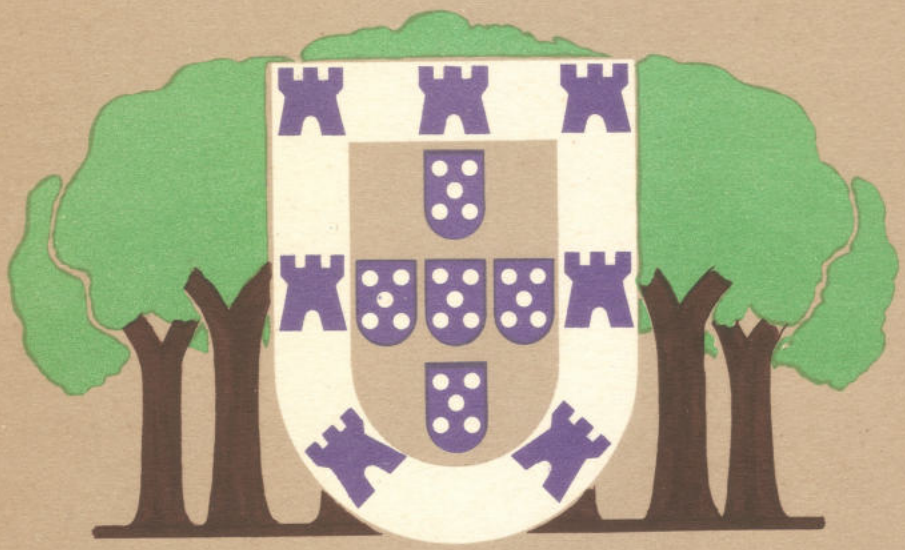
PORTUGAL



The greatest cork-producing Country in the World

JUNTA NACIONAL DA CORTIÇA
LISBOA

PORTUGAL

The Greatest Cork-Producing Country in the World

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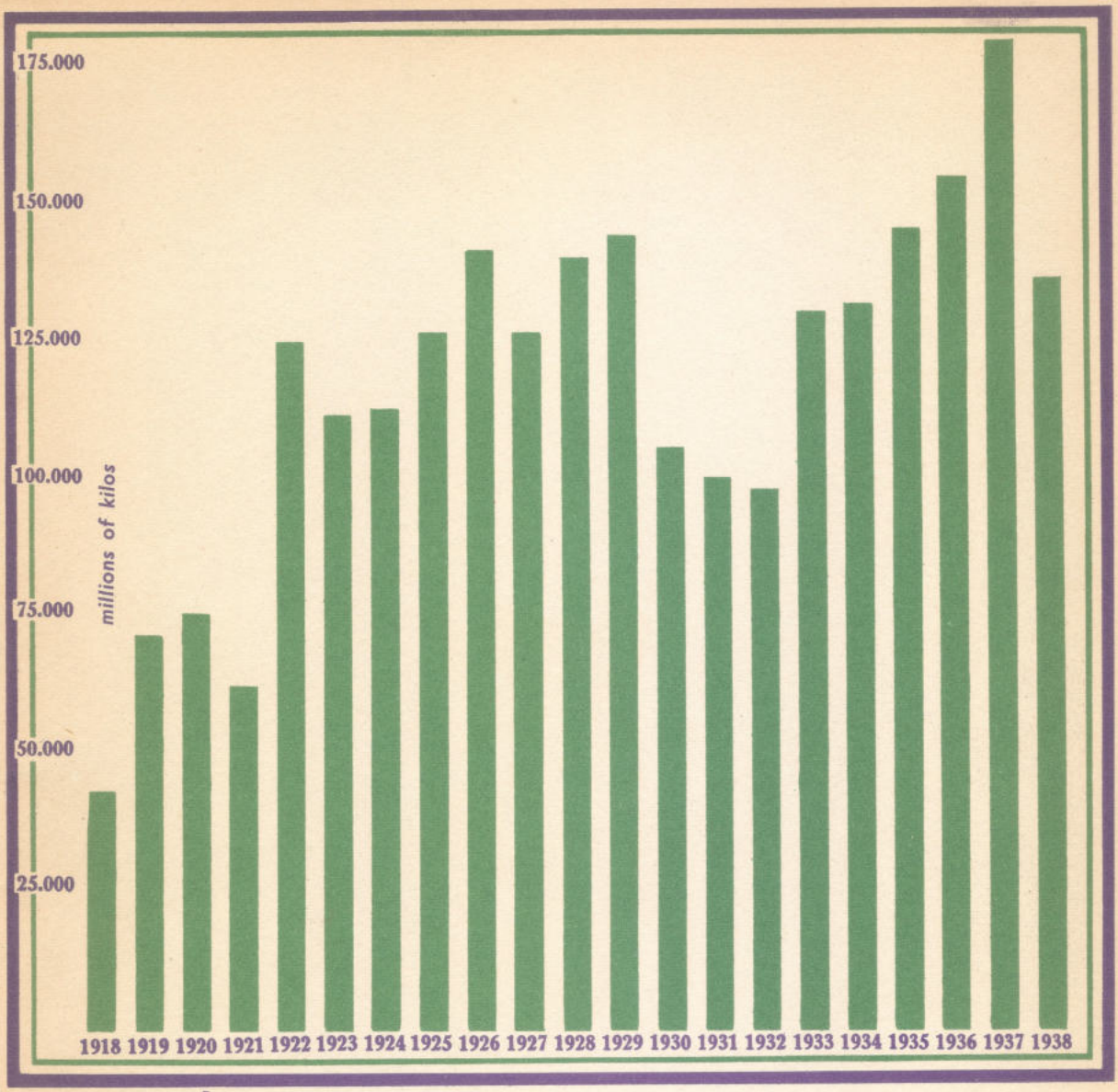
PORTUGAL *is the Country that grows most Cork*

PORTUGAL *is the Country that grows the best Cork*



FIGURES are an eloquent testimonial of the progress made by Portuguese Cork Exports and of the increased demand for Portuguese Cork Goods of every kind for use in factory, shop and the home.

