# MONTHLY REVIEW 

BUSINESS CONDITIONS IN THE SIXTH FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT

## FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA

The volume of retail trade in the Sixth District declined in June by slightly more than the seasonal amount, and there were decreases in construction contracts awarded in the District, and in pig iron production in Alabama. Increases over May, however, contrary to the usual trend, were shown in wholesale trade, in cotton mill activity, and in building permits issued at twenty reporting cities.

Trade Total sales in June by 49 reporting retail firms declined 14.5 per cent from May, were 7.9 per cent less than in June last year, and in the first half of 1938 have been 4.2 per cent smaller than in that part of 1937. The index of daily average sales by 28 of these firms which have reported over a long period of years, after adjustment for the usual seasonal change, declined from 106.0 per cent of the 1923-1925 average for May to 104.3 per cent for June. Preliminary sales figures for the first two weeks in July show a decrease of 2.5 per cent compared with corresponding weeks last year. June inventories declined 8.1 per cent from May and were 7.8 per cent smaller than a year ago.
Wholesale trade in the Sixth District, according to reports by 141 firms to the United States Department of Commerce, increased 1.5 per cent from May to June, contrary to seasonal tendency, but was 13.0 per cent less than in June last year. In the first half of 1938 wholesale trade averaged 13.9 per cent smaller than in that part of 1937. Inventories at 58 reporting wholesale firms declined 4.9 per cent in June and were 18.1 per cent smaller than a year earlier.
Banking Total loans and investments at 22 weekly reporting member banks in leading cities of the District declined further in June, and on July 6 were at the
CONDITION OF 22 MEMBER BANRS IN SELECTED CITIES
(In Thousands of Dollars)
lowest level in more than two years. On July 13 they were about 7.4 millions of dollars less than at the middle of June. Loans for commercial, industrial and agricultural purposes increased 2.1 millions between June 15 and July 13, but other classes of loans declined, and total investments declined 3.9 millions, a decrease of 6.7 millions in holdings of direct obligations of the United States being offset in part by increases in securities guaranteed by the United States and in Other Securities. Compared with the corresponding Wednesday a year ago, total loans by these banks show a gain of 12.1 millions, and commercial loans an increase of 14.9 millions, but investments in United States direct obligations show a decrease of 26.1 millions and total investments a decline of 14.7 millions.

Demand deposits-adjusted on July 13 were somewhat larger than the average for earlier months of the year, although somewhat less than at the corresponding time a year ago. Time deposits and Government deposits have not changed materially in recent weeks, but continue larger than at the same time last year. Deposits of other banks, and balances maintained with correspondents, have recently increased and are larger than a year ago.

At the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta discounts for member banks on the first two Wednesdays in July have been less than on most other report dates since the middle of April last year. This bank's participation in the System's holdings of United States securities was reduced at midyear, and on July 13 its total earning assets were slightly less than a year ago. After declining about 36 millions of dollars between April 6 and June 22, largely because of reduced reserve requirements, member bank reserve deposits increased about 10.6 millions between June 22 and July 13. Daily average figures of deposits and reserves for all member banks in the District indicate that reserves in the first half of June averaged about 34 millions in excess of legal requirements, and in the last half of June about 32 millions. On the basis of latest available figures, member bank reserves on July 13, amounting to $\$ 164,781,000$, were about 41 millions of dollars, or 33.1 per cent, in excess of legal requirements.

Agriculture Weather conditions in most parts of the District have recently been more favorable to growing crops than earlier in the season. Rainfall in June

| CONDITION OF FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA <br> (In Thouscends of Dollars) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { July } 13, \\ & 1938, \end{aligned}$ |  | Change From: <br> Junel5,1938 July 14,1937 |  |  |  |
| Bills Discounted |  | 795 | - | 67 |  |  |
| Bills Bought in Open Mar |  |  |  |  |  | 89 |
| Industrial Advances. |  |  |  |  |  | 77 |
| United States Securities |  | ,196 |  |  | + |  |
| Total Bills and Securities |  | 12,127 |  |  |  |  |
| Total Reserves. |  | 249,818 |  |  |  | 4,465 |
| F. R. Note Circulation |  | 140,499 |  |  |  |  |
| Member Bank Reserve Deposits |  | 164,781 |  |  |  | 4,738 |
| U. S. Treasurer-General Account |  | 41,068 |  |  |  | , 476 |
| Total Deposits. |  | 214,644 |  |  |  |  |
| Commitments to Make Industrial Advances. |  | 183 | + | 7 | - | 132 |


and early July has been ample in some sections but deficient in the southern and eastern part of Georgia, and in some areas in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.

