

# MONTHLY REVIEW

## BUSINESS AND AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS



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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

DECEMBER 31, 1924

The volume of business done in the Fifth Reserve District during November was up to seasonal average, although trade was somewhat spotted. Retail trade was better than in November 1923 in all of the large cities, but in the smaller centers in which buying by farmers is of greater importance the volume of business this year fell behind that of last year. Doubtless because prospects for future business in agricultural sections are less promising than they were a year ago, country merchants are carrying smaller stocks this fall and are very cautious in placing orders for future delivery. In consequence, the volume of wholesale trade is below that of last year, when the Fifth District farmers were receiving the benefits of good cotton and tobacco yields and prices. The agricultural outlook, while still much below 1923, improved to some extent during November, chiefly due to good weather which enabled farmers to gather their crops

under favorable conditions and caused more late cotton to open than has been the case in most years. The banks of the District as a class are in a strong position, and the deposits of customers are very high; debits to individual accounts are running above a year ago in the District as a whole; business failures are comparatively few and liabilities are low; labor is well employed for this season of the year; conditions in the textile industry are better than a few months ago and are still improving; world consumption of cotton is increasing materially; tobacco prices are higher than a year ago; crops are going into the winter in good condition; and building operations continue in large volume, with resulting prosperity for dealers in all kinds of building materials. On the whole, prospects appear favorable for future business except in the cotton and tobacco sections of the Carolinas, and perhaps in the coal regions of West Virginia.

### FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OPERATIONS

Between November 15th and December 15th, this year, outstanding rediscounts for member banks continued to decline at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, dropping from a total of \$31,404,000 to \$29,681,000, but there was a further demand for currency to meet holiday needs and the volume of Federal Reserve notes in actual circulation rose from \$85,097,000 to \$89,136,000. Member banks increased their reserve deposits during the month from \$63,446,000 to \$65,168,000, and the cash reserve of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond rose from \$126,945,000 to \$130,386,000. As a result of the changes enumerated, the ratio of cash reserves to combined note and deposit liabilities rose from 82.67% on November 15th to 84.18% on December 15th.

A year ago the volume of credit extended to members by the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond was much larger than the volume outstanding at present. On December 15, 1923, rediscounts held by the Reserve Bank totaled \$55,860,000, compared with \$29,681,000 held on December 15, 1924. During the year the circulation of Federal Reserve notes dropped from \$106,065,000 to \$89,136,000, while the volume of reserve deposits rose from \$61,968,000 to \$65,168,000, and the Reserve Bank's cash reserve rose from \$116,916,000 to \$130,386,000. The reserve ratio of cash to combined note and deposit liabilities increased from 69.00% on December 15, 1923 to 84.18% on December 15, 1924. As in the case of the figures mentioned in the discussion of member bank condition figures, it should be understood that the comments made herein apply only to the figures for the dates given, and have no reference to intervening dates on which figures may have been higher or lower than those quoted.

### SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS

Savings deposit figures reported by fourteen mutual savings banks in Baltimore show a slight decline during November, but the decrease is small and is seasonal. Total deposits in the fourteen banks at the close of business November 29th amounted to \$144,936,900, compared with \$145,131,411 on October 31, 1924 and \$138,804,131 on November 30, 1923. On November 30, 1922 deposits in these institutions totaled \$129,871,328; on November 30, 1921 the total was \$122,701,287; and on November 30, 1920 it was \$121,573,303.

*The National Summary will be found on page 8.*

## CONDITION OF SEVENTY-FIVE REPORTING MEMBER BANKS IN SELECTED CITIES

ITEMS	Dec. 10, 1924	Nov. 12, 1924	Dec. 12, 1923
1. Total Loans and Discounts (including all rediscounts) .....	\$ 476,426,000	\$ 472,145,000	\$ 463,505,000
2. Total Investments in Bonds and Securities .....	131,785,000	135,930,000	127,930,000
3. Total Loans and Investments .....	608,211,000	608,075,000	591,435,000
4. Reserve Balance with Federal Reserve Bank .....	39,157,000	36,536,000	36,225,000
5. Cash in Vaults .....	15,881,000	15,131,000	15,641,000
6. Demand Deposits .....	369,776,000	358,393,000	347,156,000
7. Time Deposits .....	178,600,000	179,388,000	148,793,000
8. Borrowed from Federal Reserve Bank .....	6,373,000	9,868,000	33,086,000

The accompanying table shows the principal items of condition reported by seventy-five identical banks as of three dates, December 10, 1924, November 12, 1924 and December 12, 1923, thus affording an opportunity for comparing the totals reported for the latest date with those reported for the preceding month this year and on the corresponding date a year ago.