The Mean Annual Exports, which in the ten-year period from 1884 to 1894 were only 27,500 tons, rose to 45,000 tons during the ensuing period (1895-1904). A steady progress has been maintained ever since. In 1937, Exports reached the considerable figure of 181,000 tons.

More than one-half of the worlds' supply of Cork comes from Portugal. In quality too Portuguese Cork ranks the highest. Moreover, in no other country are the standards of production and the marketing organization so developed.

The Cork Industry is an increasingly important branch of national activity. Besides Corks, Discs and Agglomerates, the Portuguese factories turn out a variety of cork products for all kinds of purposes.

THE Cork Oak is a bountiful tree that periodically yields its precious outer bark for the comfort and well-being of man. The Cork Oaks of Portugal — which enjoy world wide reputation — cover more than 1,500,000 acres, equivalent to about 10 % of the total cultivated area of the country.

Though the *Quercus Suber L.* can be grown with success in any part of Portugal, it is principally cultivated in the South, in the province of Alentejo, where the finest trees are to be found.

Portuguese Cork is not, like that of other countries, a wild product which man gathers from the woods. On the contrary, the Cork Oak is deliberately cultivated very much on the lines of a fruit tree, so that in Portugal there are no Cork Forests but rather CORK ORCHARDS. The soil is turned periodically, there is no overcrowding, the trees are pruned and carefully selected, inferior specimens being systematically removed.

THE Outer Bark, that is, the Corkwood of trade, is stripped from the tree under the blazing sun of June and July, at a time when new cells are being actively formed and the membranes are still weak, a circumstance which greatly facilitates stripping.

The cultivation of cork is essentially a slow process. Trees are stripped for the first time when they are 20-25 years old, and they yield what is called Virgin Cork, a product used only for grinding. Nine or ten years later there is a second stripping — the *secundeira* cork, the use of which is still restricted. Another nine years must elapse before the first lot of *amadia* or really standard cork can be cut. The successive crops follow evenly, every nine or ten years, until the tree is too old to produce any more — that is, at an age of 120 — 150 years.

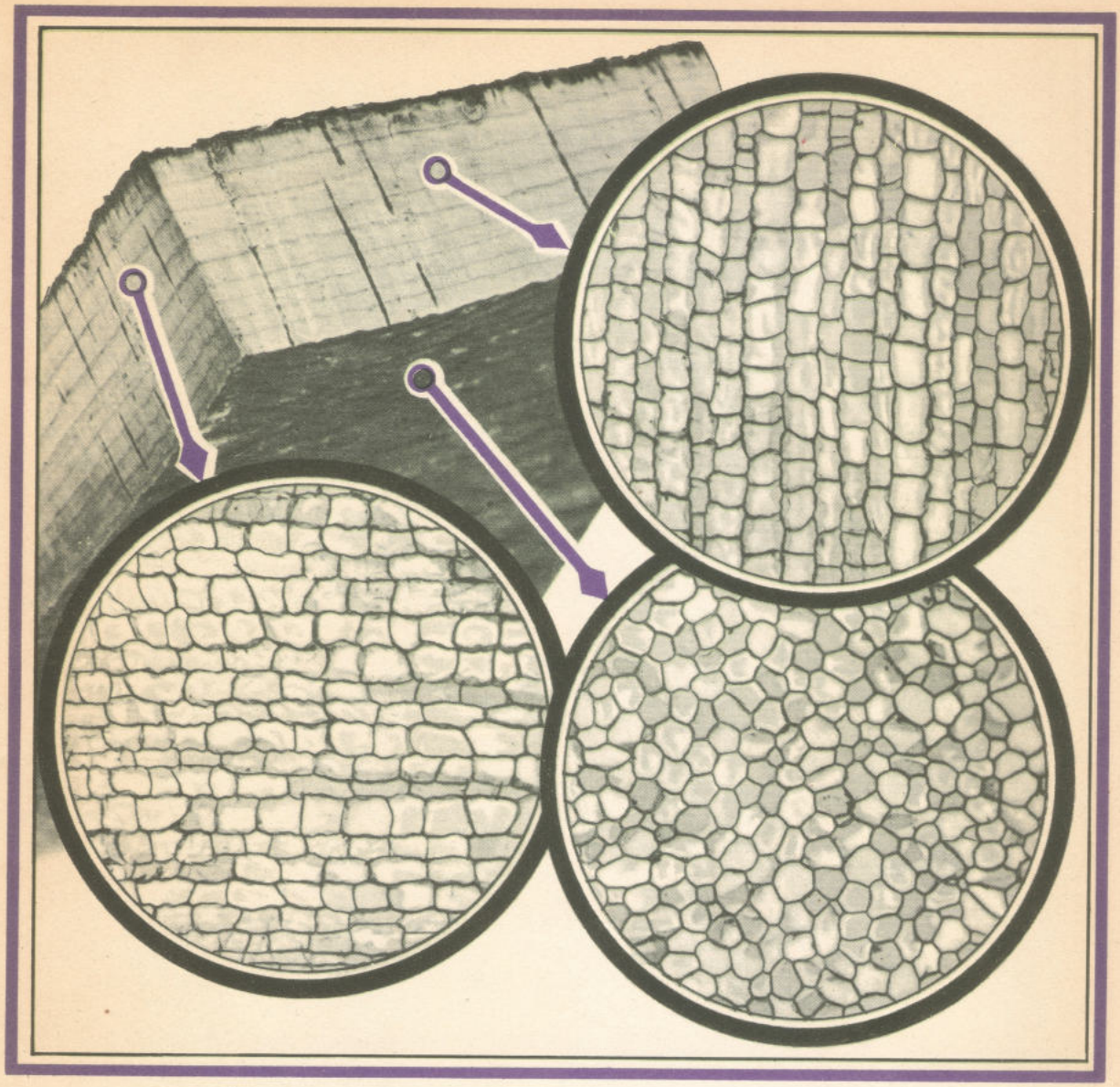
Much legislation has been devoted in Portugal to this precious tree. An Experimental Station is devoted exclusively to its study and to improving the methods of its cultivation.