The July Crop Report of the United States Department of Agriculture indicates increased production this year over 1937, in the six states of this District taken as a whole, of corn, oats, hay, tobacco, potatoes, sweet potatoes, peaches, pears, sugar cane in Louisiana and Florida, and rice in Louisiana, but decreases in wheat, apples and grapes. The July estimate of oranges in Florida from the 1937 bloom increased to 26 million boxes, a gain of 15.6 per cent over the season before, and the estimate of grapefruit increased to 14.2 million boxes, but is 21.5 per cent smaller than in the previous season.

The cotton report by the Department of Agriculture showing the acreage on July 1 indicates a decrease of 22 per cent from last year for the United States, and a decrease of 20.5 per cent in the combined estimates for the six states of this District. Comparisons with the acreage on July 1 last year, and the acreage harvested, are shown in the table for these states.

The ten-market average of spot cotton prices rose from 8.06 cents per pound the latter part of May and early June to 9.15 cents on July 8, but a week later was 8.71 cents. A year earlier the average was 12.65 cents. According to the index of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, wholesale prices of farm products rose 3.3 per cent be-

| COTTON ACREAGE - (000 Omitted) |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 1938 | July 11937 | Harvested 1937 |
| Alabama. | ..... 2,191 | 2,705 | 2,694 |
| Florida... | ............ $2_{12121}^{90}$ | 2.674 | 118 2.661 |
| Lourisiara. | ......... ${ }^{2,124}$ | 1,575 | 1,569 |
| Mississippi. | ........ 2,726 | 3,495 | 3,467 |
| Tennessee. | ....... ${ }_{816}$ | ,995 | 989 |
| Six States... | 9,188 | 11,564 | 11,498 |
| United States | .............. 26,904 | 34,471 | 34,001 |

tween June 4 and July 9, but were 23.3 per cent lower than a year earlier, and wholesale prices of foods on July 9 had risen 1.8 per cent since June 4 and 3.1 per cent since May 7, but were 15.2 per cent lower than on July 10, 1937.

Estimated receipts from the sale of principal farm products in the six states of this District, including Government payments, declined further in May by 13.5 per cent, and were 20.1 per cent less than a year ago. May receipts from livestock and livestock products were larger than a month, or a year ago, offsetting in part decreases for crops and Government payments.

Fertilizer tag sales declined further in June but were larger than in June of other recent years.

Industry In the first half of 1938 the total value of construction contracts awarded in the Sixth District, according to F. W. Dodge Corporation statistics, was 16.7 per cent smaller than in that part of last year, and the value of building permits issued at twenty reporting cities was 14.4 per cent less. In June contract awards declined 9.5 per cent, and were 14.4 per cent less than a year ago. Residential contracts declined 3.7 per cent in June, and other awards 13.1 per cent. The value of building permits increased 13.2 per cent in June, but was 15.3 per cent less than a year ago. Of the twenty reporting cities, twelve reported increases over May but only five reported gains over June, 1937. The six months total is smaller than for corresponding periods of the past two years, but larger than for the first half of other years since 1929. There was marked improvement in the Southern Pine lumber market in the latter part of June and early July, and in the five weeks ending July 9 orders at Southern Pine mills averaged 25 per cent larger than a year ago, and about one-third larger inan production.

Cotton mills in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee consumed an average of 5,270 bales of cotton for each business day in June, an increase of 2.3 per cent over May and 5.9 per cent larger than in April, but nearly 40 per cent less than in June last year.

