

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

MONTHLY REPORT ON

GENERAL BUSINESS CONDITIONS

IN FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT No. 8

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A DECIDED turn for the better during the past thirty days is almost universally indicated in replies to questionnaires addressed by this bank to leading business interests throughout the Eighth Federal Reserve District. The improvement affects both actual volume of transactions and sentiment. In all branches of activity notable strides have been made in the direction of normal, and there seems to be more confidence in values and the future of business than at any time in more than eighteen months. This confidence is being manifested in a disposition to deviate somewhat from the recent practice of purchasing only enough for immediate requirements on the part of merchants, and among agriculturists to enter with greater enthusiasm upon the tasks incident to heavier production of crops and live stock.

All sections of the district have participated to a greater or lesser degree in the improvement, but the grain areas appear to be making the most notable progress at the moment. In those areas spring farm operations are under way, and supplies for this work are moving well. With the single exception of oats, prospects are for larger acreages of cereals than a year ago. Purchases of farm implements, while not so heavy as in former seasons, are in considerably heavier volume than a year ago. In the South planting of cotton has been pressed, advantage being taken of every favorable day to seed additional acreage. Prices of cotton have advanced, and prices of cereals and live stock during the period under review were well maintained.

In marked contrast with the corresponding period in 1921, prospects for fruits in this district are magnificent. Already shipments from the South of ground fruits have been of formidable proportions. The strawberry crop in Arkansas, according to available reports, is the largest on record, and shipments to date are larger than in any previous year. The berry crop in Southern Missouri bids fair to be proportionately as large as that of Arkansas. Similar accounts are received relative to early spring vegetables, the movement of which is nearing its peak. The markets for these products have been broader than in former years, due to more intelligent distribution arrangements, and prices in the main have been satisfactory. Arkansas and Tennessee berries have brought from \$5 to \$7 per 24-quart crate in middle western markets.

In face of a backward season, the distribution of commodities through retail agencies has been in increasing volume. Reports from stores in the country and small towns disclose much more sat-

isfactory conditions than existed earlier in the year. With the outlook for the year's agricultural production in more definite shape, the rural communities are varying their recent practice of rigid economy and saving, and are supplying deferred wants. The increased employment of labor on farms is also a factor in heavier spending in the country. Stocks of merchandise in country stores are generally light and in many instances assortments limited. This latter fact has resulted in heavy calls upon wholesalers for goods to accommodate the recent broadening in the demand for merchandise.

Augmented manufacturing activity is reflected in considerably more satisfactory markets for raw materials. This is true particularly of metals. Purchases of pig iron and scrap during the past six weeks have been larger in this district than during any similar period since early in 1920. Lead and slab zinc are moving well at higher prices. The demand for lumber has increased, and all varieties of building materials are moving in volume. Distributors of drugs and chemicals report that the past month has been marked by a better inquiry for chemicals used in manufacturing and the arts. After a long period of depression the oil business has developed renewed life, the demand for gasoline and other petroleum products being broader than at any time in more than a year. Producers of fire clay products are feeling the effects of heavier smelting operations in an improved demand for refractories, and their sales of bricks and other materials for road and general construction work are steadily increasing.

Price changes and movements during the period under review have been relatively narrow, except on seasonal goods. The trend in many important commodities, particularly products of the soil, was firm. Middling cotton in St. Louis on May 15 was quoted at 19.50c per pound, against 17c on April 15. Some steel products were higher, and pig iron advanced \$1.50 to \$2.00 per ton. Throughout the past thirty days values of live stock were well sustained, particularly hogs. This fact, coupled with the satisfactory marketing of early fruits and vegetables and the relatively strong market for dairy products and poultry and eggs, has added materially to the purchasing power of important rural sections of the district. Consumption of electrical power in the leading manufacturing centers showed a good increase, and there was a further gain in savings deposits.