FOR thousands of years the uses of Cork were few and practically limited to the relatively small regions of the Old World where Cork Oaks grow.

Among its uses in olden days, we may mention floats for fishing-nets, roofing, soles for footwear and bungs for oil and wine containers. But perhaps most interesting and picturesque use of all, is the rustic beehive (in Southern countries often made of cork) which man today has taken as a symbol of the ideal dwelling, thanks to the protective properties of cork.

For, to reward the incessant toil of this invaluable insect, man has provided her with the most comfortable of homes, in which to rest after the hard day's task; a house, which is sound-proof, cool in summer and snug in winter time.

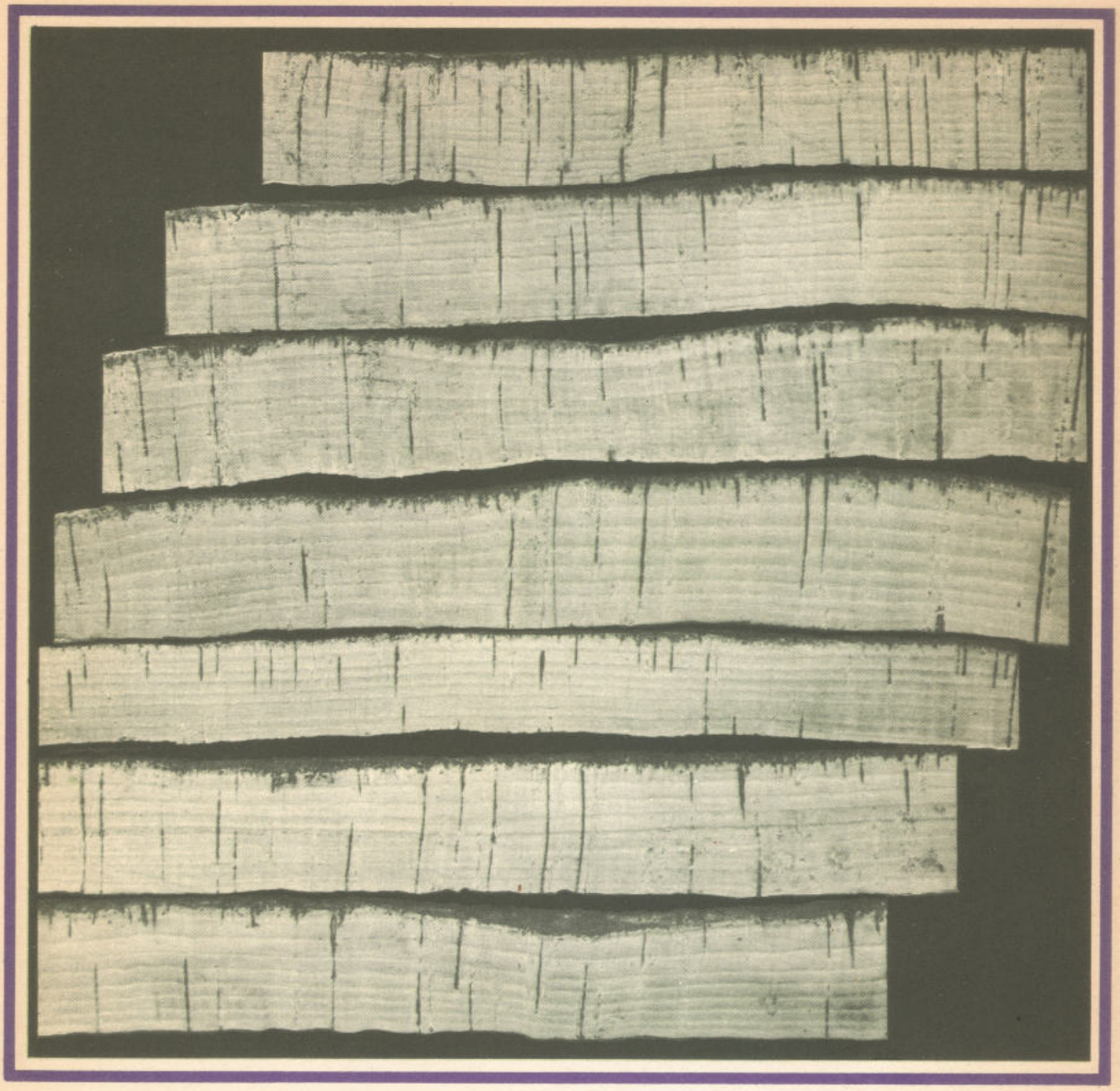
As with Bees so with Men. Modern Life is noisy and nerve-racking and Man must have a home where he can rest and recreate his strength against the labours of the morrow. Let us therefore take a hint from the Bees, and make our homes as comfortable as theirs.



THERE is hardly anyone who is not acquainted with the remarkable properties of Cork. It is a light, compressible and resilient substance, impervious to liquids and gases, unaffected by most solvents, practically a non-conductor of heat, sound and vibration; does not rot or crumble, is almost fireproof, and its surface is not easily worn by friction.

All the valuable properties of Cork are derived from its marvellous texture which the microscope reveals. Cork is one of Nature's masterpieces and cannot be matched by any artificial product. One cubic inch of Cork contains about *690 million cells*, the walls of which, though only 0.0000886 inch thick, are made up of five distinct layers, two of which are entirely waterproof.

Portuguese Cork, produced in a country where the Cork Oak finds ideal conditions for growth, is peculiarly homogeneous in structure and pure in quality. Examination under the microscope confirms the fact that it is the best in the world.

