

# MONTHLY REVIEW

## of Credit and Business Conditions

### Second Federal Reserve District

Federal Reserve Agent

Federal Reserve Bank, New York

June 1, 1924

#### Business Conditions in the United States

**F**ACTORY employment and production of basic commodities declined in April and there was a further recession in wholesale prices. Retail trade was larger than in March, chiefly because of Easter buying, and was at about the level of earlier months of the year. There was a decrease in the volume of borrowing for commercial purposes and further easing of money rates.

#### PRODUCTION

The Federal Reserve Board's index of production in basic industries, adjusted to allow for seasonal variations, declined 2 per cent. in April. Declines were particularly large in the iron and steel, coal, and woolen industries. Mill consumption of cotton, on the other hand, showed less than the usual seasonal reduction between March and April. Factory employment declined 2 per cent. in April, owing chiefly to large reduction of forces at textile and clothing establishments. Contract awards for new buildings reached a higher value than in March and were also larger than a year ago; value of building permits granted, however, declined and was smaller than in the corresponding month of 1923.

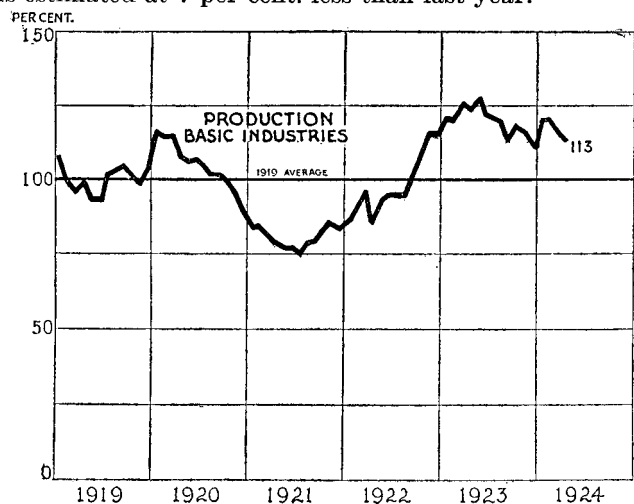
Department of Agriculture estimates on May 1 of the yield of winter wheat and rye are somewhat above the forecasts made in April. The acreage of winter wheat is estimated at 7 per cent. less than last year.

#### TRADE

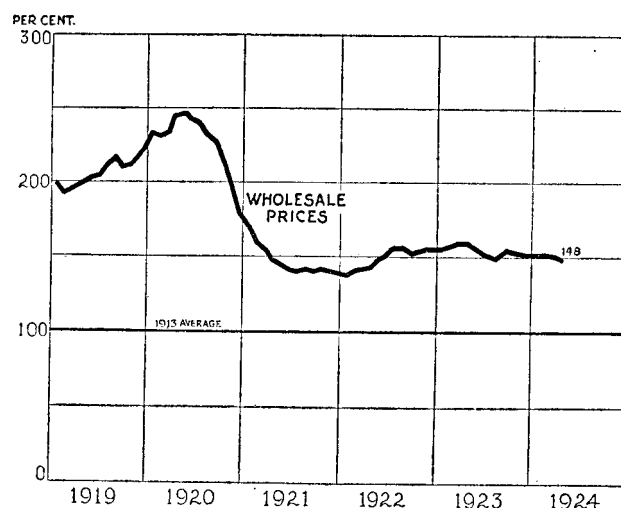
Railroad shipments, which since the middle of March have been smaller than last year, were 3 per cent. less in April than a year ago. Shipments of coal were much below last year, while loadings of merchandise and miscellaneous freight were higher. Wholesale trade in April was in about the same volume as during the preceding month and as in April 1923. Sales of dry goods and hardware were smaller than a year ago, while sales of drugs and shoes showed some increases. Department store sales were considerably larger in April than in March, partly owing to the unusually late Easter; total sales for the two months were 2 per cent. greater than in the corresponding period of 1923. Merchandise stocks at department stores showed less than the usual seasonal increase in April, but were at a higher level than a year ago.

#### PRICES

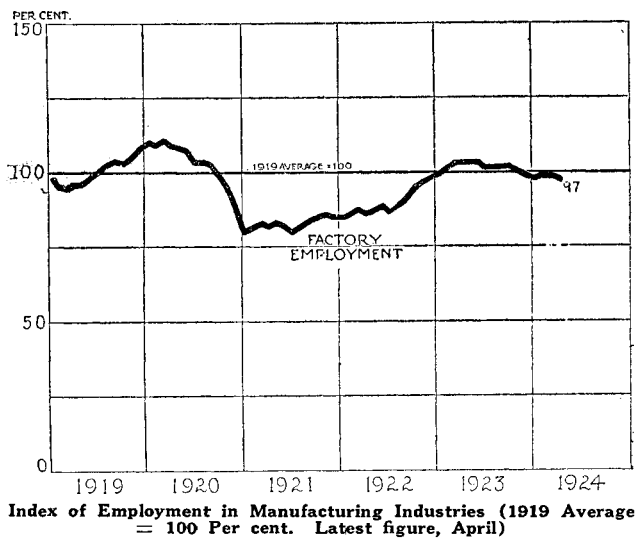
Wholesale prices, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics index, declined 1 per cent. during April and reached the lowest point since May 1922. Farm products, however, advanced 2 per cent. in April. Metals and foods showed substantial reductions; prices of clothing, fuel, and chemicals also declined; while prices of building materials and house furnishings remained unchanged. During the first half of May quotations on cotton, wheat, flour, and hogs increased, while prices of sugar, silk, wool, and metals declined.



