



WHAT THE WELL-DRESSED MAN MAY WEAR

COMPILERS of columns in men's journals on "What the Well-Dressed Man Will Wear" are probably lauding the popularity of khaki, navy and Air Force blue. But after all, it is not given to every man to dress coupon-free at the Government's expense, and it is a little harsh that the unfortunate civilian who has to fight so many battles against inflation, taxation, speculation, registration, and misinformation should be forced to divert his attention even momentarily from the vital economic struggle on the home front in order to ponder the problems of clothes rationing. "The Listener," therefore, mindful of its duty to the harassed home-fronter, has spared neither itself nor others in its search for an answer to the rationing problem.

WE began our research by buttonholing a number of Men About Town, and asking them how they proposed to manage on 52 coupons a year. To our surprise they appeared to have given insufficient thought to this important question, the usual reply being "Afraid I haven't had time to think about it at all." One or two had some vague idea that this rationing was something to do with women's clothes, but were unaware that it intimately concerned themselves. There were some who boasted that they very seldom bought clothes—they were sure that they wouldn't have used up 52 coupons on their purchases for the last three years. However, when it was

pointed out to them that their wardrobes would be in very poor condition to withstand the onslaught of rationing, they rapidly became Coupon Conscious, and started counting up to 52 on their gloveless fingers. One man who had just splashed 28 coupons on a new suit and a winter coat had his superb self-confidence deflated by our revelation that within 12 months, he would probably be without shoes, socks, and shirts. We left him inquiring the way to the nearest Home Guard recruiting office, because he'd just remembered that a friend of his had remarked that you could get socks and sometimes shirts coupon-free from Home Guard canteens.

It was clearly necessary to breed some coupon-awareness among our male readers.

WHAT ABOUT THE LINEN?

OUR schedule, however, must not be regarded as universally applicable. It is in fact the ideal rather than the real, because it is unlikely that even the most carefree bachelor will be allowed to spend all 52 coupons on himself alone. There is the Household Linen to be considered. If he is sufficiently carefree to run a Bachelor Apartment at least ten

Singapore, some did not arrive. Now we are scattered still further.

So an Empire centre of Asiatic news bulletins has disappeared. What will take its place? Tokio, Saigon, Batavia, Bangkok, in Japanese hands are flooding the air with Axis news. American stations are increasing their Asiatic broadcasts. India is playing its part.

Australia started in a small way two months ago with a Japanese broadcast. Is it too late for Australia and New Zealand, also in the Pacific zone, to expand their news services to the extent contemplated by Singapore?

On 52 Coupons A Year

SCHEDULE

	Coupons
Suit (or sports coat—or old school blazer—and slacks)	16
Overcoat or raincoat (one every three years)	4
Sweater or pullover	3
Shirts (2 working or business, one sports)	6
Singlets (2), Underpants (2)	8
Pyjamas	4
Socks (4 pairs)	4
Pair of shoes and pair of sandals	5
Handkerchiefs (4)	1
Scarf or pair of gloves every two years, or extra collars	1

Total: 52

of his coupons will go to replace the sheets and towels and tablecloths which the laundry wears out. If he boards, his landlady will probably make a levy of at least two coupons. If he lives at home, his mother will probably commandeer the lot. His wife almost certainly will.

This, of course, will upset the whole of our carefully planned schedule.

The Mere Male will be reduced to one suit every three years. This will be insufficient. What can be done about it?

MAKE THEM YOURSELF

THE biggest coupon-expenditure item in our schedule is obviously the suit at 16 coupons. It will be obvious that an ordinary suit for the average figure cannot take more than ten yards, equivalent to ten coupons. So a saving of six coupons will be effected by making the suit oneself. However, we do not advise this. Nor do we advise our readers to learn to knit their own socks, because hand-knitted socks take two coupons-worth of wool. But each of our readers should learn to darn his own. The days are gone when a heelless and toeless sock can be dropped into the waste-paper basket.

SOME OPINIONS

SINCE its compilation we have shown our schedule to a large number of men in all walks of life. Generally speaking it has met with approval.

"It should meet the needs of the average city worker," said a civil servant of our acquaintance. "Thanks to your schedule, I'll be able to look like Anthony Eden," said another.

"I think I'll go right ahead and spend as directed before my wife and daughters get down on my coupons," commented a father of five.

But many were horrified at the inadequacy of the 52. We met one particularly pathetic case, that of a young married man who for the last two years has been expecting to go into the Army

and has therefore bought no new civilian clothes. His firm has now successfully appealed for him. "One suit a year? One-third of an overcoat?" He thrust out a fraying cuff. "I need at least three suits, an overcoat, and a new dressing gown." We suggested to him that he should negotiate with any of his friends in camp who were approximately the same size for the right to wear their civilian clothes till they needed them again. However, it turned out that the wives of the men in camp had cut up their husbands' civilian trousers to make skirts for themselves.

Which brings us to another important point. Masculine readers should Take Control of Their Ration Books. We realise that these must be surrendered to wives and landladies for the purchase of sugar and tea, but once this has been done the book should be returned. Otherwise it may be necessary to alter our Model Schedule so that it accounts for only ten coupons a year.

Many of our more clothes-conscious readers are worried by the reduced sartorial scope given them by the rationing system. Accustomed as they are to variety in dress they are irked by the fact that in future they must restrict themselves to one suit and a third of an overcoat. "How can I get adequate variety in my wardrobe?" asks a reader.

This brings us to the consideration of that fundamental necessity:

THE BASIC SUIT

THE reader who strives for variety or chic in his wardrobe is well advised not to experiment with the Basic Suit. It should be cut as far as possible on conventional lines. Eschew double-breasted waistcoats, bell-bottomed trousers, and heavy well-spaced stripes. In the U.S.A. they are sponsoring a Victory suit which boasts reduced lapels and cuffless trousers, thus effecting a certain saving of material.

Once the Basic Suit has been achieved the well-dressed man can give full play to his love of colour and variety. It is not for nothing that such articles of attire as ties and braces are obtainable coupon free. Just as a woman can give variety to a simple dark frock by the cunning use of coupon-free accessories, so can the well-dressed man vary the effect of the Basic Suit by wearing with it each day a hat, tie, and perhaps even braces of a different colour. Thus can his desire for colour and variety in dress be satisfied within the framework of the coupon system.

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pore transmitter. It was only a matter of two or three days before we were on the air in Java. We wrote news, without all the sources we had in Singapore, it is true, but turned out what in retrospect appears to us a creditable job. We took turns with the Singapore transmitters in going on the air, and all too soon had to take over the whole service, when the Singapore transmitters were blown up by our own staff.

And Now, What?

Again all too soon, we left Batavia. Some went to India, some to Australia. Some of the rear party joined us from