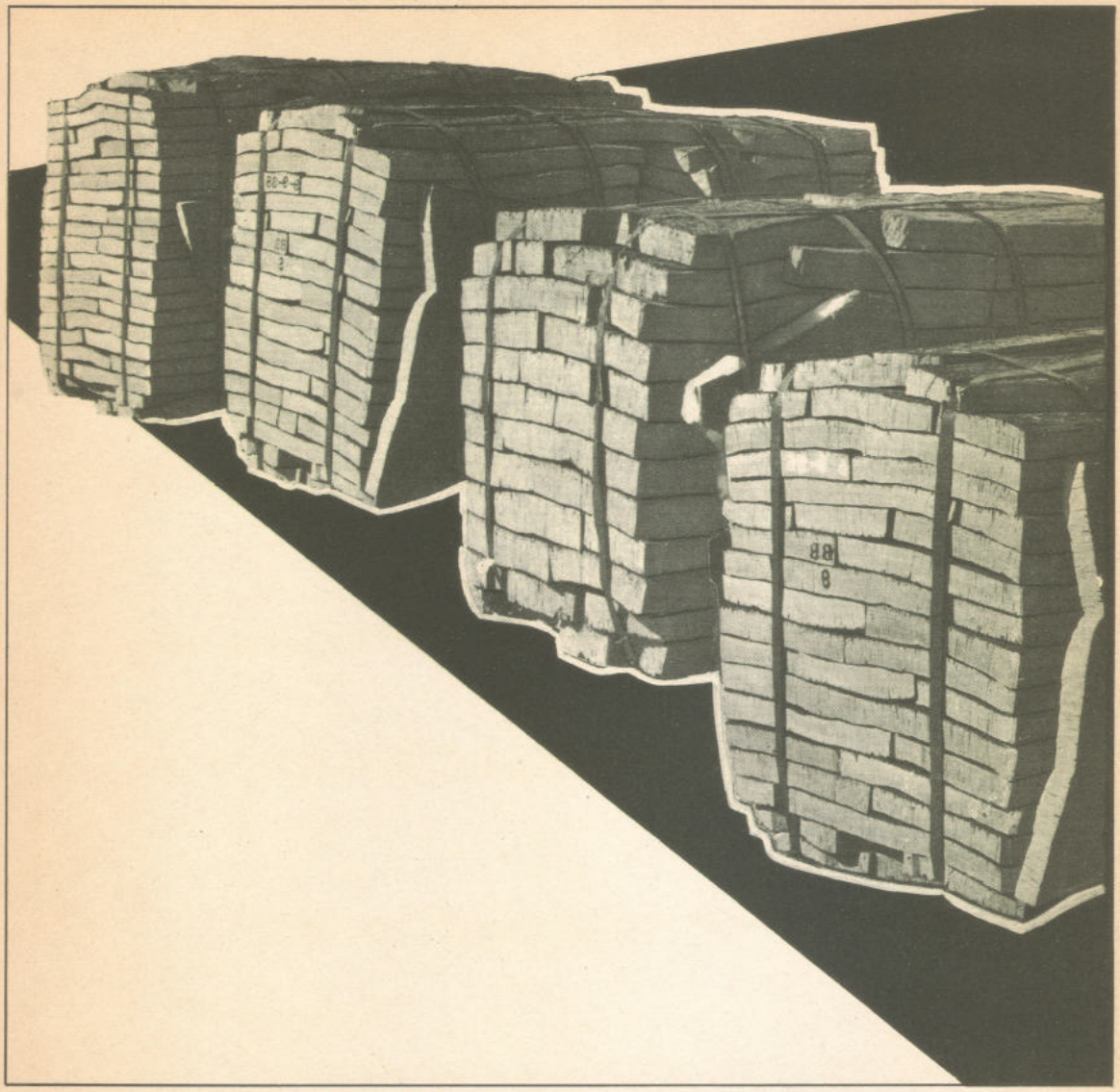


THE wonderful properties of Cork find their highest expression in the Portuguese product. Its superior quality, together with the ease with which it is prepared, have given it an unassailable position in all the markets of the world.

Though the home markets have been greatly developed, so much Cork is grown in Portugal that exports of corkwood are also on the increase and supply the needs of manufacturers in countries which cannot grow their own Cork.

After being scraped and boiled, the corkwood is cut into lengths and carefully graded by skilled workmen, according to quality and thickness, so as to meet the various requisites of Industry.