Index of 22 Basic Commodities corrected for seasonal variation (1919 = 100 Per cent. Latest figure, April)



Index of U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1913 = 100 Per cent. base adopted by Bureau. Latest figure, April)



**BANK CREDIT**

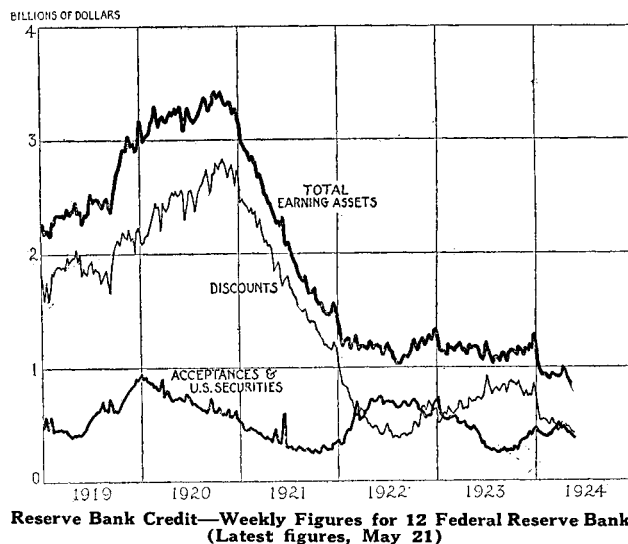
During the five week period ending May 14, the volume of borrowing for commercial purposes at member banks in leading cities declined somewhat from the high level reached early in April. There were increases, however, in loans on stocks and bonds and in investments in securities; so that the total of all loans and investments at the middle of May was higher than a month previous, and in larger volume than at any time in more than three years.

Volume of borrowing by member banks at Federal Reserve Banks declined further during the last week of April and in May, while holdings of securities bought in the open market increased slightly. Total earning assets declined to \$795,000,000 on May 21, the lowest figure since the autumn of 1917.

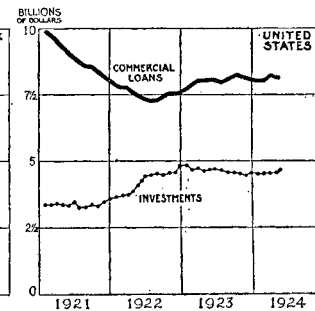
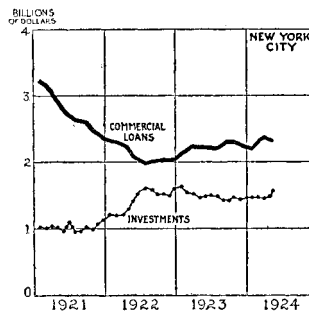
Further easing of money conditions during the last week of April and the first three weeks of May was reflected in a continued rise of the prices of Government securities, in a reduction from 4½ to 4¼ per cent. in the rate for prime commercial paper, and a decline in the rate for bankers acceptances from 4 to 3 per cent. On May 1, the discount rate of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York was reduced from 4½ to 4 per cent.

**Banking Conditions in the Second District**

Between the middle of April and the middle of May there was a further moderate reduction in the volume of commercial borrowing at banks in this district. On May 14, commercial loans of member banks in principal cities were approximately \$50,000,000 below the March high point, thereby canceling about one-third of the previous rise since January 1. More than offsetting the decrease in commercial loans, however, was a further increase during the month of \$70,000,000 in security investments to the highest point since February 1923. As a result chiefly of these changes, the total of all loans and investments was the largest in more than a year.



The accompanying diagram shows the recent movements of commercial loans and of investments of reporting banks in New York City and throughout the United States.



Loans Largely for Commercial Purposes and Total Investments of Reporting Member Banks in New York City (Latest figures, May 14)

Loans Largely for Commercial Purposes and Total Investments of Reporting Member Banks in the United States (Latest figures, May 14)

Deposits also increased during the month, and in the last week of April and first two weeks of May reached levels slightly higher than ever before. Net demand deposits were the largest since January 1923, and time deposits reached a new high point.

The volume of credit extended by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York was smaller in May than in April. A reduction in the volume of bills discounted, and a decrease practically to zero in bills purchased, were only partly offset by an increase in holdings of Government securities.

**Money Rates**

Seasonal slackening in the commercial demand for credit, continued large imports of gold, and reduced activity in certain lines of business were accompanied

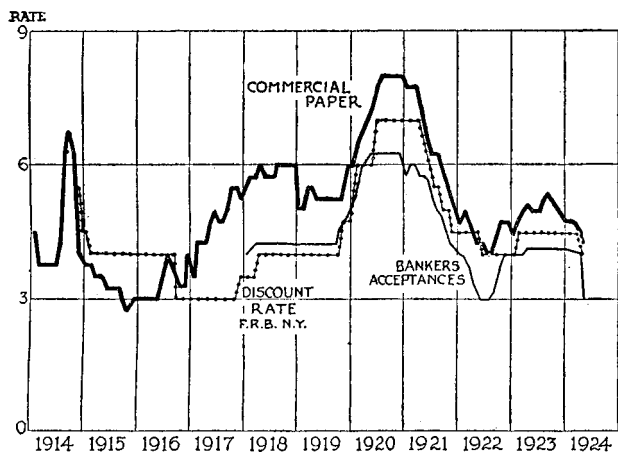
in May by a general decline in money rates to the lowest levels since 1922.