Considerable irregularity has featured the market for fuel, but on the whole the situation is calm, and to date no one appears to be suffering the least

inconvenience from the coal strike. Prices of coal have fluctuated frequently over a wider range, and the demand for steaming sizes is by no means urgent. Mines in the district still have a large number of unconsigned loaded cars, and there have been shipments in fair volume from Kentucky and other fields. Reserve stocks are being drawn upon rather heavily, but in many instances the larger consumers are replenishing and adding to their piles. Production of soft coal is increasing, the total output for the sixth week of the strike (May 8-13) indicating a gain of 9 per cent over either of the two weeks immediately preceding. Supplies of coke are ample for all immediate needs, with the leading by-product producers still holding liberal reserve stocks.

According to officials of railroads operating in the district, the loss sustained in early April was due in large measure to the reduced coal movement, and since the first of May the general situation is showing marked improvement. There has been enormous movement of raw materials, including iron and steel, building materials and lumber. Loadings of merchandise are increasing, and the total tonnage has been heavily augmented by an almost record movement of early fruits and vegetables from the Southern States. A slight falling off in shipments of live stock and cereals, usual at this season, was noted. The St. Louis Terminal Railway Association which includes in its membership 26 roads operating through this gateway, interchanged 138,690 loads in April, against 172,895 loads in March, 150,704 loads in February and 151,095 loads in January. During the first 9 days of May 47,185 loads were interchanged, against 40,342 loads during the same period in April. Passenger traffic, according to available data, decreased 6 per cent in April as compared with April, 1921, but was 10 per cent larger than in March this year.

The improvement in the automotive industry, noted in the two preceding issues of this report, was carried further during the period under review.

Commercial failures in the 12 Federal Reserve Districts during the months of April and March, with comparative figures for April, 1921, as compiled by Dun's were as follows:

District	NUMBER			LIABILITIES		
	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921
Boston, First.....	165	217	145	\$ 2,403,840	\$ 8,066,696	\$ 1,746,699
New York, Second.....	420	478	268	33,677,526	14,656,044	11,123,088
Philadelphia, Third.....	78	96	65	1,468,343	6,848,734	1,575,775
Cleveland, Fourth.....	156	202	118	2,840,844	4,159,463	4,366,788
Richmond, Fifth.....	148	215	164	3,277,906	3,787,550	3,334,591
Atlanta, Sixth.....	264	221	136	6,557,398	5,559,986	1,997,350
Chicago, Seventh.....	284	336	178	10,909,837	13,189,340	3,949,115
St. Louis, Eighth.....	120	173	115	2,244,444	2,529,541	2,427,872
Minneapolis, Ninth.....	116	103	39	2,268,658	3,764,602	593,718
Kansas City, Tenth.....	66	100	50	1,937,395	1,720,146	1,966,778
Dallas, Eleventh.....	167	107	98	3,865,301	2,121,725	2,905,847
San Francisco, Twelfth.....	183	215	121	1,607,145	5,204,365	2,580,148
Total.....	2,167	2,463	1,487	\$73,058,637	\$71,608,192	\$38,567,769

MANUFACTURING AND WHOLESALE

Boots and Shoes — Sales of the 11 reporting interests during April ranged from 2 per cent less to 40 per cent greater in dollar value than during the same month in 1921, while in number of pairs, gains were from 7½ per cent to 50 per cent. Relatively little variation either in volume or value was

For the first time in a number of months, distributors of certain makes of passenger automobiles, report they are running behind on deliveries. This is explained by the fact that producers believing business would not be normal before the last half of this year, failed to turn out sufficient cars to accommodate the demand that has developed prior to their expectations. For the first time in about two years, country dealers are driving cars to their place of business from the distributing centers to deliver on sales already made. Sales of trucks and wagons show improvement about on a parity with that noted in the passenger car department of the industry. The tire and accessory business is described as active. The above information is based on reports from 235 dealers located in cities and towns scattered throughout the district.