Coal production in Alabama and Tennessee declined further in June and was substantially less than a year ago. Daily average production of pig iron in Alabama declined 16.5 per cent in June and was 54.1 per cent less than in June, 1937. The six months total was 33.7 per cent smaller than for that part of last year, which compares with a decrease of 60 per cent for the United States. Since the reduction of $\$ 4.00$ per ton, on June 25 , in the price of pig iron, press reports indicate a decided improvement in buying and in demand for some steel products. Receipts of turpentine and rosin increased in June and were larger than a year ago, and there was improvement in prices in the latter part of June and early July. Daily average production of electric power increased 2.3 per cent in May but was slightly smaller than a year earlier.

Reports from 6,161 firms in the six states of this District to the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that employment declined 2.9 per cent in May, to the lowest level since October 1935, and that payrolls declined 1.7 per cent in May, and were the smallest in nearly two years.


| (000 Omitted) |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| June | May 1938 | June 1937 | $\underset{\text { Jan.-June, Incl. }}{1938} \text { Jone }$ |


| COMMERCIAL FAILURES- |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Number (Actual). | 34 |  | 34 |  | 21 |  |  | 177 |
| Liabilities....... | 334 | \$ | 284 | \$ | 279 |  | 2,645 | \$ 1,641 |
| CONTRACTS AWARDED- 1800000 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| DISTRICT | \$ 18,239 |  | 20,157 |  | 21,299 |  | 92,478 | \$111,026 |
| Residential | 7,348 |  | 7,627 |  | 8,371 |  | 36,635 | 41,286 |
| All Others. | 10,891 |  | 12,530 |  | 12,928 |  | 55,843 | 69,740 |
| Alabama. | 1,724 |  | 2,353 |  | 1,985 |  | 11,372 | 8,686 |
| Florida. | 5,804 |  | 5,092 |  | 9,060 |  | 28,439 | 48,265 |
| Georgia | 3,572 |  | 5,214 |  | 2.085 |  | 18,240 | 15,884 |
| Louisiona | 2,899 |  | 4,131 |  | 6,628 |  | 20,145 | 23,081 |
| Mississippi | 2,045 |  | 3,972 |  | 2,253 |  | 10,510 | 14,444 |
| Tennessee. | 5,035 |  | 3,525 |  | 3,224 |  | 21,597 | 19,538 |
| BUILDING PERMITS- |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20 CITIES. | . 8 5,039 | \$ | 4,450 | \$ | 5,947 |  | 27,616 | \$ 32,256 |
| Atlanta. | 342 |  | 311 |  | 624 |  | 1,854 | 2,501 |
| Birmingham | 362 |  | 196 |  | 228 |  | 1,477 | 2,051 |
| Jacksonville | 582 |  | 587 |  | 382 |  | 5,717 | 2,554 |
| Nashville. | 469 |  | 1869 |  | 1508 |  | 2,568 | 2,033 |
| 15 Other Citi | 3,206 |  | 2,698 |  | 4,053 |  | 15,246 | 20,599 |
| PIG IRON PRODUCTION-Tons |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| COAL PRODUCTION-Tons |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Alabama. | 665 |  | 730 r |  | 1,050 |  | 5,158 | 5,782 |
| Tennessee. | 303 |  | 335 r |  | 444 |  | 1,968 | 2,542 |
| $\underline{\mathrm{r}}=$ Revised. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |



| COTTON CONSUMPTION- |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Alabama. | 41 | 46 | 77 | 544 | 799 |
| Georgia. | 83 | 77 | 134 | 1,002 | 1,448 |
| Tennessee | 13 | 11 | 15 | 142 | 176 |
| Total 3 States | 137 | 134 | 226 | 1,688 | 2,423 |
| COTTON SEED CRUSHED- | 67 | 102 | 43 | 2,266 | 1,864 |
| FERTILIZER TAG SALES-Tons Total 6 States................ | 61 | 172 | 55 | 2,362 | 2,661 |