The open market rate for prime commercial paper declined from 4½ to 4¼ per cent., and in a few cases sales were made at 4 per cent. While there was a continued good demand for paper, the supply was more limited, and the outstanding paper of the 26 reporting dealers declined \$19,000,000 in April to \$883,000,000.

Easier money conditions were reflected also by marked reductions in open market rates for Government securities and bankers acceptances. Yields on short term Treasury issues were reduced by ½ to ¾ of 1 per cent. between April and May, while the offering rate for 90-day bankers bills declined from 4 to 3 per cent. Dealers' portfolios of bills continued to be reduced and reached totals less than half as large as at the February high point.

In the Stock Exchange money market time loans declined ½ of 1 per cent. to 3¾-4 per cent., the lowest since July 1922. Call loan renewals ruled at 3½ per cent. during the first part of the month, but under pressure of large accumulations of funds declined later to 3 per cent.

The following diagram shows by months the course of open market money rates since 1914 and the rediscount rate of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York on commercial paper.



Open Market Rates for Prime Commercial Paper and Bankers Acceptances, and Discount Rate of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York

### Security Markets

The marked ease in money conditions that developed in May was accompanied by further strength in the bond market. The upward tendency was strongest in the United States Government group, and Liberty 3rd 4¼s at 101 2/32s and Treasury 4¼s at 102 22/32s reached the highest prices since issuance, while the other 4¼ issues were within half a point of the 1922 high prices. The general bond market was also firm, and high grade railroad bonds particularly strong. Foreign issues generally held steady, despite the unsettlement in exchange rates.

While new security issues were in good demand, the volume offered in the open market was only moderate. The largest issue of the period was a \$40,000,000 6 per cent. loan of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, at a price to yield 6.10 per cent. On May 20 the American Telephone and Telegraph Company announced a prospective offering of \$150,000,000 capital stock to stockholders at par.

Stock prices declined early in May, in some cases to new low points for the year, but thereafter became slightly firmer. On May 26 the Standard Statistics Company's index of 202 industrials stood about 1½ points above the lowest point for the year, and 9 points below the high level reached in February. Railroad stocks continued firm and in some instances reached new high prices for the year.

### Foreign Shipments of United States Currency

Reports for April from 14 banks in this city which are the principal shippers of United States currency to foreign countries show for the first time since last August an excess of receipts of currency from abroad over shipments. Prior to March this year shipments had been increasing rapidly, but beginning in that month there was a marked decrease, due chiefly to a decline in shipments to central Europe and countries bordering on Russia. In April there was also an increase in receipts, particularly from Germany. It seems possible that these changes in the movements of currency reflect efforts towards the establishment of stable currencies in Russia and Germany. The following table gives the figures by months from May 1923 through April 1924.

Month	Shipments	Receipts	Net Shipments	Net Receipts
1923				
May.....	\$ 3,916,000	\$ 2,341,000	\$ 1,575,000	—
June.....	2,473,000	2,568,000	—	\$ 95,000
July.....	3,051,000	2,824,000	227,000	—
Aug.....	1,684,000	6,161,000	—	4,477,000
Sept.....	7,842,000	3,723,000	4,119,000	—
Oct.....	3,095,000	2,109,000	986,000	—
Nov.....	3,195,000	1,821,000	1,374,000	—
Dec.....	3,825,000	933,000	2,892,000	—
1924				
Jan.....	5,694,000	1,374,000	4,320,000	—
Feb.....	6,989,000	1,463,000	5,526,000	—
Mar.....	2,095,000	2,074,000	21,000	—
Apr.....	940,000	2,601,000	—	1,661,000
Total.....	\$44,799,000	\$29,992,000	\$21,040,000	\$6,233,000

In addition to direct shipments banks in this district in the past twelve months forwarded \$30,295,000 to Cuba by wire transfer through the Federal Reserve System, including both the Boston and Atlanta Reserve Banks. Of this amount \$15,350,000 was forwarded during the first four months of this year.

### Foreign Exchange

Uncertainty as to the effect of the German and French elections on the adoption of the recommendations of the Committee of Experts to the Reparations Commissions, coupled with the unusual rapidity of the April advance, were among the factors in a reaction in

the leading European exchanges in May. At 5.40 cents and 4.63 cents on May 24, French and Belgian francs showed a loss of more than a third of the recovery of April. Sterling was likewise under pressure, and declined from \$4.40 to \$4.34.

The principal changes in other European exchanges included a reaction in Spanish pesetas from their recent high level, and a further advance in Swedish kronor to 26.57 cents, a new high level for the year. By resumption of specie payments on April 1 Sweden becomes the first European nation to return to a gold basis.