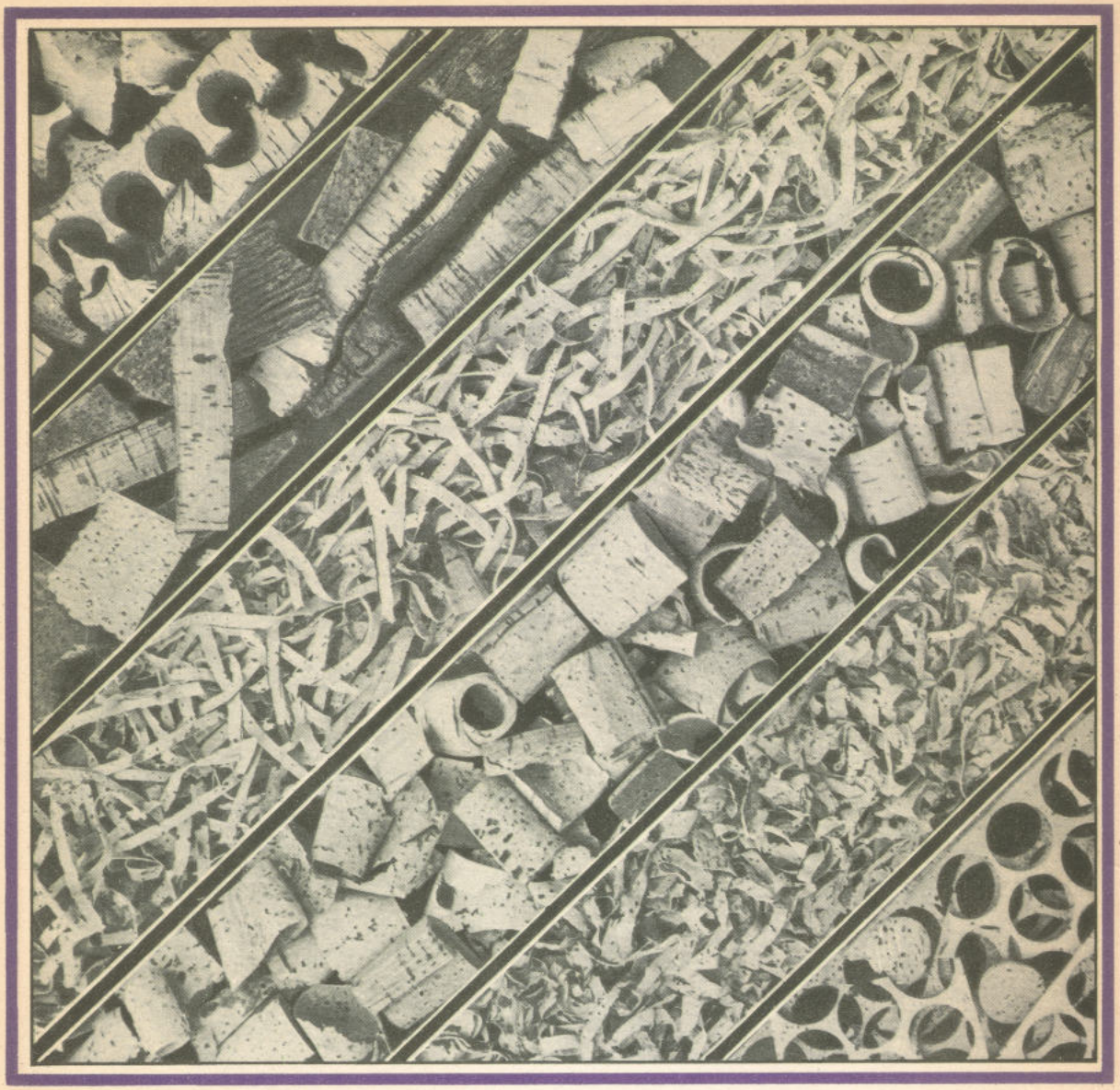
Of course, there is Cork and... Cork. But if you want BEST QUALITY CORK buy PORTUGUESE CORK.



LONG before the word STANDARDIZATION became current in the commercial world, Portuguese Cork, destined for foreign markets, was subjected to careful selection and grading.

Each bale of Portuguese Cork is a compact unit of standard size, containing cork of uniform quality and thickness, so that it can be readily applied to the particular branch of Industry for which it is intended. The ends of the bales are trimmed flat so that the quality and thickness of the planks may be ascertained at a glance.

The care lavished in Portugal on the preparation of corkwood for the market is known all over the world. Long practice in handling the raw material has created a class of skilled operatives in this trade. An official body called the JUNTA NACIONAL DA CORTIÇA guides and inspects the whole trade and sees that official regulations are observed.



CORK is so precious a commodity and — because of its manifold qualities — plays such an important part in modern Industry, that even the bits and pieces, shavings and refuse of every kind undergo industrial transformation.

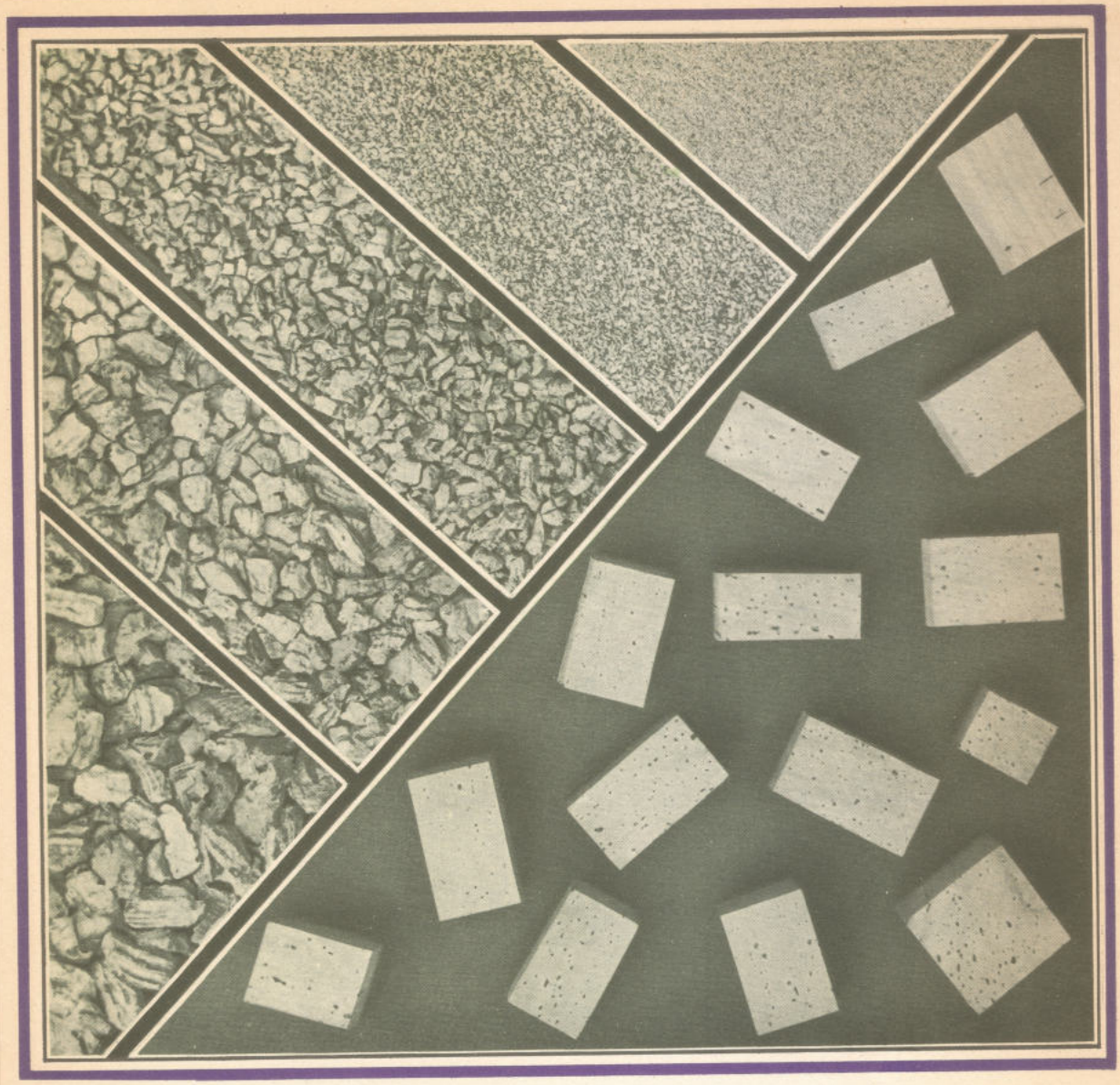
Indeed, Cork Waste is exported in large quantities. It is divided into two main groups: Ordinary Thick Waste (remnants from cutting out or squaring processes, backs of discs or of insoles); and Fine Shavings, comprising a wide variety of classes, such as: shavings from bottle corks, from planing, blocking or slicing processes; also from bungs, discs, insoles, throw-outs, cork bellies etc.