Between November 12th and December 10th, both this year, total loans to customers in the reporting banks increased a little more than \$4,000,000, rising from \$472,145,000 to \$476,426,000, while investments in bonds and securities decreased from \$135,930,000 to \$131,785,000. Reserve deposits maintained by the reporting banks at the Reserve Bank rose from \$36,536,000 on November 12th to \$39,157,000 on December 10th, and cash in vaults showed a seasonal rise between the same dates from \$15,131,000 to \$15,881,000. Demand deposits rose sharply, increasing from \$358,393,000 to \$369,776,000, but time deposits showed a small decline from \$179,388,000 to \$178,600,000. A decline in time deposits is expected at this season of the year, however, when savings accounts are being drawn upon for Christmas shopping. The volume of borrowing from the Reserve Bank done by the seventy-five reporting members dropped from \$9,868,000 to \$6,373,000.

Comparing the figures reported for December 10th this year with those reported a year ago, increases are found in total loans to customers, in investments, in reserve balances at the Reserve Bank, in cash in vault, and in both demand and time deposits, the only decrease being in the volume of borrowing from the Reserve Bank. Total loans rose during the year from \$463,505,000 to \$476,426,000; investments in bonds and securities rose from \$127,930,000 to \$131,785,000; reserve balances rose from \$36,225,000 to \$39,157,000; cash in vaults rose from \$15,641,000 to \$15,881,000; demand deposits rose from \$347,156,000 to \$369,776,000; and time deposits rose from \$148,793,000 to \$178,600,000. Borrowing at the Reserve Bank declined from \$33,086,000 to \$6,373,000. It should be understood, however, that the comments made herein apply only to the figures for the dates given, and have no reference to intervening dates on which figures may have been higher or lower than those quoted.

### DEBITS TO INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS IN LEADING TRADE CENTERS

CITIES	TOTAL DEBITS FOR THE FOUR WEEKS ENDING		
	December 10, 1924	November 12, 1924	December 12, 1923
Asheville, N. C. ....	\$ 20,373,000	\$ 19,905,000	\$ 20,891,000
Baltimore, Md. ....	371,900,000	342,369,000	337,735,000
Charleston, S. C. ....	24,121,000	26,300,000	29,897,000
Charleston, W. Va. ....	35,567,000	30,983,000	34,213,000
Charlotte, N. C. ....	45,030,000	45,185,000	44,383,000
Columbia, S. C. ....	19,739,000	21,498,000	22,058,000
Cumberland, Md. ....	8,425,000	8,365,000	8,649,000
Danville, Va. ....	13,484,000	11,921,000	12,989,000
Durham, N. C. ....	22,373,000	20,545,000	21,614,000
Greensboro, N. C. ....	25,655,000	23,285,000	24,374,000
Greenville, S. C. ....	25,210,000	21,869,000	26,575,000
Hagerstown, Md. ....	9,137,000	9,274,000	10,026,000
Huntington, W. Va. ....	26,384,000	24,372,000	24,818,000
Lynchburg, Va. ....	19,210,000	17,372,000	19,257,000
Newport News, Va. ....	8,538,000	6,271,000	8,542,000
Norfolk, Va. ....	82,468,000	62,824,000	93,110,000
Raleigh, N. C. ....	23,799,000	24,372,000	28,840,000
Richmond, Va. ....	132,778,000	121,840,000	144,633,000
Roanoke, Va. ....	26,040,000	23,549,000	24,166,000
Spartanburg, S. C. ....	17,504,000	17,598,000	13,012,000
Washington, D. C. ....	197,434,000	185,659,000	181,559,000
Wilmington, N. C. ....	21,469,000	20,438,000	23,869,000
Winston-Salem, N. C. ....	30,598,000	30,957,000	29,771,000
Total for 23 cities.....	\$ 1,207,236,000	\$ 1,116,751,000	\$ 1,184,481,000

Debits to individual accounts in twenty-three leading cities of the Fifth District showed a seasonal increase during the four weeks ending December 10th in comparison with the four weeks ending November 12th, both this year, the total rising from \$1,116,751,000 to \$1,207,236,000. The increases were pretty evenly distributed over the District, sixteen of the twenty-three reporting cities showing higher figures during the later period. The majority of the cities reporting lower figures last month were tobacco or cotton centers, the decreased debits probably resulting from the slowing down in the marketing of the two crops.

