

ASSESSMENT AND LEVY OF 1904.

Statement "K" continues to show a marked increase in the basis of assessment, amounting this year to \$680,743,794, or an increase of \$7,406,495, while the increase in the levy from 17 cents to 22½ cents on each \$100, produces an increase of \$387,000.14, or the large sum of \$1,531,673.54.

PUBLIC SCHOOL TAX.

The receipts and disbursements on account of this Fund are shown in statement "L," the total receipts being \$939,477.85, which, together with the balance of \$346,434.68 brought down from the preceeding year, aggregates \$1,285,912.53, or an increase of \$204,794.80. The disbursements are shown to be \$757,827.19, leaving the very large balance of \$528,085.34 applicable to the school year commencing October 1, 1904. This increase in revenue is manifest by virtue of the increased school tax rate from 10½ cents to 15 cents on each \$100, which income must be largely augmented, since this year's receipts represents only the beginning of the benefits of the increased rate.

Heretofore, on October 1, January 1 and March 15, there has been distributed among the counties and Baltimore city, the sum of \$125,000, to white schools and \$37,000 to colored schools, in addition to the usual amounts to the Normal schools and State Board of Education, but last October, the amount on hand to equalize future distribution being so large, I determined to give the schools in this State the benefit of this money, rather than retain the same in the Treasury until the last distribution, viz: June 15, and therefore apportioned in October, the sum of \$200,000, and again on January 1, 1905, this distribution was still further increased to \$300,000. Whether this increase can be maintained depends entirely upon future collections, but such distribution is made with the full assurance that this revenue will warrant a like distribution of \$300,000 on March 15, next.

The last Legislature made one important change concerning the distribution of this fund—Chapter 584. Heretofore this revenue was distributed at each quarterly apportionment, separately to the white and colored schools, \$150,000 to the latter, while the white schools received the difference between this sum and whatever sum came into the Treasury from this tax. Said statute provides, however, that "the Comptroller shall not appor-