Around Shik-ho there are six fortresses; of these two are guarded by 500 Chincmen, and by 500 other troops, partly from Kulja, partly from its environs, most of them being refugees. The garrison of two others of these fortresses consists of 1000 men, partly Manchus, partly Mongols; while the last two are occupied by Kalmuks. The chief command is in the hands of Shu-Amban, a Manchu, and Su-Amban, a Kalmuk. The regular army usually lies in Shik-ho, and is occupied in watching the border. It is reported that a concentration, on a larger scale, of the regular army, commanded by two officers—Shushu-gun and Dzindz-iun—is going to take place at Suzanca. Otherwise the Chinese keep strictly on the defensive. In regard to their future plans of campaign, it is stated that those stationed at Barkul and Kamul will soon be set in motion towards Kashgar, while others are preparing to march against the Tungus of Uranus and Manassi. The Chinese seem to be willing to extend their propaganda even among the Buddhist Kalmuks, subject to Russia; if so, they are labouring under a grave mistake, for wherever the Russian bear has planted his paw, there the Chinese dragon will never find a foothold.

Captain Trotter on the Drainage of the Pamir.—Captain Trotter's geographical memoir, prepared to accompany Sir Douglas Forsyth's report on the recent Kashgar mission, is now passing through the press. In his journey over the Little Pamir he ascertained that the lake on this table-land, called Barkut Yassin by the Mirza, is one of the sources of a river which is called here the Akol, and afterwards the Murghidah, and which joins the Oxus near Waimar, and is in all probability the principal source of that river, as has already been conjectured by Colonel Yule. The furthest point reached by Captain Trotter to the west is Kila Panja; but fortunately he was able to send one of his native surveyors down the Panja River for a considerable distance. The man first went to Ishashkham, so far travelling along a route which is well known from the journals of Wood and the Mirza, and then struck northwards into a region that was altogether unknown, and followed the downward course of the Panja River for a distance of nearly 100 miles, finding its direction to be in reality very different from what had hitherto been conjectured and represented on the best maps of these regions. He reached Kila Waimar, in Koshtan, but was unable to go down the river any further. An exploration has, however, been since made from Fyzabad and Koldub up the river, to a point which is believed to be at no great distance from Kila Waimar, by Colonel Montgomery's Hajrallah, who is now returning from Kabul with his journals. He writes that he has suffered great hardships, and lost some of his papers; but if enough evidence is forthcoming to determine the course of the Oxus from Kila Waimar down to the plains of Koldub, a problem which is of the highest importance both politically and geographically will be solved.

Captain Burton on the Outlet to Tangan-yika.—In his interesting geological notes, published in the Poli Mall Gazette on March 25th, Captain Burton, speaking of Lieutenant Cameron's discoveries, says—"The gallant young explorer has so thoroughly surveyed and fixed not only the details, but the trend and shape of that great reservoir, that he amply deserves to be entitled Second Discoverer of the Tangan-yika." Captain Burton at present inclines to the opinion that the Tangan outlet is a siltus drain, acting mainly during the period of inundation, and becoming an influent during the dry season.

Darien.—The cessation of pearl fishing has made it a matter of great importance to the State of Panama, with reference to the continuance of commercial prosperity, that some other product of equal value, and for which there is a constant demand, should be discovered on the isthmus. Hence the extraction and export of caauchu (India-rubber) is receiving much attention. The trees are found in great abundance in the territories of the Darien Indians, but these independent tribes are inclined to obstruct the work of the caauchu or India-rubber collectors, and to resist an entrance into their forests. The New Granada Congress has authorized the Government to station a force of national troops in Darien, to protect the caauchu industry, but they have not yet arrived. Meanwhile the merchants engaged in the trade have sent about 300 labourers up the Darien River in boats, to a place on the Chucunaque, where they will be stationed, and whence they will occupy and work certain localities as far up as the river Chucuri, an affluent of the Chucunaque. The caucho trees (belonging to the genus Castillea) are said to abound in dense groups in the forests drained by the head waters of the Chucunaque and Chucuri; and so long as the tapping of the trees is done on an intelligent principle, and under due superintendence, the supply will be inexhaustible.