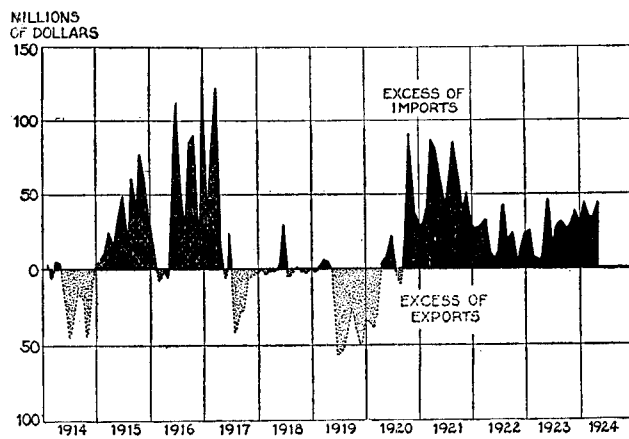
Following a substantial decrease in the excess of imports in April, Japanese yen recovered to 40 $\frac{1}{4}$  cents on May 22, or approximately 2 cents above the low figure reached in April under the influence of the large import trade balances of February and March.

### Gold Movement

Gold imports in April totaled \$45,400,000, of which \$21,000,000 came from the Netherlands and \$14,000,000 from England. Exports, which were chiefly to Venezuela, Mexico, and Spain, totaled \$1,400,000, and the excess of imports was \$44,000,000.

For the first four months of this year the excess of imports of gold amounted to \$156,994,000, compared with \$45,424,000 in the corresponding period of 1923. The accompanying diagram shows the net movement of gold by months from 1914 through April 1924. Since the export movement of 1919-1920 came to a close the total excess of imports of gold has amounted to \$1,534,000,000, and since 1914 the excess has been \$2,147,000,000.

About half of the large gold imports during 1923 and thus far in 1924 have been from England, and have approximated payments on the British Government debt to this country.



United States Net Imports and Exports of Gold  
(Latest figure, April)

### Foreign Trade

The value of both exports and imports of merchandise was slightly larger in April than in March. Exports totaling \$348,000,000 were also \$23,000,000 larger than

in April last year, while imports at \$324,000,000 were considerably smaller than a year ago. As a result, there was a favorable trade balance of \$24,000,000 this year, compared with an import balance of nearly \$40,000,000 in April 1923.

The increase in exports in April was due partly to a small increase in exports of manufactured goods ready for consumption. Cotton exports continued to show a seasonal decline, and there were decreases in shipments of other raw materials such as coal, meats, and grains. Factors in the slightly larger imports were an increased movement of silk, and the largest receipts of rubber ever reported.

During the first four months of this year the total excess of exports was \$176,000,000, compared with an import excess of \$86,000,000 during the corresponding period of last year. In large part, this reversal of the trade balance reflects an increase of 16 per cent. in the quantity and 42 per cent. in the value of cotton shipments during the present cotton marketing year as compared with last year.

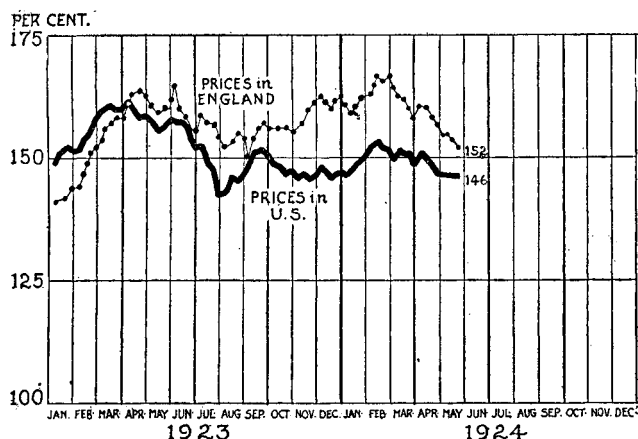
### Prices

By a further decline of 1.3 per cent. in April to 148 per cent. of the 1913 average, the Bureau of Labor Statistics index for wholesale prices reached the lowest level since May 1922, 7 per cent. below the high point of last year, reached in March and April. Foods and metals contributed chiefly to the decline from the March figure but all other groups were either unchanged or lower, except farm products, which advanced slightly. The accompanying table indicates the recent price tendencies in the various groups of the index, and the changes that have occurred over a year's time.

Commodity group	April Index	Per cent. change from	
		March 1924	April 1923
Farm products . . . . .	139	+ 1.4	- 1.4
Foods . . . . .	137	- 2.8	- 4.9
Cloths and clothing . . . . .	189	- 1.0	- 7.8
Fuel and lighting . . . . .	179	- 1.1	-10.5
Metals . . . . .	139	- 3.5	- 9.7
Building materials . . . . .	182	0.0	-10.8
Chemicals . . . . .	128	- 1.5	- 5.9
House furnishings . . . . .	175	0.0	- 6.4
Miscellaneous . . . . .	113	0.0	-10.4
All commodities . . . . .	148	- 1.3	- 6.9

During the greater part of May, this bank's weekly price index of 20 basic commodities was practically stationary. Cotton rose sharply to around 32 $\frac{3}{4}$  cents a pound, and there was also a recovery in hides, while wheat, corn, and hogs were comparatively steady. Sugar, on the other hand, at 7 cents a pound was 2 cents below the February high point of this year, and the lowest since February 1923, and silk prices reached new low points since 1921. Rubber touched the lowest price since October 1922, and there were declines also in wool, lumber and the metals. The accompanying diagram shows by weeks the recent movement of this

bank's index and compares with it a similar index of 20 basic commodities in Great Britain.



Price Indexes of 20 Basic Commodities in the United States and England (1913 = 100 Per cent.)