These diverse forms have nevertheless one thing in common: QUALITY. For it is all cork from Portuguese trees and therefore has the high qualities which are demanded of this commodity, viz: Maximum Lightness, Compressibility, Resilience and Purity.

CORK Waste is standardized in a similar way to the wood. Each bale of waste contains cork of the same commercial grade.

These by-products are eventually transformed into a variety of finished goods — panels, tiles, insulating blocks, which make life pleasanter, easier, more comfortable and hygienic, more secure and economical.

In the same way, Virgin Cork and *Refugo* occupy an important place in the export trade. The total exports of Waste (including Shavings, *Refugo* and Virgin) for 1937 were 142,000 tons and for 1938, 90,000 tons. If one considers the extreme lightness of the product (1 cubic foot weighs only 10 lbs) an idea can be formed of the freightage involved.



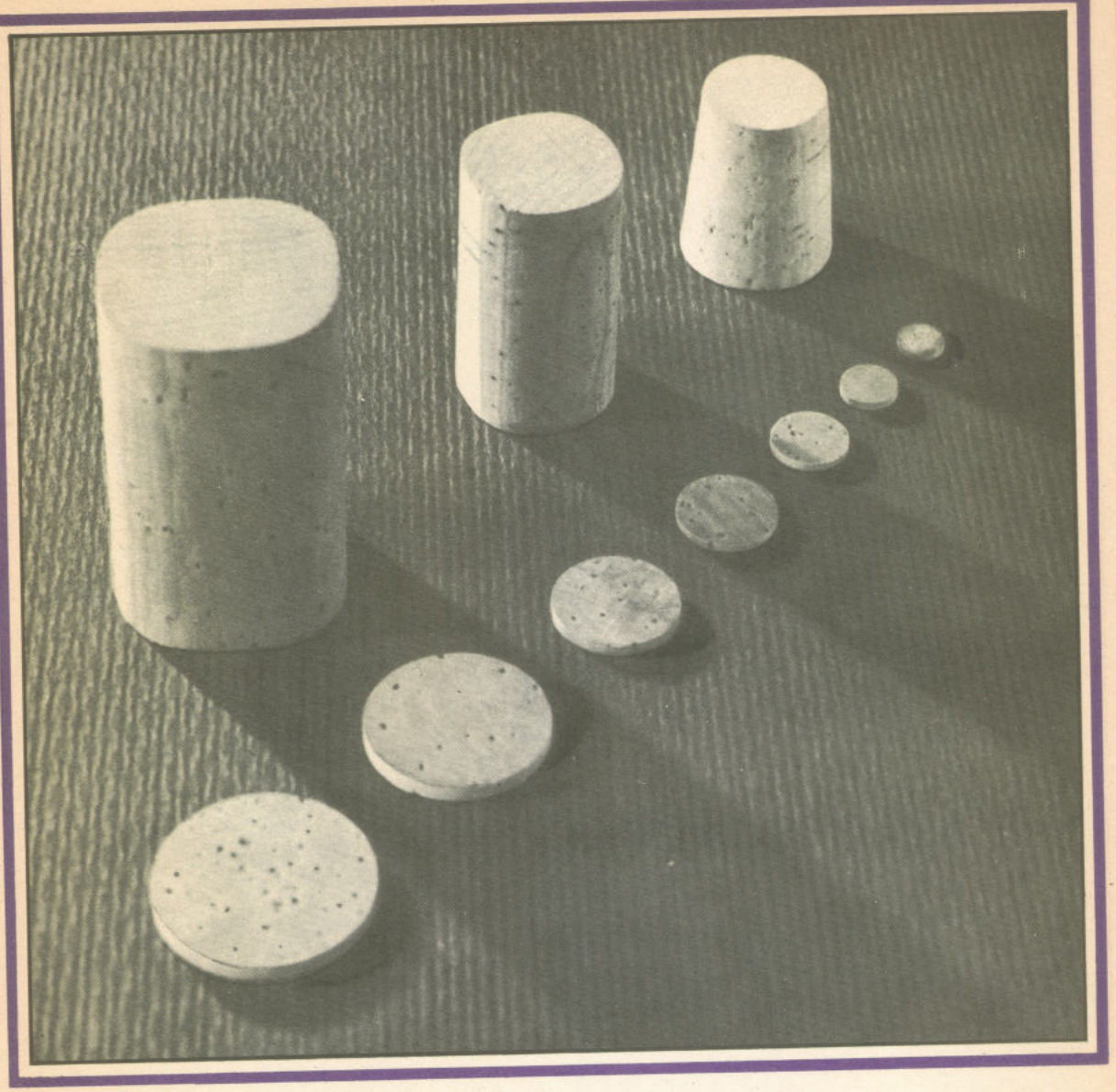
PORTUGUESE Cork is exported also in the form of sawdust, granulated and in squares for making corks.