The total of debits reported by the twenty-three cities for the four weeks ending December 10th this year was larger than the total reported for the corresponding period last year, ending December 12, 1923, but the majority of the cities showed declines. Again the cotton and tobacco centers led in decreases, due to lower yields and prices for cotton and to lower yields for tobacco. On the whole, however, the decreases were not marked, and the District total indicates a very large volume of business transactions during late November and early December.

### BUSINESS FAILURES IN THE TWELVE FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICTS NOVEMBER, 1924 AND 1923.

City and District	Number		Per Cent Increase or Decrease	Liabilities		Per Cent of Increase or Decrease
	1924	1923		1924	1923	
Boston, First .....	141	133	6.0%	\$ 5,368,846	\$ 10,727,470	— 50.0%
New York, Second .....	323	356	— 9.3	6,278,358	8,126,848	— 22.7
Philadelphia, Third .....	62	78	— 20.5	1,129,368	3,864,301	— 70.8
Cleveland, Fourth .....	133	116	14.7	2,441,042	4,001,582	— 39.0
Richmond, Fifth .....	111	103	7.8	1,715,396	2,223,757	— 22.9
Atlanta, Sixth .....	113	106	6.6	1,604,013	3,710,159	— 56.8
Chicago, Seventh .....	211	230	— 8.3	4,429,890	6,433,450	— 31.1
St. Louis, Eighth .....	102	109	— 6.4	1,039,945	2,233,369	— 53.4
Minneapolis, Ninth .....	65	91	— 28.6	2,063,142	1,565,635	31.8
Kansas City, Tenth .....	123	75	64.0	1,082,957	892,862	21.3
Dallas, Eleventh .....	63	127	— 46.5	904,820	4,445,724	— 79.6
San Francisco, Twelfth .....	201	180	11.7	3,066,133	2,066,551	48.4
<b>Totals .....</b>	<b>1,653</b>	<b>1,704</b>	<b>— 3.0%</b>	<b>\$ 31,123,910</b>	<b>\$ 50,291,708</b>	<b>— 38.1%</b>

In commenting on the figures in the above table, *Dun's Review* for December 6th says, "Contrary to the usual seasonal tendency, commercial failures in the United States decreased in number during November. Seven of the preceding ten years, including 1923, had shown an increase in the November total over that of October, but last month the number fell off moderately. Thus, the 1,653 defaults in November compare with 1,696 in October, and are about 3 per cent below the 1,704 failures of November 1923. The number for last month is, in fact, the smallest for the period since 1920, when the business mortality of the country was at a relatively low level.

Not only is the exhibit as to number of defaults favorable, but the November liabilities of \$31,123,910 are about \$5,000,000 below those for October, and are actually the smallest of the present year. Compared with the amount for November 1923, a decrease of fully \$19,000,000 is shown, and it is necessary to go back to 1920 to find a November indebtedness below that of last month. The reduction in liabilities is accounted for by the falling off in large failures, those for \$100,000 or more in each instance numbering 43 and involving \$12,357,862 altogether, which is in striking contrast to the 72 similar defaults for \$29,639,506 in November last year. Not since 1919, indeed, have there been so few large failures in November."

In the Fifth District, exactly the same number of failures occurred in both November and October of this year, but November liabilities were approximately 3 per cent lower. In comparison with November 1923, the current month this year shows an increase in the number of failures from 103 to 111, but liabilities declined from \$2,223,757 to \$1,715,396. Except for September, liabilities in November in the District were the lowest of the year.

**TEXTILES.**—No marked changes in conditions in the textile field have been noted since our November 30th *Review* was written, but some further progress toward a satisfactory volume of business has been made. Much of the surplus stock accumulated by Fifth District mills during the past year has been worked off, and new orders are coming in in sufficient volume to warrant full time operations in nearly all mills. The mills are not yet operating at night, however, with occasional exceptions, and no immediate increase in running time appears in prospect. During November the Fifth District mills consumed 204,764 bales of cotton, compared with 216,322 bales used in October, but on account of November having more Saturdays and holidays than October, running time last month was 14 per cent less while the cotton consumption was only 5.3 per cent less. Mill executives are on the whole optimistic on future prospects, and especially since cotton prices appear to be settling and are fluctuating relatively little from day to day. The Department of Agriculture's final cotton report of the year seemed to assure a sufficient supply of raw material but did not indicate the existence of any unduly large surplus.

**COTTON.**—Spot cotton prices slowly declined between the middle of November and the middle of December, the average weekly price in the Carolinas dropping from 23.63 cents per pound during the week ending November 22nd to 22.40 cents during the week ending December 13th, the latest period for which figures are available as we write. While prices are now lower than a month ago, they are ruling somewhat higher than in October and about \$5 a bale higher than in mid-September.