### Building

Building permits issued during April in 158 selected cities throughout the country were 29 per cent. smaller than in March, and about 10 per cent. smaller than in April a year ago. The decline from March was due chiefly to a large decrease in New York City, where the March figures had been greatly increased by uncertainty whether there would be continued tax exemption on residential construction. Figures for building contracts actually awarded, published by the F. W. Dodge Corporation, showed only a slight decrease in the New York district in April, and for all reporting districts were larger than ever before.

Reflecting the movement of permits, this bank's index of building construction, with allowance for seasonal variation and changes in costs of construction, declined sharply in April but was 30 per cent. above normal as determined by the trend of past years. For the first four months of this year the index averaged 73 per cent. above the computed trend, due in considerable part to the heavy building in New York City. The following table compares the dollar figures for permits granted in the five boroughs of New York with those of all other selected cities and indicates the extent to which the New York figures have affected the aggregate building totals.

Borough	Value of Building Permits in thousands of dollars		
	Jan.-April 1923	Jan.-April 1924	Change
Manhattan.....	\$ 61,345	\$100,371	+\$39,026
Bronx.....	75,172	76,608	+ 1,436
Brooklyn.....	100,934	140,974	+ 40,040
Queens.....	74,753	100,983	+ 26,230
Richmond.....	6,055	8,805	+ 2,750
New York City.....	318,259	427,741	+109,482
Other selected cities.....	787,075	764,096	- 22,979
Total, 158 selected cities.....	\$1,105,334	\$1,191,837	+\$86,503

Despite the large increase in building in New York City during the past year there appears to be no shortage of funds for high grade building loans. Evidence of this is found in the fact that, while mortgage investments of savings banks in New York City and other sections of the State increased substantially in 1923, as shown by the table below, prepared by the New York State Savings Banks Association, they were except in the Buffalo district, still considerably below the statutory limit for such investments, which is 70 per cent. of their total resources.

District	Mortgage Investments of Savings Banks			
	Amount (000 Omitted)		Per cent. of Total Resources	
	Jan. 1, 1923	Jan. 1, 1924	Jan. 1, 1923	Jan. 1, 1924
Buffalo.....	\$ 155,967	\$ 171,062	58.3	69.7
Syracuse.....	94,114	103,400	56.1	58.5
Albany.....	146,612	173,500	52.0	56.7
Manhattan and Bronx..	815,958	917,148	47.0	48.4
Brooklyn, Queens, and Richmond.....	402,168	474,878	53.2	57.0
Total, New York State	\$1,614,819	\$1,839,988	50.4	53.0

Reports in May from several of the larger savings banks located in Brooklyn, where building has been particularly heavy this year, indicate an increase in the percentage of mortgage investments from 57 per cent. at the first of the year to approximately 60 per cent., still leaving, therefore, a substantial margin before reaching the legal limitations.

### Production

The decline during April in the Federal Reserve Board's composite index of basic production, noted on the first page, accompanied recessions in a majority of this bank's indexes of production in individual lines.

Production of pig iron declined 6.6 per cent. from the high rate reached in March, but was approximately at normal, as determined by the trend of past years. The reduction in active blast furnaces, however, was particularly large in the latter part of the month, and further shut-downs were reported in May. Steel production continued to decline and by the third week in May was estimated at 60 per cent. of capacity, or one-third below the high rate reached early in March. Unfilled orders of the United States Steel Corporation declined 574,360 tons during April to the lowest tonnage since February 1922.

Following a prolonged decline since early in January, mining of bituminous coal increased slightly late in April and early in May, but was lower than in any corresponding period for which records are available, except the strike period of 1922. Anthracite output also declined more than usual in April but increased substantially early in May.

Mill consumption of cotton was only slightly smaller than in March, and this bank's index, which allows for seasonal variation, remained at 82 per cent. of the computed trend. Woolen mill activity, however, declined

further and production of zinc and leather also continued below the computed trend.

The output of passenger automobiles was slightly smaller than in March or in April last year, but still far above the computed trend. Truck output was 6 per cent. larger than in March and 3.8 per cent. smaller than in April last year. Increases occurred during April in indexes showing output of packing houses, paper mills, and boot and shoe factories.

The following table gives this bank's indexes of production in recent months and in April a year ago, in terms of the computed trend, with allowance made for usual seasonal variations.

(Computed trend of past years=100 Per cent.)

	1923	1924			
		Apr.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
<i>Producers' Goods</i>					
Pig iron.....	114	105	105	101	
Steel ingots.....	115	116	115	96	
Bituminous coal.....	117	113	89	81	
Copper, U. S. mines.....	89	110	96	99p	
Tin deliveries.....	132	151	73	143	
Zinc*.....	82	72	78	73	
Petroleum.....	134	134	124	...	
Gas and fuel oil.....	106	111	111p	...	
Cotton consumption.....	101	95	82	82	
Woolen mill activity*.....	120	96	95	86p	
Cement.....	134	167	151	136	
Lumber.....	119	145	129	...	
Leather, sole.....	103	84	75	71	
<i>Consumers' Goods</i>					
Cattle slaughtered.....	109	105	100	106	
Calves slaughtered.....	115	148	119	130	
Sheep slaughtered.....	101	92	88	89	
Hogs slaughtered.....	132	118	123	126	
Sugar meltings, U. S. ports.....	122	123	121	117	
Wheat flour.....	110	119	122	117	
Cigars.....	84	87	81	77	
Cigarettes.....	88	79	79	85	
Tobacco.....	99	106	96	97	
Gasoline.....	115	130	130p	...	
Tires*.....	159	149	156	...	
Newsprint.....	104	115	106	114	
Paper, total.....	109	107	100	107	
Boots and shoes.....	118	94r	91	112p	
Anthracite coal.....	102	109	96	85	
Automobile, all.....	138	151	131	125	
Automobile, passenger.....	142	155	138	131	
Automobile, truck.....	120	137	101	102	

\*=Seasonal variation not allowed for.  
p=Preliminary.  
r=Revised.