But whether it is exported in thick blocks or as fine dust, the quality is just the same, since each grain has that uniform cellular structure which only cork grown under the ideal conditions obtaining in Portugal can possess.

All Portuguese Cork products have a particular purity and consistency which makes them eminently suitable for industrial uses. Moreover their preparation for the market is carefully attended to, in accordance with the most exacting demands of manufacturers.

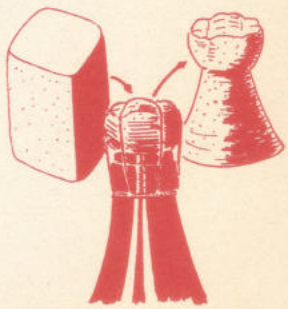
Granulated Cork is sold in various grades, down to the fine, impalpable dust obtained from putting the finish on bottle corks.

The squares are hand-cut by skilled workmen (the *quadradores*) in a great number of thicknesses and qualities.

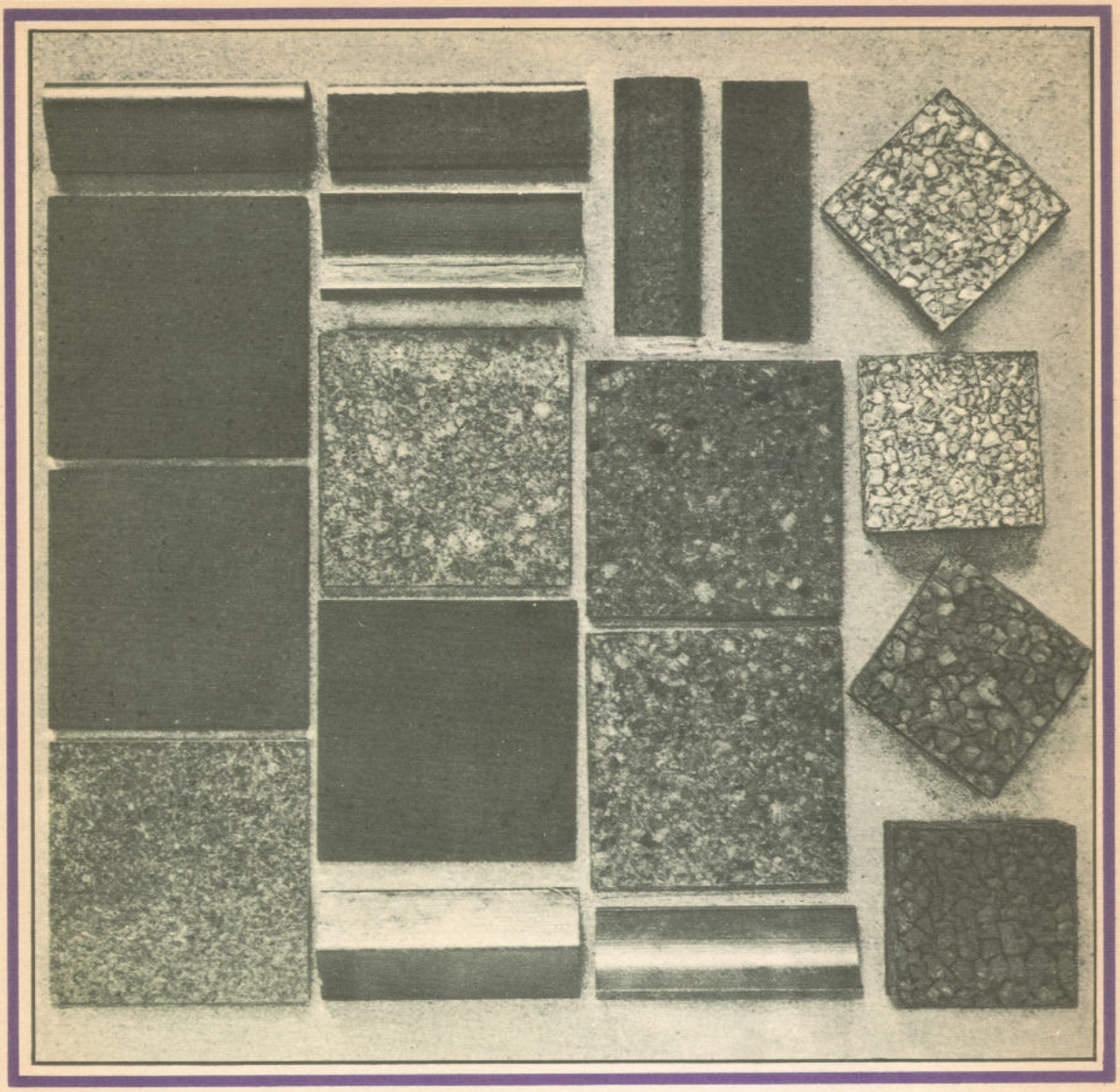


CORK is the ideal stopper for bottles. An ordinary cork stopper is composed of 750 million tiny cells, the texture of which is flexible, elastic and watertight.

No other substance combines so many properties suitable for the efficient closing of vessels. Cork is compressible and therefore adapts itself to the form of the neck of the bottle; being elastic and impervious to liquids or gases, it seals the mouth effectively, imparts no flavour or smell to the liquid, does not crumble and is not attacked by ordinary solvents. It lasts for an incredibly long time and as it is very light, large quantities of it can be transported at small cost. On account of these properties, the cork stopper is and will ever remain the most efficient, hygienic and the cheapest form of bottle closure.