Collections generally continue to make a favorable showing, though some backward spots are noted. During April there were numerous delays in meeting bills due to flood conditions in the territory bordering on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Almost universally current accounts are being liquidated promptly, and there is some liquidation on old indebtedness, though the volume of unpaid bills in the latter category is still large in some sections. Wholesale merchants in the large centers report that April settlements in most instances equalled or exceeded expectations. This is true particularly of boots and shoes and drygoods. The high price of hogs and success of early fruit and vegetable crops have served to release extensive credits. Answers to 311 questionnaires addressed to representative interests in various lines throughout the Eighth Federal Reserve District asking for data relative to collections show the following results: 5.9 per cent excellent, 38.2 per cent good, 41.2 per cent fair, and 14.7 per cent poor.

The per capita circulation of the United States on May 1, 1922, was \$48.89 against \$49.81 on April 1, and \$57.12 on May 1, 1921.

reported in April as contrasted with March. Since May 1 orders have been very satisfactory, and according to the six largest interests, the proportion of forward orders is increasing from week to week and is now about equal to normal years in the past. While the demand is mainly for staple goods, sales

of novelties and women's specialties are larger and retail merchants are purchasing broader assortments than heretofore. There has been no change in prices of finished goods during the past thirty days, and prices of raw materials average about steady. Factory operation in the district is at from 86 to 100 per cent of capacity. Business of the reporting interests for the first four months of the year is approximately 32 per cent greater than for the corresponding period in 1921.

Clothing—April sales of the 23 reporting interests displayed considerable irregularity, ranging from 42 per cent less to 16 per cent greater than April last year and from 6 per cent less to 8 per cent larger than in March this year. The losses in April were explained as being due in a large measure to unseasonable weather and flood conditions. The fall selling season in apparel has been opened by manufacturers with fair success, though the practice of buying only for immediate needs is exerting an unfavorable effect. Reductions made in prices have met with the approval of retailers, there being much less criticism on this score than heretofore. The demand centers largely in moderate priced goods, and suits selling for \$20 to \$30 at retail are favored in samples now being shown.

Iron and Steel Products—Business in finished and semi-finished iron and steel goods continues to record sensational improvement. During the period under review heavy tonnages of pig iron, scrap and other raw materials were purchased by mills, foundries and machine shops of the district, many of these interests anticipating their needs for several months ahead. The melt of pig iron in this district in April was approximately 12¼ per cent greater than in March. Additional open hearth furnaces have been blown in by four of the leading steel manufacturers. Buying has been of a general character, with the railroads, the building industry and agriculture furnishing the largest outlets. Stove manufacturers, 7 interests reporting, report sales in April from 22 to 108 per cent larger than during the same month last year, and from 6 per cent to 30 per cent larger than in March. Five farm implement manufacturers and distributors show sales in April 30 to 104 per cent larger than a year ago, and from 8 per cent to 200 per cent larger than in March this year. Electrical supply interests, 8 reporting, show sales steady to 16 per cent larger than in April 1921, and 2 per cent less to 28 per cent larger than March this year. Four railway supply manufacturers and distributors report gains of from 10 to 62 per cent in their April sales over the corresponding month last year. A further advance was scored in pig iron prices, No. 2 Southern (1.75 to 2.25 per cent silicon) having moved up to \$17.50 to \$18.50 per ton, while Northern iron of the same grade is quoted at \$23 per ton.

Hardware—Sales of the 12 reporting interests during April were from 4 per cent less to 17 per cent larger in dollar value and from 4 to 37 per cent larger in volume than for the corresponding month in 1921. As compared with March this year, sales last month ranged from 4 per cent less to 10 per cent larger. The comment is made that orders are numerous, but small in size, and buying is about equally divided between city and country. Seasonable goods, builders hardware, shelf hardware and sporting goods are moving actively. In the country

sales of automobile sundries have been affected by the wet weather, but are now improving.

Flour—Production of 11 leading mills in the district during April was 252,868 barrels, against 329,428 barrels in March, 250,472 barrels in February and 333,966 barrels in January. Throughout April the demand for flour was slow and unsatisfactory, especially high grades and patents. Purchasing was mainly on a hand to mouth basis, with buyers holding off in expectation of lower prices upon arrival of the new wheat crop. Prices were relatively well sustained due chiefly to the scarcity of prime milling wheat, and of clears and low grade flours. At the moment the export demand centers in low grades, for which domestic consumers are offering better prices than Europeans. Mill operation in the district was at less than 50 per cent of capacity.

