

After the fall of Tuholo, the population along the Enderoh River probably was reduced to the little hamlets of which I discovered the ruins at Korgach and Serteck. Later, there was a slight revival, as appears from the ruins of Bilel Konghan, a walled village of about a hundred and fifty houses which I discovered west of the river. The village contains a mosque, which proves that it belongs to the Mohammedan period. The natives have no tradition as to its origin or the reason for its abandonment.

Sometimes they jokingly call it "Nummret Sher," "Poor Man's City," because the main gate on the south side has wooden hinges.

"The Beg of this place was so poor," they say, "that he could not even afford iron for hinges."

The chief importance of Bilel Konghan lies in the fact that it forms a mediæval link in the chain of successively smaller and more decadent settlements which have grown up one after the other on the Enderoh River. At the beginning of the Christian era, Tuholo was a large and prosperous town, comparable in size to the modern Chira, but more advanced in the arts, apparently. The houses were well-built structures of sun-dried brick, supported by fine timbers of white poplar, and were admirably adapted to withstand the cold of winter and the heat of summer. Agriculture flourished, and orchards and fields probably surrounded every house. The people were adepts in the art of pottery-making, and their artistic sense, though crude, was so far developed that they ornamented their utensils with designs like those on page 205. Other decorative arts, such as painting, wood-carving, and the moulding of clay and plaster,