|  | (000 Omitted) |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { May } \\ & 1938 \end{aligned}$ | April $1938$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { May } \\ & 1937 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & { }_{19 n} .-M \end{aligned}$ | Cay, Incl. |
| FARM INCOME*-Six States. ${ }^{\text {\% }}$ | 38,722 | \$ 44,783 | \$48,469 | \$244,673 | \$307,049 |
| Alabama. | 4,993 | 5,592 | 7,387 | 30,593 | 44,125 |
| Florida. | 9,762 | 13,064 | 15,387 | 63,510 | 83,452 |
| Georgia | 4.751 | 3,855 | 5,111 | 25,969 | 40,343 |
| Louisiana | 5,669 | 7,836 | 7,728 | 31,373 | 36,543 |
| Mississippi | 5,169 | 6,581 | 5,832 | 41,003 | 49,094 |
| Tennessee | 8,378 | 7,855 | 7,024 | 52,225 | 53,492 |
| ELECTRIC POWER |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 252,680 | 234,373 | 240,317 | 1,185,342 | 1,170,545 |
| Florida. . | 77,644 | 83,284 | 70,727 | 1,432,481 | 1,382,382 |
| Georgia | 110,054 | 114,342 | 148,340 | 584,430 | 725,170 |
| Louisiana. | 137,251 | 113,162 | 133,612 | 594,509 | 623,677 |
| Mississippi | 1,970 | 5,751 | 5,083 | 30,548 | 25,020 |
| Tennessee. | 111.104 | 106,114 | 103,474 | 569.414 | 538,651 |
| Total Six States | 694,703 | 657,026 | 701,553 | 3,396,724 | 3,465,445 |
| By Water Power. | 414,524 | 410,380 | 449,731 | 1,875,483 | 2,242,114 |
| By Fuels. | 280,179 | 246,646 | 251,822 | 1,521,241 | 1,223,331 |

*Includes Government payments.

