

A Board of Invention.

WHEN divided opinions led to Lord Fisher leaving the Admiralty it was felt that the services of a man of such eminence should not be wholly wasted, and when the creation of a Board to encourage scientific effort in relation to the requirements of the naval service was decided upon he was appointed chairman. That was on July 5th. A few weeks later the Board was made up and the names of the scientists who would serve on it were published. With one exception all are members of the Royal Society, and several, if not all, were giving their services before they were enrolled in an official body. They are all men eminent in abstract science, but few, we regret to say, have been engaged in applied science, and still fewer are engineers. It may be a convenience to give the names here. They are Sir J. J. Thomson, Sir Charles Parsons, Mr. G. T. Beilby, Professor H. B. Baker, Professor W. G. Bragg, Professor H. C. H. Carpenter, Sir William Crookes, Mr. W. Duddell, Professor Percy Frankland, Professor Bertram Hopkinson, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor W. J. Pope, Sir Ernest Rutherford, Mr. Gerald Stoney, and Professor the Hon. R. J. Strutt. It will be noticed at once that the number of professors predominates, and every one who has followed the work of these illustrious men knows that they have, with one or two exceptions, won their laurels in the study and the laboratory rather than in the workshop. With all deference to their ability, we find it difficult to believe that as constituted the Board has the kind of knowledge that is required to express a valuable opinion upon the varied inventions that are likely to be brought before it, and we trust that it may see fit to call for the services of a few thoroughly practical men, particularly mechanical engineers.