

PUBLIC OPINION.

THE LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.—
LORD G. HAMILTON'S RESIGNATION.
—On August 1st, at the meeting of the London School Board, Lord George Hamilton, who presided, said that he wished to mention a matter which affected himself. The Board would remember that ten months ago they elected him to the post of Chairman (hear, hear). He had hoped that he should have been able to discharge those duties for the whole period of the existence of the present Board, and he might say that that hope had gained weight from the kindness and consideration with which he had been treated by all with whom he had come into contact. He had, however, recently accepted a very onerous position, that of Secretary of State for India (hear, hear). It was impossible for him to associate the two offices, and, therefore, he had no alternative but to inform the Board that it would be impossible for him to continue his duties as Chairman of the Board. As it was possible that this might be the last time he would occupy the chair, he did not know whether he might presume so much as to say a word or two with reference to his connection in the past with the Board. The tone, the character, and the status of the officials in the employ of the Board left little to be desired. The same might be said of the teachers and others employed by the Board. Speaking of the indoor administration, he said that they had to discharge the function of not only one Board, but practically of eleven. It had been the practice of this Board to appoint large Committees. His experience was, that the larger the Committees were, the slower they worked. There was a large amount of detail put before the Committees, and as he saw his friend Mr. Davis

with a Committee of 55 every week struggling with an agenda paper of about 200 pages, he could not help thinking that, if they were to consider the expediency of diminishing the numbers on the Committees, it would be a great relief, and more time would be given to questions of real importance. London was growing, and as it grew, so the work increased. Beyond a certain point such a strain would be put upon individual members as to prevent any except those who could give the whole of their time to the work from being elected, and in that way a great many staunch friends of education would be lost to the Board. As this was the first time he had ever had the pleasure of being associated with ladies in an administrative capacity, he should like to say that no part of the work of the Board was more effectively done than in those Committees upon which ladies served. He believed that the cause of his selection as an outsider was in consequence of the earnest interest which was taken in the religious question, and it was felt advisable that no prominent champion of either side should be selected to fill the chair. His experience was, whenever any religious question or document became at all a shuttlecock between parties, it became enormously exaggerated. He could not help applying that observation to the Circular. He had never been able to understand the extreme interpretation which had been put upon the Circular, or the intentions of those who supported it. He also thought that the teachers somewhat hastily placed that interpretation on the Circular. On the other hand, he did not believe that religious education, as given in the great mass of the Board schools, was either bad