## Indexes of Business Activity

Indexes of trade and general business activity were generally higher in April than in March. Loadings of revenue freight in April and the first 10 days of May continued substantially lower than a year ago, due chiefly to smaller shipments of coal, but remained considerably above the totals for the corresponding period in any previous year. Merchandise and less than car-load shipments averaged in May about 3 per cent. higher than last year.

Available indexes of distribution to the consumer were nearly all higher in April than in March, but in the cases of department store and chain store sales were below normal as measured by the trend of past years. Mail order sales, on the other hand, were above the computed trend.

There were also advances in April in indexes of bank debits, particularly those outside New York City, and in

postal receipts. The indexes of building permits and factory employment, however, declined, and there was an increase in the proportion of firms failing to the number in business.

(Computed trend of past years=100 Per cent.)

	1923 April	1924		
		Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
<i>Primary Distribution</i>				
Car loadings, mdse. and misc.....	114	111	108	110p
Car loadings, other.....	125	119	113	102
Wholesale trade, Second District.....	102	111	97	97
Exports.....	82	95	84	90
Imports.....	122	117	102	112
Grain exports.....	107	64	73	75
Panama Canal traffic.....	157	147	138	129
<i>Distribution to Consumer</i>				
*Department store sales, Second District.....	98	99	90	95
*Chain store sales.....	96	101	96	97
Mail order sales.....	100	95	85	105
Life insurance paid for.....	103	96	103	112
Amusement receipts.....	95	107	104	113
Magazine advertising.....	99	98	91	102
Newspaper advertising.....	103	102	96	95
<i>General Business Activity</i>				
Bank debits, outside New York City.....	111	109	102	107
"    New York City.....	104	118	104	105
Postal receipts.....	99	104	96	102
Electric power.....	109	114	109	...
Employment, N. Y. State factories.....	104	99	99	97
Building permits.....	144	201	196	130
Business failures.....	97	94	104	108

\*=Allowance made for late Easter.  
p=Preliminary.

## Employment and Wages

A general decline in factory employment in April was indicated by reports from the United States and the New York State Labor Departments. Following unusually small spring advances this year, reductions of 2.1 per cent. for the United States, and 3.2 per cent. for New York State, brought the total numbers on the factory pay rolls to the lowest since the fall of 1922. Except for small seasonal increases, the decline has been continuous during the past year and in this State has amounted to approximately 7 per cent. since April 1923.

The following table, comparing the changes in factory employment by industries in New York State, indicates that decreases in April, both as compared with the previous month and with April 1923, were in large part in the textile, clothing, leather, and metal industries. Notwithstanding these declines, however, employment offices report the existence of no large amount of unemployment, due to the opening of the season for building, road construction, and farm work.

(June 1914=100 Per cent.)

	April 1924	Per cent. change from March	Per cent. change from April 1923
Stone, clay, and glass.....	104	+0.3	-1.8
Metal products.....	126	-3.1	-7.9
Wood manufactures.....	105	-1.7	-1.3
Furs, leather, and rubber.....	113	-3.8	-5.6
Chemicals, oils, etc.....	107	-0.4	-3.1
Paper.....	103	+0.2	-10.1
Printing and paper goods.....	96	-2.9	-5.6
Textiles.....	89	-5.1	-11.9
Clothing and laundering.....	81	-5.1	-12.0
Foods and tobacco.....	91	-3.6	-2.6
All industries.....	104	-3.2	-7.3

The general level of wages remained little changed during April and early May, although occasional instances of wage reductions occurred, particularly in the textile and metal industries. Reflecting partly the decrease in employment, the average weekly earnings of factory workers in New York State were slightly lower in April than in March. Compared with April a year ago, however, earnings showed an increase of 2.6 per cent.

### Wholesale Trade

This bank's index for April of the sales of 163 wholesale dealers in 11 principal lines, corrected for seasonal variation and price changes, was for the second month 3 per cent. below normal, as determined by the trend of past years.

The chief increases in dollar sales over corresponding figures for April last year occurred in women's coats and suits, and shoes. There were increases also, however, in the sales of men's clothing, silk goods, stationery, and drugs, while sales of groceries were equal to those of the year previous. Hardware sales, on the other hand, after showing increases over the year previous for many months, were 4 per cent. below those of last April. Cotton goods sales continued slow, while lessened activity in metal working industries was reflected in a larger reduction in machine tool sales.

