

TORPEDOES SHELL OLD CITY OF MOLFETTA

ANCIENT WALLS PROVE NO PRO-
TECTION AGAINST PRO-
JECTILES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 16.—Molfetta, the seaport of Italy which was shelled by Austrian torpedo boats recently, is the subject of the following war geography bulletin issued by the National Geographic society from its Washington headquarters:

“The shipbuilding yards of Molfetta were probably the chief targets of the Austrian navy during the recent bombardment. While the town presents a striking appearance from the sea, its walls, studded with towers, are of a former age when such defenses were effective against pillaging expeditions of freebooters and adventurers.

“With a population of more than 40,000, Molfetta is one of the thriving commercial centers of the southeastern coast of Italy. In addition to its trade as a seaport the city has numerous manufacturing establishments, producing flour, soaps, wines, bricks and vermicelli. Sixteen miles by rail to the southeast is the important town of Bari (the Barium of the ancients).

Find Neoliths Nearby.

“Evidences of a neolithic settlement have been found in the vicinity of Molfetta, but the origin of the present town is uncertain. It began to figure in European history during the 16th century when Charles V bestowed it upon the Duke of Termoli. No sooner had it passed into the possession of its new master than the ill-starred marshal of France, Odet de Foix Lautrec, descended upon it and sacked it in the prosecution of his campaign against the kingdom of Naples. Lautrec, though a gallant soldier, owed his advancement in the

service of the French king, Francis I, not to his prowess in arms, but to the fact that the charms of his sister, Francoise de Chateaubriant, had fascinated his sovereign. He died in Italy a victim of the plague which decimated his army shortly after the sacking of Molfetta.

Was Scene of Bread Riots.

"Molfetta was one of the cities of Southern Italy in which serious disturbances occurred in May, 1898, when there was a sudden increase in the price of bread.

"The most picturesque building in the medieval section of Molfetta is the cathedral, which like the cathedral in the neighboring Bari has the unusual feature of two towers, both attached to the east end. These campaniles are of plain masonry, the stories being suggested by blind arches and windows.

"The Austrian province of Herzegovina is directly across the Adriatic from Molfetta, a distance of 125 miles."