The Department of Agriculture's final cotton report of the year was issued on December 8th, and estimated this season's crop at 13,153,000 bales as compared with the November 14th estimate of 12,992,000 bales and the final estimate in 1923 of 10,139,671 bales. The weather continued almost ideal for cotton picking during November, and a larger late crop than had been expected was made. Between November 14th and December 1st cotton made some progress in North Carolina, and the estimate of production was raised by the Department of Agriculture from 760,000 bales to 765,000 bales. In South Carolina a much greater gain was reported, the estimate of production being raised from 720,000 bales on November 14th to 750,000 bales on December 1st. Virginia's estimate of 30,000 bales remained unchanged. Total production in the Fifth District is estimated at 1,545,000 bales, compared with 1,865,000 bales grown in 1923.

The Census Bureau's ginning report to December 12th showed 12,796,216 bales, compared with 9,549,015 bales ginned to December 12th last year. It is believed that a larger proportion of this year's crop was ginned prior to December 12th than was the case last year.

Cotton consumption in American mills decreased 7.6 per cent during November in comparison with October, the number of bales used dropping from 532,629 bales to 492,233 bales, but on account of holidays and an extra Saturday and Sunday in November actual working time during that month was 14 per cent less than in October. In November 1923 American mills used 531,631 bales, 7.2 per cent more than in November this year, but last year the month contained only four Saturdays and Sundays compared with five this year. Cotton on hand in consuming establishments at the end of November totaled 1,046,612 bales, compared with 730,656 bales on October 31, 1924 and 1,438,813 bales on November 30, 1923. Public warehouses and compresses held 4,914,219 bales on November 30, 1924, 4,224,854 bales on October 31, 1924, and 3,770,542 bales on November 30, 1923. Cotton consumed in the cotton growing states in November amounted to 347,548 bales, compared with 373,390 bales in October this year and 358,718 bales in November last year. November imports totaled 17,549 bales, compared with 18,113 bales in October 1924 and 16,564 bales in November 1923, while exports reached the unprecedented total of 1,306,550 bales, compared with 947,556 bales exported in October and 770,002 bales in November last year. Since August 1st a total of 3,268,753 bales has been sent abroad, in comparison with 2,478,370 bales exported during the corresponding period last year.

**TOBACCO.**—Producers' sales of leaf tobacco on the auction markets in Virginia during November amounted to 20,335,625 pounds, according to warehouse reports to the Commissioner of Agriculture. Bright tobacco sales totaled 16,892,060 pounds, at an average price of \$23.45 per hundred pounds, compared with 17,467,267 pounds at an average of \$22.75 per hundred sold in November 1923. Danville led in sales with 9,247,959 pounds, but Lawrenceville reported the highest average price, \$26.24 per hundred pounds. The sales of Dark leaf during November amounted to 3,443,565 pounds, and the average price was \$19.06 per hundred, compared with 2,741,943 pounds at an average of \$17.87 per hundred sold in November last year. Drakes Branch reported the highest average price on Dark, having sold 306,025 pounds at an average of \$23.62 per hundred pounds. Lynchburg led the Dark markets in volume of sales, disposing of 1,637,740 pounds during the month. Warehousemen estimate that the tobacco sold in November graded 28 per cent good, 38 per cent medium, and 34 per cent common, compared with 25 per cent good, 34 per cent medium, and 41 per cent common last year.

North Carolina auction markets sold 45,180,070 pounds of growers' tobacco during November, compared with 75,810,802 pounds sold in November 1923. Prices this year averaged \$28.44 per hundred pounds, compared with \$23.24 per hundred paid in November 1923. Wilson led all markets in volume of sales with 8,325,758 pounds, Winston-Salem following closely with 7,891,710 pounds. Farmville and Mebane led in average prices with \$34.36 and \$34.19 per hundred, respectively. Total auction sales this year amount to 175,879,971 pounds, and warehousemen estimate that about two-thirds of the crop has been sold.

None of the figures quoted include tobacco delivered to the Tobacco Growers Co-operative Association, monthly figures on Association deliveries being unavailable.

**AGRICULTURAL NOTES.**—Maryland crops benefited greatly from the rains in October and November. The rains were followed by mild weather, and wheat is going into the winter in good condition, contrary to expectations a month ago. Weather during November was ideal for corn husking and practically all corn in the state has been harvested. The soil has been in good condition for cultivation, and many farmers have taken advantage of the opportunity to do considerable plowing in preparation for spring crops.

