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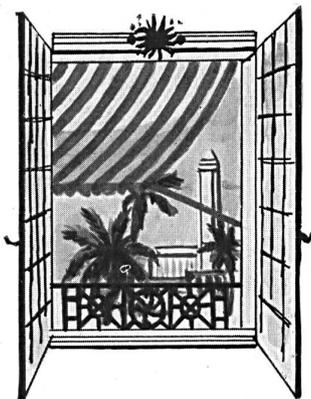
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Los Angeles Letter

FABRICS MAKE THE FASHION

Fabrics make the fashion, says Helga.

Like all great designers, Helga lets her fabrics dictate her designs. Thus she achieves subtle clothes known for high fashion understatement with carefully calculated daring. Helga uses only the finest of materials, much of her yardage being woven exclusively for her in European and domestic mills.

Although born in Germany, Helga journeyed when quite young to England. There, at the age of fifteen (she says she passed for twenty) she began her design studies under a French directrice. As part of her training, she travelled regularly four times a year to Paris to buy fabrics and view collections. She became a designer in a famous London firm and later took her talents to New York where she designed for two equally famous houses of distinction. Her next move was to San Francisco where, in 1947, she and her husband established their own business under the name of Helga. She insists it was fun to live in San Francisco, but difficult to create and her next move was to Los Angeles where she feels there is the life and bustle and receptivity to new ideas that marks this as a genuine fashion center.

The firm of Helga is doubly-headed. The second and business head is that of her charming and talented husband, Walter Oppenheimer, who makes it possible for his wife to create to her heart's content. She lives, dreams, sleeps dresses, she says, and for each collection she does over 1000 sketches. She pares this number down to 100, then revises and drapes in the fabric to be used, turning the making of muslins over to an assistant.

Since Helga's clothes are sold only in the finest shops throughout the country, it is only natural for her to use Swiss fabrics. This she does in abundance and in varied collections: plain fabrics for fall and winter, fine silk prints and organzas for spring and summer, exotic cottons for resort wear. She says she



**WINZELER, OTT & CIE S.A.,
WEINFELDEN**

« WOCO » handkerchief lawn
exclusively through
Pavillon Fabrics Ltd, New York
Model by Helga, Los Angeles

Photo John Engstead



STOFFEL & CO, SAINT-GALL

Navy cotton with white woven satin stripes.

Model by Helga, Los Angeles

L. ABRAHAM & CO., SILKS Ltd, ZURICH

Pure silk white satinorganza.

Model by Helga, Los Angeles.



Photos John Engstead

chooses Swiss fabrics because they exemplify her collection which is "simply beautiful and beautifully simple". The mark of quality and of Helga's clothes can be described in no better fashion.

Helene F. Miller