

1864, chapter 90, amounts to two hundred and nine thousand nine hundred and twenty acres. No part of the scrip issued and delivered to the State has yet been sold. A proposition was made to this Office for the purchase of the whole amount, but it was not accepted, for the reason chiefly, that it was considered too low.

ASSESSMENT.

The assessed value of real and personal property in the State, liable to direct taxation, as will appear by *Statement "H,"* is \$286,530,838.34.

The aggregate amount of Direct taxes levied thereon, at the rate of five cents in the hundred dollars, is \$143,265.42; of Bounty taxes at the rate of ten cents, is \$286,530.83; and of Public School taxes at the rate of fifteen cents, is \$429,796.25.

A general assessment and valuation of property was provided for by the Act of 1866, chapter 157. Forms for a return of the assessment were prepared at this Office, as required by the Act, and transmitted with as little delay as possible, to the respective Clerks of Courts and the City Register of Baltimore, for the use of the Assessors.

The 17th and 18th sections of the Act, provided that the Assessors should complete the assessment, and make a return thereof to the several County Commissioners and Boards of Control and Review, before the first Monday of October, 1866; but the Assessors in Baltimore city and in a few of the counties, although they promptly entered upon their duties, were unable to complete the same by the time limited. It was deemed important that the work should be completed within the time prescribed, but as the provisions of the Act were considered merely directory, and as the work already done would have been useless, unless finished, the Assessors were advised to complete the same. By the 26th section of the Act, the Clerks of the respective Boards of Control and Review and County Commissioners are required to prepare from the Assessor's statement a summary statement, showing the description of property assessed and the value thereof, and to return the same to the Comptroller before the first Monday in February, 1867. Some of these officers will not be able to perform the duty by the time prescribed.

By reason of the unfinished condition of the assessment, the Department is not in the possession of such information as will justify an estimate of the aggregate value of the real and personal property of the State. It is believed, however, that when compared with the previous assessment, there will be a very large increase, and such as will warrant a considerable reduction in the present rate of taxes.