|  | June 1938 | May 1938 | June 1937 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| RETAIL SALES*-Unadjusted |  |  |  |
| DISTRICT (28 firms) | 93.9 | 107.1 | 99.8 |
| Atlanta. | 160.6 | 190.7 | 165.9 |
| Birmingham. | 83.9 | 97.8 | 98.3 |
| Chattanooga. | 76.2 | 84.6 | 81.9 |
| Nashville.... | 78.3 85.9 | 94.9 89.5 | 88.2 |
| RETAIL SALES*-Adjusted |  |  |  |
| DISTRICT (28 firms). | 104.3 | 106.0 | 110.9 |
| Atlanta... | 184.6 | 181.6 | 190.7 |
| Birmingham. | 90.2 | 96.8 | 105.7 |
| Chattanooga | 68.6 | 82.1 | 73.8 |
| Nashville. | 85.1 | 85.5 | 87.2 |
| New Orleans. | 96.5 | 92.3 | 98.9 |
| RETAIL STOCKS-Unadjusted |  |  |  |
| DISTRICT ( 24 firms). | 63.7 | 69.9 | 69.3 |
| Atlanta. | 98.4 | 109.2 | 109.6 |
| Birmingham. | 65.9 | 71.2 | 67.7 |
| Chattanooga | 56.5 | 61.9 | 57.4 |
| Nashville. | 46.8 | 52.9 | 57.5 |
| New Orleans | 56.5 | 61.2 | 58.8 |
| RETAIL STOCKS--Adjusted |  |  |  |
| DISTRICT ( 24 firms). | 67.1 | 68.5 | 72.9 |
| Atlanta. | 102.5 | 108.1 | 114.2 |
| Birmingham. | 66.6 | 69.8 | 68.4 |
| Chattanooga | 58.9 | 60.7 | 59.8 |
| Nashville. | 48.2 | 52.4 | 59.3 |
| New Orleans | 60.1 | 60.6 | 62.6 |
| WHOLESALE SALES-Total. | 66.2 | 65.2 | 81.6 |
| Groceries. | 51.1 | 49.5 | 57.1 |
| Dry Goods. | 41.4 | 46.0 | 51.1 |
| Hardware. | 73.2 | 73.0 | 89.9 |
| Furniture. | 71.8 | 61.7 | 79.2 |
| Drugs. | 99.9 | 97.4 | 105.0 |
| CONTRACTS AWARDED-DISTRICT. | 52.0 | 57.4 | 60.7 |
| Residential. | 52.4 | 54.4 | 59.7 |
| All Others. | 51.7 | 59.5 | 61.4 |
| Alabama. | 37.7 | 51.5 | 43.4 |
| Florida. | 40.0 | 35.1 | 62.5 |
| Georgia. | 53.6 | 78.2 | 31.3 |
| Louisiona | 46.1 | 65.7 | 105.4 |
| Mississippi | 106.1 | 206.0 | 116.9 |
| Tennessee. | 90.8 | 63.6 | 58.1 |
| BUILDING PERMITS-20 Cities. | 44.8 | 39.5 | 52.8 |
| Atlanta. | 22.1 | 20.1 | 40.3 |
| Birmingham. | 24.4 | 13.2 | 15.4 |
| Jacksonville | 70.8 | 71.3 | 46.5 |
| Nashville. | 12.1 | 29.7 | 24.0 |
| New Orleans | 36.4 | 36.5 | 39.4 |
| 15 Other Cities | 58.5 | 49.3 | 74.0 |
| PIG IRON PRODUCTION-ALABAMA*. | 40.5 | 50.1 | 91.1 |
| COTTON CONSUMPTION-3 STATES* | 111.1 | 108.6 | 183.8 |
| Alabama. | 117.7 | 131.4 | 222.2 |
| Georgia. | 105.7 | 97.8 | 171.0 |
| Tennessee | 131.1 | 114.8 | 151.8 |
|  | May 1938 | April 1938 | May 1937 |
| EMPLOYMENT-(Av. for 1932=100) |  |  |  |
| Alabama. | 125.9 | 129.0 | 150.8 |
| Florida. | 103.8 | 117.0 | 109.0 |
| Georgia. | 129.8 | 132.2 | 152.3 |
| Louisiana. | 118.3 | 120.0 | 125.2 |
| Mississippi. | 96.5 | 103.0 | 115.9 |
| Tennessee. | 117.1 | 117.8 | 142.7 |
| Six States | 120.9 | 124.5 | 140.9 |
| PAYROLLS-(Av. for 1932=100) |  |  |  |
| Alabama. | 179.1 | 183.3 | 230.4 |
| Florida. | 85.0 | 92.4 | 89.5 |
| Georgia. | 152.5 | 153.6 | 204.4 |
| Louisiana. | 149.0 | 147.8 | 153.6 |
| Mississippi. | 121.5 | 124.6 | 160.3 |
| Tennessee. | 140.0 | 140.3 | 186.2 |
| Six States. | 150.6 | 153.2 | 186.3 |
| EEECTRIC POWER PRODUCTION* |  |  |  |
| Alabama. | 316.3 | 303.1 | 300.8 |
| Florida. | 394.5 | 423.2 | 347.9 |
| Georgia.. | 183.2 | 196.6 | 246.9 |
| Louisiana. | 515.4 | 439.1 | 501.7 |
| Mississippi | 92.3 | 91.9 | 78.5 |
| Tennessee. | 177.1 | 174.8 | 164.9 |
| Six States. | 271.2 | 265.0 | 273.9 |
| By Water Power | 307.9 | 315.0 | 334.0 |
| BY Fuels................. | 230.6 | 209.7 | 207.2 |

*Indexes of retail sales, electric power and pig iron production and of cotton consumption are on a daily average basis.


Index of physical volume of production, adjusted for seasonal variation, $1923-1925$ average $=100$. By months January, 1934, to June, 1988.


Index compiled by U. G. Bureau of Labor Statistics, $1926=100$. By weeks, 1934, to week ending June 16, 1988.


Indexes of value of sales, 1928-1925 average $=100$. By months, January, 1934, to June, 1988.

EXCESS RESERVES OF MEMBER BANKS


Wednesday figures of estimated excess reserves for all member banks and for selected New York City banks, member banks and for selected 19,1934 , to July 18, 1938 .