The principal work during the first half of December on Virginia farms consisted of cribbing corn, hauling fire-wood and feed for stock, plowing, and butchering hogs. Weather conditions were generally favorable, and satisfactory progress was reported. In some sections wet ground delayed fall plowing to some extent. There was considerable complaint about this year's corn crop, many farmers stating that it did not mature well and was difficult to cure. Husking and cribbing have made excellent progress, and probably seventy-five per cent of the total crop has been housed. Except in Southwest Virginia, the crop

is exceedingly short. Seeding of winter grains was rather late in some sections, and the crop in these localities is just coming up. Early sown fields are looking well and have made considerable growth. Late sown crops are not looking so well, and there is some complaint of poor stands. Weather conditions have been unfavorable for ordering and stripping tobacco, and marketing has therefore been retarded. Stocks of hay on the farms are good, and will help to offset the shortage in corn for feeding livestock. Threshing of peanuts has made good progress, but the yield is turning out very poorly, and most farmers will not get more than two-thirds their usual crop. The quality is also poorer than usual. Owing to the late season, only a small percentage of the peanut crop has been marketed prior to the middle of December. Virginia livestock is generally in fine order, but very few cattle are on feed, the price received last season not encouraging farmers to buy cattle for this purpose. It has been generally contended that cattle marketed this fall were sold at great financial loss.

North Carolina soils have been in good condition for crop growth and the planting of small grains, and farmers took full advantage of the favorable weather in November and early December. There were no serious freezes up to the middle of December, and winter crops are in good shape for cold weather. Some harvesting remains to be done, especially in cotton and corn fields. Corn grains turned out somewhat better than was expected from earlier prospects. All feed and hay crops are short this year in North Carolina, September rains having ruined much of the hay and forage left in the fields at that time. The wheat crop has been reduced in acreage this fall, and probably the same statement applies to all other small grains. The peanut crop, which looked good until dug, resulted in very poor yields and quality of nuts. The poor returns appeared due to slow development and premature harvesting.

### BUILDING OPERATIONS FOR THE MONTHS OF NOVEMBER, 1924 AND 1923.

No.	CITIES	Permits Issued				New Construction		Alterations		Increase or Decrease Total Valuation	Per Cent of Increase or Decrease	No.
		New		Repairs		1924	1923	1924	1923			
		1924	1923	1924	1923							
<b>MARYLAND</b>												
1	Baltimore.....	550	497	1,407	913	\$ 3,128,040	\$ 2,902,920	\$ 750,600	\$ 526,770	\$ 448,950	13.1%	1
2	Cumberland.....	32	28	3	20	193,829	86,870	400	6,183	101,176	108.7	2
3	Frederick.....	11	8	6	4	43,475	29,750	9,400	20,309	2,816	5.6	3
4	Hagerstown*.....	*32		*10		*31,435		*2,375				4
<b>VIRGINIA</b>												
5	Lynchburg.....	14	16	14	22	27,761	41,651	7,395	6,730	— 13,225	— 27.3	5
6	Norfolk.....	89	103	38	45	235,120	267,740	30,905	36,105	— 37,975	— 12.5	6
7	Petersburg.....	2	5	5	8	4,700	19,550	1,560	3,109	— 16,399	— 72.4	7
8	Richmond.....	184	126	82	88	842,482	878,439	128,987	67,570	25,460	2.7	8
9	Roanoke.....	80	106	50	20	190,455	210,960	7,880	4,435	— 17,060	— 7.9	9
<b>WEST VIRGINIA</b>												
10	Bluefield.....	14	26	4	7	66,970	63,075	160	1,425	2,630	4.1	10
11	Charleston.....	34	43	9	13	41,810	117,240	8,300	15,853	— 82,465	— 62.0	11
12	Clarksburg.....	31	39	10	25	95,825	61,756	2,280	11,770	24,579	33.4	12
13	Huntington.....	111	93	20	20	371,987	541,840	9,545	9,450	— 169,758	— 30.8	13
14	Parkersburg.....	*31		*15		70,565	43,000	5,890	5,100	28,355	59.0	14
<b>NORTH CAROLINA</b>												
15	Asheville.....	19	35	28	68	223,913	137,660	42,060	17,788	110,525	71.1	15
16	Charlotte.....	61	57	17	11	841,300	359,975	47,113	29,825	498,613	127.9	16
17	Durham.....	11	21	2	3	43,275	58,500	1,200	2,400	— 16,425	— 27.0	17
18	Greensboro.....	46	51	34	15	251,713	210,095	31,235	4,142	68,711	32.1	18
19	High Point.....	45	59	10	7	142,625	157,500	5,800	2,025	— 11,100	— 7.0	19
20	Raleigh.....	62	55	9	2	196,180	139,603	7,750	1,100	63,227	44.9	20
21	Salisbury.....	28	16	3	0	51,495	10,390	575	0	41,680	401.2	21
22	Wilmington.....	8	9	6	4	23,200	861,000	5,200	9,300	— 841,900	— 96.7	22
23	Winston-Salem.....	73	70	103	85	195,025	194,185	32,345	29,402	3,783	1.7	23
<b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b>												
24	Charleston.....	4	4	21	15	3,000	15,700	5,085	7,090	— 14,705	— 64.5	24
25	Columbia.....	14	20	48	59	41,000	38,314	11,165	7,125	6,726	14.8	25
26	Greenville.....	15	34	17	13	49,700	81,750	18,725	9,515	— 22,840	— 25.0	26
27	Spartanburg.....	32	31	35	21	229,435	127,276	8,339	6,230	104,268	78.1	27
<b>DIST. OF COLUMBIA</b>												
28	Washington.....	572	171	187	458	3,631,942	4,121,593	201,479	293,268	— 581,440	— 13.2	28
Totals.....		2,142	1,723	2,168	1,946	\$11,236,822	\$11,778,332	\$1,381,873	\$1,134,156	\$— 293,793	— 2.3%	

