement said "there are no 'barbers' here . . . only masters of styling, skilled in the art of bringing out the best in your appearance."

There was a tycoon of industry in one of the booths having his hair re-styled to make himself look taller. Another lay back luxuriously with white goo spread all over his face as Miss Marie, a red-haired cosmetologist in a mini skirt, gave him the works.

Another sat off in a corner thumbing through a magazine. They weren't doing anything to him. He had sent his hair piece in for a shampoo and re-styling and merely was waiting until they had finished with it. Cleaning time is 20 minutes.

The service is under the direction of Jerry Roman and his staff of Salon di Roma stylists whose hairpieces are all custom made and are never, never called wigs. The hairpieces start at $175 but you can get sideburns for a lot less.

We waved the invitation to him and he waved us over to a booth where awaited Mr. Pierre, who in turn was waving a razor and a pair of scissors.

He thrust me into a rubberized jacket that fastened up the back, spun me around and began shampooing with the back of my head over a sink. The hair was chopped down to size with a straight razor and Mr. Pierre got ready to enhance my image.

He did it with a hair drier and a comb, mumbling all the while that it had no body and was fine like a baby's. So he roached it up along the part, held it down with something that looked like a loose tennis racquet and sprayed it with hair spray.

Then he led me over to Miss Marie waiting apprehensively in the wings. She set me down in a chair, flipped back the back (the legs did not rise, barber chair style) and went to work.

Hot towels. Then the goo. "It will dry in 12 minutes, no less," she said, spreading it all over my face. "It will clean the skin. It will remove all the wrinkles."

Then a bit of sunlamp, a touchup job by Mr. Pierre, and I went out into the world, my image enhanced.

What to wear and Where to wear it

Along with your vacation, plan your wardrobe to have a sure enough rewarding time.

If you're going to see Hemis Fair, take some light clothes. It's hotter in Texas than you think. If you are going to California take a top coat. It gets cool at night. If you're going to New York or some other big city take a dark suit. It's more formal than you think.

If you're taking a light suit try some of the new black and white combinations which were fashion news this spring and even more so this fall — glen plaids and the like. If you're taking a dark suit make it light weight. New York can get mighty hot.

If you're taking a topcoat anywhere try one of the new raincoats that look like a topcoat or one of the new topcoats that shed water like a raincoat. But keep it light weight. It isn't that cold anywhere this time of year.

If you haven't bought your shirts yet try wash and wear. The big manufacturers are now making them in "fashion colors" and not plain white.

They also come in tattersall checks which are fashionable worn with a small figure tie and in stripes ditto. Widespread collars are "in."

If you're playing a lot of golf anything goes in the way of color — fire engine red pants, for example. Knitted sport shirts are color coordinated with sweaters if it's on the cool side. Golf shoes even come in blue and red and, if you feel fancy, Corfam that looks like patent leather.

If you're going camping wear blue jeans. If you're going swimming the surfer look is still here, including those disreputable looking "jams." If you're going boating there are thin vinyl plastic shorts and jackets to keep off the water. If you're going yachting you don't need this column.

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