

## National Research.

LAST week the Board of Education issued particulars of a scheme for the organisation and development of scientific and industrial research. This is a provision for the future and is doubtless the outcome of a great deal of discussion that has taken place since the war began on the future position of this country with regard to the applications of science to industry. It has nothing to do with the present requirements of the War-office and Admiralty and will not overlap the work of their scientific committees. The body which will control the scientific side of the scheme, to be known as the Advisory Council, will make (1) proposals for instituting specific researches, (2) proposals for establishing or developing special institutions or departments of existing institutions for the scientific study of problems affecting particular industries and trades, and (3) proposals for the establishment and award of research studentships and fellowships. The work of the Council is to be thoroughly national in character. Research is to be carried out for the kingdom as a whole, and the assistance of the principal scientific and professional associations is to be sought, a regular procedure for inviting and collecting suggestions from them being established. It is expected that the Council will work largely through sub-committees, on which experts in the particular science or industry concerned will be invited to sit. It is too soon yet to say whether this body will be of any value to the country or not. There is always the danger, particularly when we remember its origin, that it may become purely scholastic, whilst, on the other hand, it must expect a certain amount of resistance from industries which are anxious to retain their so-called trade secrets, and will do nothing to encourage research the results of which are to be given to all and sundry. There remains, nevertheless, a great deal of work to be done in the co-ordination of researches normally carried out by private workers, by colleges and by institutions, and if it undertakes that great task it may realise in some degree Sir Frederick Donaldson's idea of a Clearing House of Knowledge.