\*Not included in totals —Denotes decrease

NOTE--The figures in the above table reflect the amount of work provided for in the corporation limits of the several cities, but take no account of suburban developments.

Permits for new construction issued in twenty-six cities of the Fifth District during November totaled

2,142, with estimated valuation of \$11,236,822, compared with 2,417 permits and valuation of \$11,815,980 in October 1924, and 1,723 permits and valuation of \$11,778,332 in November 1923. Alteration and repair permits issued in November totaled 2,168, valued at \$1,381,873, compared with 3,230 permits and valuation of \$1,856,582 in October this year, and 1,946 permits and valuation of \$1,134,156 in November last year. In total valuation for both new work and alterations or repairs, November 1924 showed \$12,618,695, compared with \$13,672,562 in October 1924 and \$12,912,488 in November 1923.

Lumber mills and dealers report a large volume of orders. Saw mills are running practically full time, and mill operators state that the usual seasonal dullness during the fall and winter does not appear to be developing this year. The volume of orders for lumber is sufficiently large to encourage talk of price advances, and several of our correspondents predict higher prices for lumber when construction activities open next spring.

**FIGURES ON RETAIL TRADE**  
**As Indicated By Reports from Twenty-nine Representative Department Stores**  
**for the Month of November 1924.**

	Baltimore	Richmond	Washington	Other Cities	District
Percentage increase in net sales during Nov. 1924, compared with Nov. 1923.....	1.8	2.7	2.5	— 4.8	1.4
Percentage increase in net sales from July 1st through Nov. 30, compared with sales during the same five months of 1923.....	0.7	2.7	2.6	— 2.6	1.1
Percentage increase in net sales during Nov. 1924, compared with average sales during the corresponding month of 1920, 1921 and 1922 .....	2.1	20.5	4.8	— 7.6	3.6
Percentage increase in stocks on hand at the end of Nov. 1924, over stocks on hand at the end of Nov. 1923.....	— 2.1	6.2	— 2.3	— 13.6	— 3.0
Percentage increase in stocks on hand at the end of Nov. 1924, over stocks on hand at the end of Oct. 1924.....	— 0.5	3.7	3.9	— 1.9	1.1
Percentage of average stocks on hand at the end of each month since July 1, 1924, to average net sales each month during the same period, five months.....	404.4	402.1	406.5	533.5	418.5
Percentage of outstanding orders at the end of Nov. 1924, to total purchases of merchandise during the year 1923.....	4.6	4.8	4.2	5.3	4.5

Department store sales in the Fifth District during November, measured in dollars, averaged 1.4% higher than in November 1923, Richmond stores leading with a gain of 2.7%. All of the large cities showed increased sales, but the group of miscellaneous cities, most of which depend to a considerable extent upon rural patronage, showed a decline of 4.8%. In cumulative sales since July 1st, this year shows an increase of 1.1% over the corresponding five months last year, here again the miscellaneous cities falling behind the larger cities. Stocks on hand in the reporting stores averaged 3.0% less in selling value at the end of November than on the same date a year ago, but were 1.1% greater than stocks on October 31st this year. The percentage of average stock on hand at the end of each month since July 1st to average monthly sales during the same period, five months, was 418.5%, compared with 438.4% reported by the same stores during the corresponding five months in 1923, the lower figure this year indicating a somewhat more rapid rate of turn-over this season than last. Outstanding orders at the end of November amounted to 4.5% of total purchases of merchandise during the calendar year 1923.