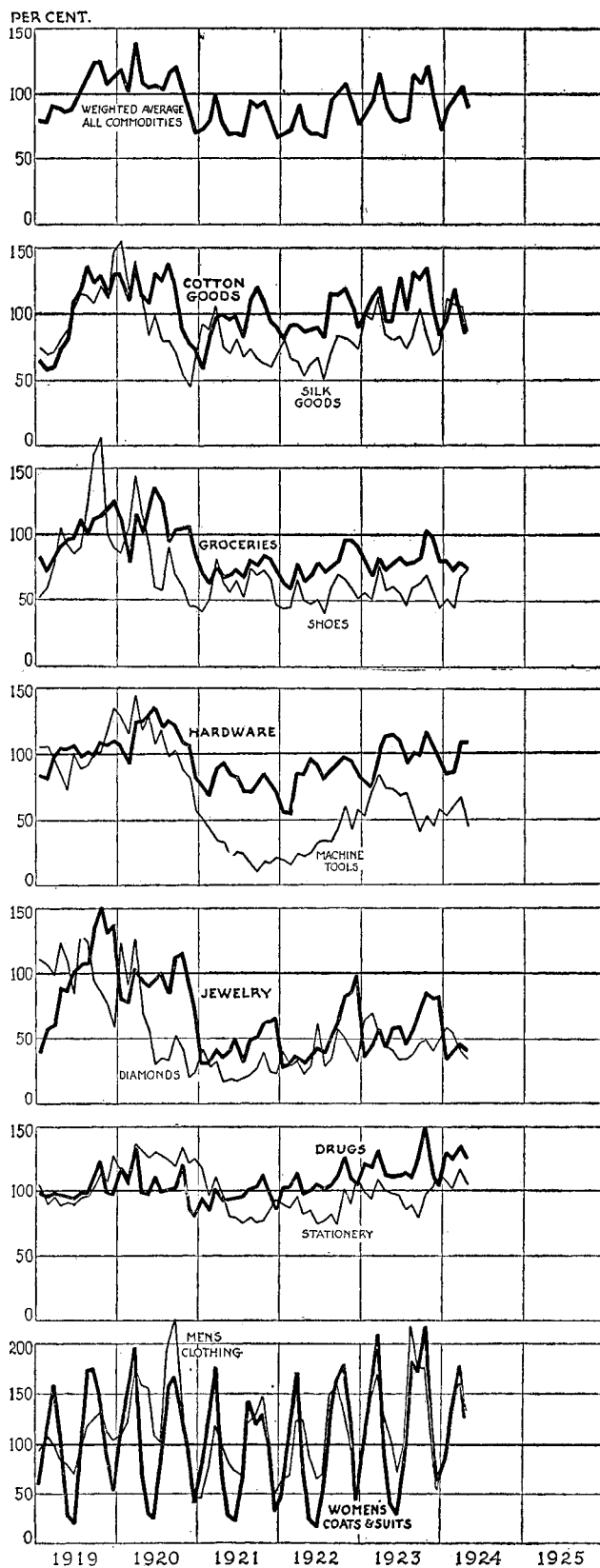
Comparisons between April sales for the past five years appear in the following table, while the accompanying diagram shows the movement of sales in different lines by months since 1919. In this diagram no allowance has been made for seasonal changes or year to year growth.

Commodity	Dollar Value of April Sales (April 1923=100 Per cent.)				
	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924
Shoes.....	196	108	86	100	126
Drugs.....	87	83	87	100	112
Stationery.....	131	97	82	100	105
Clothing.....	95	73	82	100	104
(a) Men's.....	124	75	97	100	104
(b) Women's dresses.....	74	69	60	100	73
(c) Women's coats and suits.....	76	74	82	100	136
Groceries.....	137	92	87	100	100
Dry Goods.....	130	98	79	100	97
(a) Cotton.....	124	107	93	100	91
(b) Silk.....	137	89	64	100	102
Hardware.....	112	82	76	100	96
Jewelry.....	215	82	69	100	95
Diamonds.....	158	40	52	100	77
Machine Tools.....	161	45	30	100	60
Weighted average.....	123	87	82	100	101

### Department Store Business

Department store sales in this district in April were 11 per cent. larger than a year previous, due largely to delayed Easter buying this year. For the months of March and April combined sales were 3 per cent. larger than last year, which is less than the usual year to year growth.

The increase in April sales over a year ago was largest in wearing apparel, which is most affected by the date of Easter. Sales of furniture and home furnishings



Monthly Sales of Representative Wholesale Dealers in the Second Federal Reserve District  
(Average Sales in 1919 = 100 Per cent.)

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have been most consistently above those for a year previous. April sales in the major divisions of department store trade compared with a year ago are shown in the following table.

	Per cent. Change in Sales over April 1923	Per cent. Sales of each Dept. to Sales of all Departments
Men's and boys' wear	+34.1	7.7
Women's and misses' ready-to-wear	+22.2	15.5
Women's ready-to-wear accessories	+18.7	17.0
Shoes	+18.7	3.9
Hosiery	+18.5	3.5
Home furnishings	+3.6	13.5
Woolen goods	+2.8	1.6
Furniture	+2.3	5.6
Cotton goods	-2.9	3.3
Silk goods	-7.6	4.8
Miscellaneous	+11.8	23.6

Stocks of goods on hand May 1 were 5 per cent. higher than a year previous for the fourth consecutive month. The average sale in April was \$2.93 as compared with \$2.58 in March and \$2.87 in April 1923.