## National Summary of Business Conditions

Prepared by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Gystem

INDUSTRIAL activity showed little change in June and increased in the first three weeks of July, although there is usually a considerable decline at this season. Prices of most staple commodities advanced sharply in the latter part of June and early July and there were substantial increases in prices of stocks and lower grade bonds.

## Production

Volume of industrial production, as measured by the Board's seasonally adjusted index, was at 77 per cent of the 1923-1925 average in June as compared with 76 in May and an average of 79 in the first quarter of the year. Available data indicate that in July the index will show a considerable rise.

In June activity in the textile industry increased, reflecting chiefly a further rise at woolen mills. Output of cotton and silk mills, which usually declines at this season, showed little change. Shoe production declined, following a considerable increase earlier in the year.

Automobile output decreased further in June. Sales of new cars continued in excess of production, however, and stocks were further reduced. Steel production declined seasonally in June, and lumber production showed little change, although some increase is usual. Output of plate glass rose sharply from an exceptionally low level. Coal production remained in small volume in June, while output of crude petroleum, which had been sharply reduced in May, declined somewhat further.

In the first three weeks of July activity at steel mills increased, although there is usually a decline in that period, and in the third week of the month ingot production was estimated at 36 per cent of capacity as compared with an average rate of 28 per cent in June. Crude petroleum output also rose sharply, reflecting chiefly a return to production on a six-day week basis in Texas. Automobile production declined seasonally.

Value of construction contracts awarded, as reported by The F. W. Dodge Corporation, showed a decline in June, following a considerable increase in May. Changes in both months reflected chiefly fluctuations in awards for publicly-financed construction. Awards for private residential building were maintained in June at about the same daily rate as in May, although there is usually some decline at this season, and were in slightly larger volume than a year ago. Other private construction work remained at recent low levels.

## Employment

Factory employment and payrolls decreased further from the middle of May to the middle of June. Employment in the automobile, steel, machinery, and clothing industries continued to decline, while at woolen mills there was an increase and in most other manufacturing lines changes were small. In trade employment was reduced, while in other non-manufacturing industries changes in the number employed were largely seasonal.

Agriculture
A total wheat crop of $967,000,000$ bushels was indicated by July 1 conditions, according to the Department of Agriculture. A crop of this size would be considerably larger than average and a Government program was announced for loans at close to current market prices. Cotton acreage on July 1 was esimated at $\mathbf{2 6 , 9 0 0 , 0 0 0}$ acres as compared with $34,500,000$ acres last year when, with exceptionally high yield per acre, a record crop was harvested. Production estimates for most other major crops were slightly under the large harvests of last season.

## Distribution

Distribution of commodities to consumers was maintained in June at about the May level, although a decline is usual at this season. Sales at department and variety stores showed little change and mail order sales increased. In the first half of July department store sales decreased less than seasonally. Freight-car loadings showed little change from May to June and were slightly above the low level of April.

## Commodity Prices

Prices of industrial materials, particularly rubber, hides, non-ferous metals, and steel scrap, showed advances from the middle of June to the third week in July, and there were also increases in prices of livestock and products. Wheat prices declined, following a rise early in June. Prices of iron and steel were reduced and there were also declines in some other industrial products.

## Bank Credit

Excess reserves of member banks increased substantially in June and the first half of July, rising to above $\$ 3,000,000,000$, as compared with $\$ 1,730,000,000$ just prior to the reduction in reserve requirements the middle of April. The largest gain in excess reserves occurred at city banks through the retirement of Treasury Bills and the continued growth of bankers' balances.

Total loans and investments of reporting member banks in 101 leading cities, which had increased sharply in the first week of June, declined during the remainder of June, reflecting largely redemption of Treasury Bills held by New York City banks and a decrease in loans to security brokers and dealers. During the first three weeks of July total loans and investments at reporting banks showed little net change.

## Money Rates

Rates on Treasury Bills and Notes were slightly firmer in July but continued at exceedingly low levels. Yields on Treasury Bonds showed little change.