Groceries—Gradual and steady improvement in this line is indicated in the reports of 13 leading interests. April sales were 30 per cent less to 14 per cent better than for the same month last year, and averaged about steady with March this year. Unfavorable weather and the floods were largely accountable for the falling off in sales by certain of the reporting firms. Further progress in price stabilization has been made, and marked improvement in sales for forward delivery is reported. Stocks in jobbers hands are now in a better position than at any time since the depression set in in 1920. Collections are reported generally good.

Furniture—Sales in April of 11 reporting interests indicate increases of from 12 to 18 per cent over those of April, 1921, and from 4 to 8 per cent over March. The character of buying is more general, with household furniture in especially good demand. Sales in the South reflect the recent activity in home building. Jobbers, however, are buying closely and mainly for prompt shipment. Sales of furniture for offices are reported only fair. Prices, which are about steady with the preceding month, are the lowest since 1918. Factory operation in the district is at from 70 to 75 per cent of capacity. The big sales at Chicago and Grand Rapids this year will be held from June 15 to July 15, instead of in July as heretofore. The St. Louis sales will be conducted in August.

Drugs and Chemicals—Decreases in sales during April as compared with March by the 7 reporting interests ranged from 2 to 25 per cent. Unfavorable weather was accountable for part of the losses and the decline in prices since a year ago constitutes a factor in the unfavorable showing. Sales of chemicals to manufacturers were much heavier than during the same month in 1921. The trend of prices continues downward, but actual changes during the period under review were slight.

Lumber—The past thirty days have been marked by a sharp increase in the demand for lumber, accompanied by an irregular, but substantial advance in prices. Buying of building woods, notably yellow pine and fir, which was delayed by the backward season, is now proceeding in heavy volume, and is non-speculative in character. Building throughout the country is so active that virtually all lumber moving to retail yards is for immediate or close-by needs. Stock orders are relatively light. Barring a too rapid advance, these conditions are likely to obtain through the early summer, as rail-

roads are handling shipments with as much expedition as ever. The hardwood market has also changed for the better since April 1. Spring rains and floods in the South caused a temporary impasse in production which materially aided the selling position. In addition there has been a brisk demand from oak flooring mills, sash and door factories, planing mills

and automobile plants. The present upward price tendency is stimulating buying by box makers, fixture and even furniture manufacturers. The railroad demand for cross ties, car material and bridge timbers, while confined to small lots, bulks heavily in the aggregate. Sentiment in these lines is optimistic.

Industrial Power Consumption — Public utility companies in the four leading cities of the district report liberal increases in consumption of electrical power by industrial customers during April as compared with the same month last year. With the exception of Louisville, all show increases in April over March, St. Louis recording a gain of 52.3 per cent. The comparative figures follow:

Representative Customers	April, 1922		March, 1922		April, 1922 comp. to Mar. 1922		April, 1922 comp. to April, 1921	
		k. w. h.		k. w. h.				
St. Louis.....	63	8,599,980		5,647,665	+52.3		7,519,397	+14.4
Memphis.....	31	941,900		817,980	+15.1		598,200	+57.4
Little Rock..	11	669,121		628,030	+ 6.5		437,070	+53.1
Louisville....	81	2,098,280		2,204,198	- 4.8		1,682,311	+24.7
Total.	186	12,309,281		9,297,873	+32.4		10,236,978	+20.2