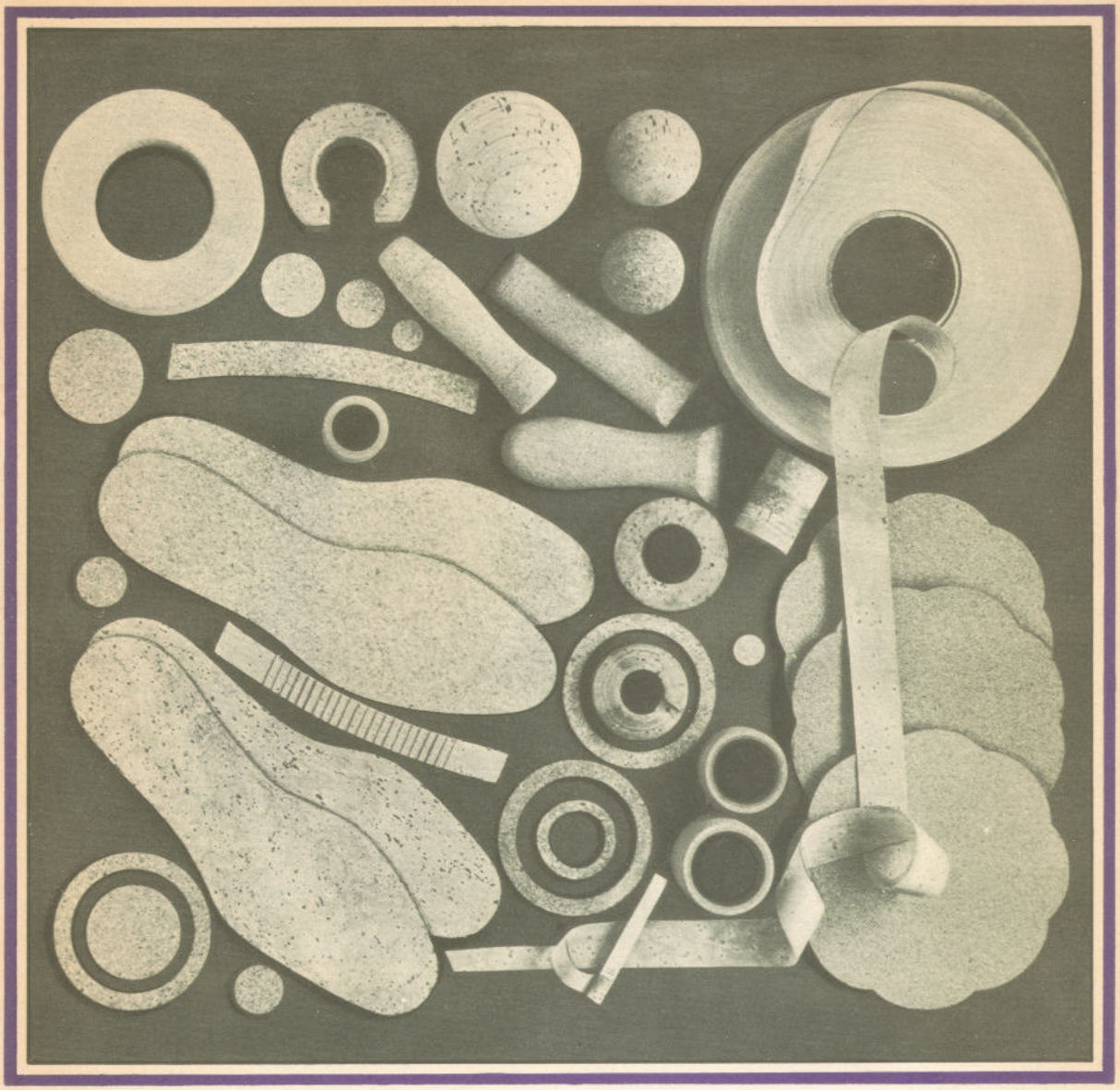
Portuguese Industry is equipped with the best and most modern machines and can manufacture corks and discs of all sizes and shapes, suitable for every type of bottle or flask.



CORK is the ideal insulating substance. A minute fragment of Cork contains millions of hermetically sealed chambers enclosing stationary air, beyond all possibility of renewal. It is this cellular structure that gives cork its unequalled qualities as a temperature insulator and enables it to absorb vibration and sound waves.

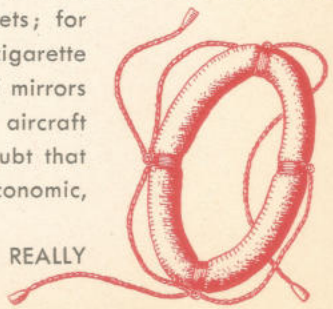
By virtue of these properties, Cork holds an unrivalled position in Industry and in the Building Trades. Cork Agglomerates fulfil the practical requirements of insulation like no other substance. When laid on floors they do not crumble or rot, are proof against damp and last as long as the building. Moreover, cork floors and panelling give a distinguished, sober beauty to rooms, halls and staircases, besides adding largely to the comfort of any house.

Portuguese Factories turn out agglomerates of various types possessing the characteristics of natural cork.



APART from its uses as a mean of closing bottles, as an ideal insulator of temperature, sound and vibration, for house-and shipbuilding and in cold storage plants, as the principal component of Linoleum, Lincustras and floor compositions, Cork is employed in many trades and for many purposes and its use is increasing every year.

Lifebelts and floats for fishing nets are made of Cork, which is also used for shoe insoles, hatbands, sun helmets, cartridge wads, cylinder gaskets; for balls, for cork wool and cork paper such as is employed in cigarette mouthpieces. It is used as a polisher for the bevel edges of mirrors and crystal ware, also in textile machinery, electrical apparatus, aircraft and endless small objects of domestic utility. There is no doubt that cork makes life easier and pleasanter, more hygienic and economic, and cannot be overrated or replaced.



And Portuguese Cork is not merely Cork; it is THE REALLY IMPORTANT CORK.

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