Figures compiled early in December by the Federal Reserve Board in co-operation with the Controllers' Congress of the National Retail Dry Goods Association showed a gain in the Fifth District of 2.0% in sales in November in comparison with November 1923. In making up this figure the stores in Richmond, Baltimore and Washington were used. The Fifth District increase was the largest reported by any of the twelve Reserve Districts, the national average of 104 stores showing a decline in November 1924 sales amounting to 2.5%.

**WHOLESALE TRADE**  
**November 1924.**

	Groceries	Dry Goods	Shoes	Hardware	Furniture	Drugs
Number of reporting firms in each line.....	43	15	11	18	7	13
Percentage increase (or decrease) in net sales during Nov. 1924, compared with sales during Oct. 1924.....	-12.2	-16.4	-20.7	- 4.1	- 8.7	-4.8
Percentage increase (or decrease) in net sales during Nov. 1924, compared with sales during Nov. 1923.....	- 4.1	-18.2	- 6.2	- 8.2	17.5	-1.2
Percentage increase (or decrease) in cumulative sales from July 1st through Nov. 1924, compared with sales during the corresponding five months of 1923.....	- 0.4	-15.4	-12.7	-10.3	26.5	0.6
Percentage increase (or decrease) in stocks on hand Nov. 30, 1924, compared with Oct. 31, 1924.....	3.5(11)	- 8.9(8)	3.8(7)	18.9(5)	- 4.8(3)	.....
Percentage increase (or decrease) in stocks on hand Nov. 30, 1924, compared with Nov. 30, 1923.....	7.8(8)	-13.0(7)	-25.2(6)	30.0(4)	-10.1(2)	.....

— Denotes decreased percentage.

NOTE:—The number of firms reporting stock figures for the dates compared is shown in parenthesis immediately after the percentage figure.

The dollar volume of wholesale trade in the Fifth District, as reflected in the business done by 107 firms selling six lines, was less in November than the volume of business done in October in every line reported upon, decreases in sales ranging from 20.7% in shoes to 4.1% in hardware having been reported. In comparison with the volume of business done in November last year, business done in November 1924 was less in every line reported upon except furniture, which showed an increase this year of 17.5%. Cumulative sales from July 1st through November were less than during the corresponding five months last year in groceries, dry goods, shoes and hardware, but were larger in furniture and drugs. Stocks on hand in the reporting firms at the end of November 1924 were larger than at the end of October 1924 in groceries, shoes and hardware, but were less in dry goods and furniture. Grocery and hardware stocks on November 30th this year were larger than those on hand November 30, 1923, but dry goods, shoes and furniture showed declines for the year.

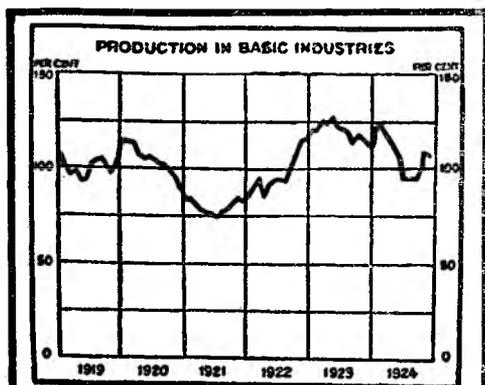
Collections improved slightly during November in comparison with October, but were distinctly slower than in November last year, when 90.1% of the reporting firms classified their collections as either *Good* or *Fair* in comparison with 78.2% so classifying them in November this year. The classifications made by 101 identical firms for November 1923 and November 1924 were as follows:

<i>Lines</i>	<i>November Collections Reported As</i>									
	<i>Good</i>		<i>Fair</i>		<i>Slow</i>		<i>Poor</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	1924-1923		1924-1923		1924-1923		1924-1923		1924-1923	
Groceries .....	8	17	25	19	8	4	0	1	41	41
Dry Goods .....	1	3	9	9	4	2	0	0	14	14
Shoes .....	0	2	7	7	3	1	0	0	10	10
Hardware .....	2	8	9	6	5	2	0	0	16	16
Furniture .....	1	2	6	5	0	0	0	0	7	7
Drugs .....	4	5	7	8	2	0	0	0	13	13
November totals .....	16	37	63	54	22	9	0	1	101	101