Mail order sales were 10 per cent. higher than a year ago, whereas in March they were 7 per cent. lower. After allowing for the usual seasonal variation and price changes, mail order sales were above the computed trend for the first time since June 1923.

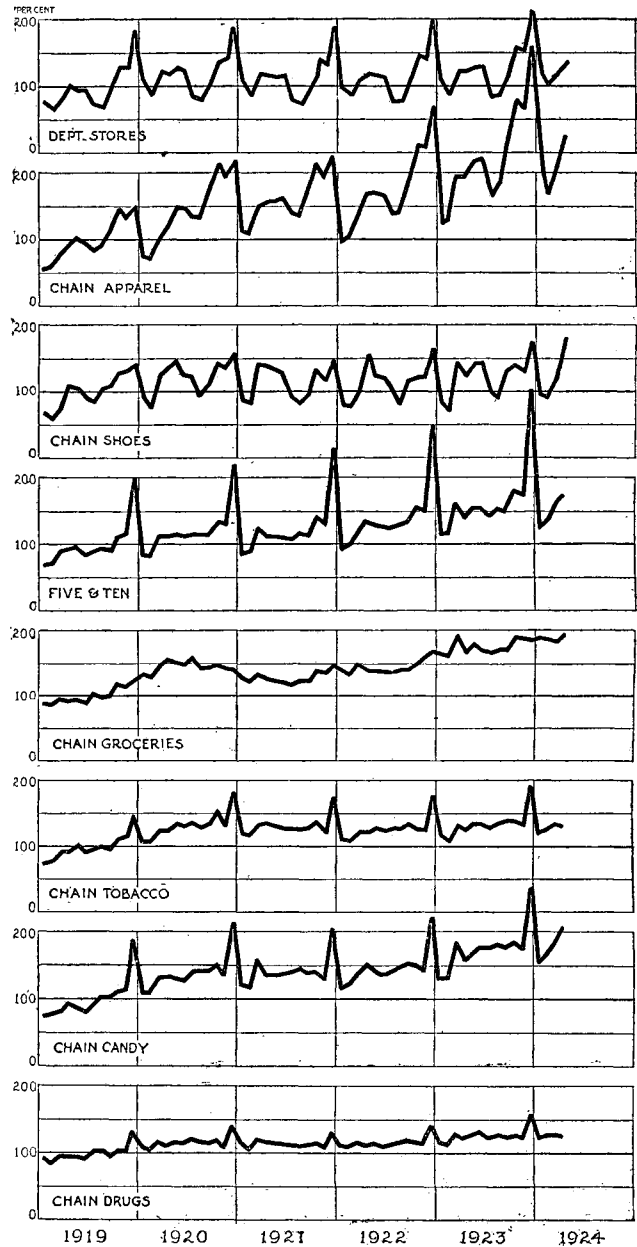
	Net Sales During April (Apr. 1923=100 Per cent.)					Stock on Hand May 1 (May 1, 1923=100 Per cent.)				
	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924
All dept. stores	96	96	98	100	111	114	93	96	100	105
New York	99	95	99	100	110	116	94	98	100	105
Buffalo	89	98	88	100	106	108	96	96	100	103
Newark	93	94	90	100	116	124	87	89	100	105
Rochester	95	106	104	100	121	146	111	102	100	113
Syracuse	102	103	96	100	109	138	113	97	100	105
Bridgeport	116	103	103	100	111	122	101	100	100	102
Elsewhere, 2dD.	94	102	100	100	106	92	82	88	100	99
Apparel	85	92	99	100	117	92	83	93	100	109
Mailorderhouses	102	75	74	100	110	...	...	...	...	...

Chain Store Sales

Late Easter buying was probably largely responsible for an increase of 2.4 per cent. in the sales of all types of chain stores in April over April a year ago, compared with a decrease of 2 per cent. in March. There was also a large increase in the sales per store of shoe, candy, and ten cent stores, but sales per store of groceries and drugs declined. Allowing for seasonal variation and price changes, this bank's index of chain store trade was 3 per cent. below the computed trend, compared with 4 per cent. below in March.

The accompanying diagram shows the course of sales of department stores in this district and of different types of chain stores by months since 1919. During these five years the average annual increase in the total chain store sales, exclusive of groceries and after allowance for price changes, has been between 13 and 14 per cent., whereas the average increase in department store sales has been about 8 per cent. The sales of all these types of stores, with the exception of groceries, show a remarkably regular seasonal variation.

Type of Store	Number of Stores		Dollar Value in Percentages					Per cent. Change in sales per store Apr. 1923 to Apr. 1924
	Apr. 1923	Apr. 1924	Apr. 1920	Apr. 1921	Apr. 1922	Apr. 1923	Apr. 1924	
Shoe	299	360	111	112	123	100	146	+21.3
Apparel	438	571	62	81	88	100	132	+ 1.3
Candy	118	130	84	85	95	100	131	+19.1
Ten Cent	1,796	1,933	79	79	95	100	125	+16.5
Grocery	14,664	17,764	87	70	81	100	117	- 3.3
Tobacco	2,747	2,741	99	108	100	100	104	+ 4.5
Drug	305	318	89	96	91	100	102	- 2.6
Total	20,367	23,817	85	78	88	100	120	+ 2.4



Monthly Sales of Department Stores in the Second Federal Reserve District and Sales of Chain Stores (Average Sales in 1919 = 100 Per cent.)