RETAIL

Generally throughout the district reporting retail establishments have experienced decided improvement during the past thirty days. This improvement is reflected in substantial gains in numerous instances and by smaller losses in other cases, as compared with the corresponding period a year ago. Most of the unfavorable showings made were by stores in the coal mining fields where the strike is in progress, or in the areas affected by the high water. Weather conditions have not been uniformly favorable for the seasonal movement of merchandise, but during the last ten days there has been considerable improvement in this respect. Spring apparel, both men's and women's, is moving in larger volume, and piece goods, especially in the country, are reported more active. Jewelers, while still reporting decreases under last year, say that the tone of their business is better. The number of pieces selling is larger and customers more numerous, but in the final results this is more than offset

by extreme dullness in the demand for expensive items. In the hardware line the usual seasonal improvement is noted, with some stores reporting excellent gains, both in the counter sales and mail order trade. Sporting goods, garden supplies, wire goods, automobile accessories, shelf hardware and fishing tackle are being heavily bought. Furniture, floor coverings, hangings and other household articles are in demand. Department stores comment on improved sales of pianos and talking machines. Printers and stationers, while showing losses as compared with a year ago, report business well over that of the preceding month this year. The arrival of early fruits and vegetables has served to stimulate the volume of business of purveyors of foods. Quality of these early products is considerably better than last season, and retail prices are relatively high in the larger cities. As a general rule collections are reported satisfactory. Retailers report that keenness of competition has led to freer credit concessions.

Department Stores — The condition of retail trade during April, 1922, in the leading cities of this district is reflected in the following statement, compiled from reports of 21 representative department stores:

(Percentages)	St. Louis	Louisville	Memphis	Little Rock	Evansville	Quincy	8th District
Net Sales:							
April, 1922, compared with April, 1921.....	- 4.2	- 5.9	- 2.2	+ 2.7	- 8.6	- 8.3	- 3.7
Period January 1 to April 30, 1922, compared with same period in 1921.....	-12.9	-11.2	-13.1	-19.6	- 9.7	-16.0	-13.3
Stocks at end of April, 1922:							
Compared with same month in 1921.....	.5	- 8.	+ 1.3	+10.8	-13.2	+ 1.0	- .4
Compared with stocks at end of Mar., 1922....	+ .6	+ 8.2	+ .2	+ 2.6	- .1	- 3.4	- 1.7
Average stocks on hand at end of each month since Jan. 1, 1922, to average monthly sales during same period.....	356.9	602.4	574.2	470.4	914.3	491.2	437.1
Outstanding orders for April, 1922, compared with previous year's purchases.....	5.4	2.6	6.5	4.1	2.3	4.5	5.1

AGRICULTURE

Generally agricultural prospects in the Eighth Federal Reserve District are excellent. Barring excessive precipitation and floods, which served to delay farm operation, and in bottom lands ruined heavy acreages of growing winter wheat, conditions have been auspicious. During the past three weeks tremendous progress was made in planting spring

crops and soil preparation. The late spring resulted in a rather heavy decrease in the acreage seeded to oats, and it is too late to remedy this deficiency. Otherwise indications point to larger acreages and production of the chief cereals than last year. Winter wheat is in good condition, and May 1 reports of Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Indiana, indi-

cate larger acreages than a year ago. Illinois and Indiana report considerable abandoned acreage, due to flooding. The Missouri winter wheat crop will go to harvest on 2,944,850 acres, which with the present conditions of 87 per cent, should yield 43,024,000 bushels, against 34,390,000 bushels harvested last year.

Planting of corn has made rapid progress, though still backward. In Kentucky and Mississippi the acreage will be smaller, but in the other States of the district, according to most recent reports, it will exceed that of 1921. A considerable part of the abandoned wheat acreage will be planted in corn. In Arkansas the crop is about 70 per cent planted. Rye in Missouri and Illinois is fairly well advanced and the condition favorable. Growers of rice in Arkansas have not been in a hurry to plant, but there has been considerable seeding since the last week of April and the total acreage will probably equal that of last season. Almost universally pastures are in excellent condition. The sod has been well soaked, and the recent days of sunshine have done wonders to promote growth of forage crops. Reports relative to live stock vary somewhat, but are in the main favorable, and indicate a material increase in farm animals, particularly hogs, as compared with the same time last year. Mortality among young pigs in Illinois and Indiana has been unusually heavy.