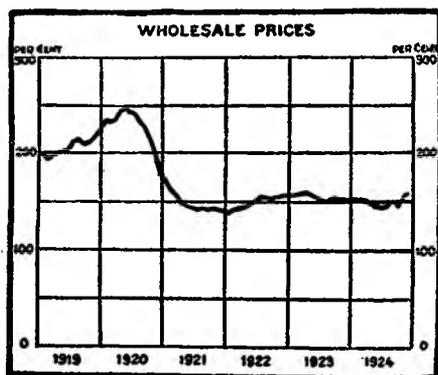
(Compiled December 20, 1924)

# BUSINESS CONDITION IN THE UNITED STATES.

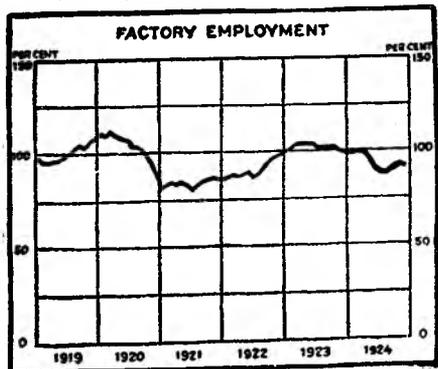
Compiled by the Federal Reserve Board.



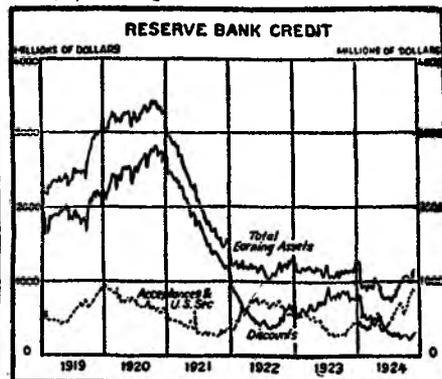
Index of 22 basic commodities corrected for seasonal variation (1919=100). Latest Figure—November 107.



Index of U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (1913=100, base adopted by Bureau) Latest figure—November 152.7.



Index of 33 manufacturing industries (1919=100). Latest figure—November 91



Weekly figures for 12 Federal Reserve Banks. Latest figures, December 17th.

**PRODUCTION.** Production of basic commodities was at about the same rate in November as in October, but owing to the smaller number of working days not allowed for in the adjustment for usual seasonal variations, the Federal Reserve Board's index of production declined about 2 per cent. Increased activity was shown in the iron and steel industry and in cotton and woolen textiles, while production of food, coal, lumber, paper and automobiles declined. There was little change in the volume of factory employment in November. Building contracts awarded declined somewhat in November, but the total was considerably larger than for the corresponding month of any recent year. Final estimates by the Department of Agriculture of crop yields in 1924 showed a greater aggregate production than in 1923 and an increase of about 9 per cent in the total value of all crops. Yields of wheat, oats, cotton, potatoes and hay were larger than in 1923, but the production of corn and tobacco was smaller. Marketing continued in large volume in November and exports of agricultural products were the largest for that month in any recent year.

**PRICES.** The level of wholesale prices, as measured by the index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, advanced slightly in November, price increases in most of the commodity groups being nearly offset by a considerable decline in the prices of animal products. During the first half of November there were further advances in the prices of grains, flour, sheep, metals and lumber, while the prices of beef, hides, silk and brick declined.

**TRADE.** Railroad freight shipments, though smaller in November than in October, owing to seasonal influences, were in about the same volume as in 1923. Wholesale trade showed the usual decline in November and was about as active as a year ago. Sales of furniture and meat were larger than last year, while the volume of business in nearly all other lines was smaller. Retail trade was somewhat more active in November and sales of mail order houses and chain stores were larger than last year. Merchandise stocks at department stores were slightly reduced and were 2 per cent less than a year ago.

**BANK CREDIT.** Total loans and investments of member banks in leading cities continued to increase during the four weeks ending December 10th and on that date were in larger volume than at any previous time. The increase during the period was chiefly in loans secured by stocks and bonds and accompanied continued activity in the security markets. Commercial loans showed a seasonal decline from the high point of the year reached in the middle of November, but continued above the level of a year ago. Security holdings, after increasing rapidly since the spring of the year, reached a peak on November 19th and after that time showed a slight decline. At the Reserve banks total earning assets increased considerably during the four weeks ending December 17th, reflecting the seasonal demand for currency and the export of gold. The volume of discounts of the Reserve banks increased between the middle of November and the middle of December, and their holdings of acceptances also showed a net increase, while United States security holdings declined somewhat. Firmer conditions in the money market during the last half of November and the first half of December were indicated by higher rates on Bankers acceptances and a rise of one-half per cent in the rate on commercial paper.