

**M**R. HANS BERENTS, engineer, had some things to say to the Rotary Club of Shanghai the other day. His address was upon the possibilities of the application of intelligence to the development of Shanghai. Mr. J. O. P. Bland has told us that we can learn something about the League of Nations from the observance of how things go in this city. If there is one mistake that is apparent among the measures that brought the present League and its new states into being it is this, that political considerations were given more weight than economic and business considerations. The present League may be said to suffer from too much thinking in terms of politics and too little in terms of economics. Mr. Bland does not point it out but he might have set this down as one of the similarities between Shanghai and the League. This may seem unbelievable to those who have been told that Shanghai has a business man's government and that its continued life is an evidence of the power of modern business to surmount manifold political hindrances. But stop and think it over. Mr. Berents advocates a bridge across the Whangpoo that will connect Shanghai with Pootung. He says that the technical problem can be solved. He points out what is clear to everyone that such a bridge would pay from the business point of view. Why has such a project never been carried out. Isn't the answer politics? Mr. Berents proposes that an elevated railway system be tried in Shanghai. Such a system would, of course, have to cross the International Settlement, Chinese territory and French territory. Are the difficulties not obvious? Shanghai must come sooner or later to see that the whole city from the Loonghwa pagoda to Woosung and from Pootung to Rubicon Road is one city. It is an economic and business unit and it must be treated so. What Mr. Berents calls the city group of Shanghai, what an American finds it easier to call Greater Shanghai, must be viewed as a world port. It cannot be run by parochial thinking and jealous nationalistic projects. It is eloquent testimony to find Mr. Berents proposing, before any other step can be taken, a means of solving the political problems that are involved in his proposals. He wants a "Board of Control," the members of which should be selected by the different chambers of commerce and other interested bodies, "such a board to coordinate all municipal interests within the area of a larger Shanghai, including the Foreign Settlement, the French Concession, Chinese City, Nantao, Chapei, Pootung and Woosung." Is this a dream? Remember Mr. Berents' words which apply to other things as well as to a Pootung Brodge, the technical problem can be

solved, the economic advantage is clear! If Shanghai fails to keep pace with the requirements of a world port it will be because we cannot free ourselves from the spell of politics. To see what can be done with this and similar plans, we propose a commission that shall be appointed by the Municipal Council and the Chinese Advisory Committee of the International Settlement whose duty it shall be to consider and bring in a report on a possible organization of all interested units in a council or board for the promotion of such technical and other projects as cannot now be carried out for want of cooperation within the area that may be called Greater Shanghai. Before we submit to what Mr. Berents calls sleeping sickness, let us make a supreme effort to shake off the deadening influence of politics and international jealousy. Is there a better way forward than a study of the situation by such a committee as is here proposed. The Shanghai Municipal Council's attention is respectfully directed to this suggestion.