Due to floods and backward season, the outlook relative to cotton acreage is uncertain. The disposition, however, appears to be to plant as much cotton as possible in the time remaining. In Arkansas an increase of from 10 to 20 per cent is looked for, and farmers in Tennessee and Southern Kentucky plan to avail themselves of any spare acreage to plant to this staple. Reports from Mississippi indicate acreages equal to those of last year, with some counties reporting moderate increases.

Tobacco beds are growing fast, and there are some complaints of damage from worm. In Kentucky prospects are for a considerable increase in acreage, both in the burley and dark districts. In Indiana many beds are established and plants are making satisfactory growth, with plowing being pushed.

Prospects for fruits are uniformly excellent throughout the district. No damage from frost or other causes has occurred, and the outlook for orchards is better than at any time since 1914. Barring some unforeseen contingency, production of apples and seed fruits in Missouri, Arkansas and Southern Illinois will be of bumper proportions. Yields of berries and early vegetables in the South to date have been most satisfactory. A great improvement in the orchards has been made through more scientific pruning, spraying and general cultivation.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, in its report as of May 1, 1922, gives the condition of winter wheat in States of the Eighth Federal Reserve District as follows:

	Acreage		Condition			Forecast 1922 from May 1 condition Bushels	Final estimate 1921 Bushels	Price May 1	
	Per cent aban- doned	Acres remaining to be harvested	1922	1921	ten- year av.			1922	1921
			%	%	%			cents	cents
Arkansas	3.5	74,000	88	86	90	814,000	958,000	125	125
Illinois	5.0	2,636,000	89	94	82	48,094,000	42,638,000	121	120
Indiana	5.0	1,950,000	89	90	82	32,974,000	24,144,000	127	118
Kentucky	3.0	650,000	95	93	87	8,336,000	6,340,000	136	139
Mississippi	5.0	6,000	87	88	86	91,000	84,000	175	133
Missouri	3.7	2,945,000	87	91	85	43,044,000	34,390,000	120	116
Tennessee	2.0	495,000	93	91	87	5,616,000	4,500,000	140	141
United States	14.4	38,131,000	83.5	88.8	87.1	584,793,000	587,032,000	121.0	110.7

Range of prices on typical products in the St. Louis market between April 15 and May 15, with closing quotations on each of these dates, and on May 15, 1921:

	Close April 15	High	Low	Close May 15	Close May 15, 1921
May wheat.....Per bu.	\$1.39½	\$1.45	\$1.34	\$1.39⅞	\$1.21
July wheat....."	1.27⅞	1.26⅞	1.19⅞	1.22½	1.05
September wheat....."	1.18¼	1.19½	1.15⅞	1.17⅞	.....
May corn....."	.59⅞	.60⅞	.58	.59½	.54
July corn....."	.63⅞	.64⅞	.62	.63	.58
September corn....."	.65⅞	.67¼	.64¾	.65⅞	.61
May oats....."	.38¾	.39½	.37¼	.39¼	.36⅞
July oats....."	.41¼	.41¾	.39	.41	.36¾
No. 2 red winter wheat.."	\$1.44 @ 1.47	1.48	1.37	\$1.47 @ 1.48	1.29 @ 1.31
No. 2 hard wheat....."	\$1.43 @ 1.48	1.46	1.33	1.38	1.30
No. 2 corn....."	.59 @ .59½	.63½	.58	.60	.54½
No. 2 white corn....."	.58½	.63	.59	.60½ @ .61½	.56
No. 2 white oats....."	.39 @ .39½	.42	.38	.40½ @ .41	.38
Flour: soft patent.....Per bbl.	6.00 @ 7.00	7.50	6.25	6.75 @ 7.50	6.50 @ 7.00
Flour: spring patent....."	7.00 @ 7.75	8.60	7.40	7.80 @ 8.00	7.25 @ 7.50
Middling cotton.....Per lb.	.17	.19½	.17	.19½	.11½
Hogs on hoof.....Per cwt.	8.25 @ 10.45	11.05	7.50	8.50 @ 10.95	5.50 @ 9.10

LABOR SITUATION

The labor situation in this district is reflected in the following table, compiled from reports received from 200 leading employers in 20 of the largest cities in the district:

	Men	Women	Wage Earners			Pay Roll
			Total	Normal	% of Normal	
April 30, 1922.....	102,460	20,058	122,518	156,761	-21.8	\$7,314,631.46
March 31, 1922.....	101,470	20,215	121,694	156,011	-22.0	6,892,802.20
April 30, 1921.....	102,425	18,141	120,566	156,761	-23.1	7,953,102.00

From the above tabulation it will be noted that the number of employes of the reporting interests increased 1,952 or 1.6% (men increased less than one tenth of one per cent while women increased 10.6%) between April 30, 1921 and April 30, 1922. On April 30, 1921, the number was 23.1% under normal and on March 31, 1922, the total was 22.0% under normal as compared with 21.8% on April 30, 1922. Wages figured on a semi-monthly basis, decreased 8.1% between April 30, 1921 and April 30, 1922.

COMMODITY MOVEMENT

Receipts and shipments of important commodities at St. Louis during April 1922 and 1921, and March, 1922, as reported by the Merchants' Exchange, were as follows:

	Receipts			Shipments		
	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921
Flour, barrels.....	303,400	412,770	306,360	437,130	592,360	330,840
Wheat, bushels.....	1,422,225	2,451,443	3,203,547	1,331,660	2,407,290	2,753,656
Corn, bushels.....	1,196,000	2,210,000	1,301,300	1,211,995	2,402,955	1,188,385
Oats, bushels.....	1,294,000	1,886,000	1,458,000	1,349,940	1,864,440	1,261,720
Lead, pigs.....	308,670	404,630	176,420	122,150	146,490	103,390
Zinc and Spleter, slabs.....	198,180	252,340	114,540	164,150	303,910	217,620
Lumber, cars.....	13,131	15,085	10,211	9,699	10,218	8,148
Meats, pounds.....	17,417,300	13,754,800	12,181,300	22,364,200	22,246,900	20,067,400
Fresh beef, pounds.....	31,000	62,600	2,003,500	16,335,100	15,612,300	19,786,700
Lard, pounds.....	3,318,200	2,709,500	1,483,600	6,728,300	7,083,300	5,926,100
Hides, pounds.....	6,992,700	5,310,700	2,570,300	8,025,400	7,871,800	3,290,800

LIVE STOCK MOVEMENT

As reported by the St. Louis National Stock Yards, receipts and shipments of live stock in April, 1922 and 1921, and March, 1922, were as follows:

	Receipts			Shipments		
	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921	April 1922	March 1922	April 1921
Cattle and Calves.....	55,835	72,312	59,458	32,110	41,931	32,145
Hogs	262,953	286,203	274,480	184,144	196,039	180,145
Sheep	20,497	22,335	28,140	5,519	6,574	14,216
Horses and Mules.....	4,981	9,567	3,664	5,750	10,918	5,308

BUILDING

For the fourth time this year, building permits issued by the five leading cities of the district show an increase over the preceding month, also of the corresponding period a year ago. Accounts from all sections of the district tell of increased activity in the building industry. While residential construction, particularly in the country and small towns, constitutes the principal part of the present movement, other classes of buildings are figuring more prominently in the most recent list of undertakings. Warehouses, factories and hotels are mentioned in reports of work commenced during the past six weeks. In some localities a scarcity of skilled labor is reported, but generally there are sufficient workmen to meet the present demand in the building industry. Further adjustments in wage scales were reported during the period under review, notable among which was the acceptance by carpenters in St. Louis of a reduction from \$1.25 to \$1.12½ per hour. Since May 1 there has been a heavy resumption of road building operations, which had been delayed by unfavorable weather conditions earlier in the year. There has been a slight advance in certain building material prices, principally in the classifications of iron and steel and lumber.

Comparative figures for April in leading cities of the district follow:

	New Construction				Repairs, etc.			
	Permits		Cost		Permits		Cost	
	1922	1921	1922	1921	1922	1921	1922	1921
St. Louis.....	677	564	\$1,705,718	\$ 878,740	583	513	\$409,203	\$248,415
Louisville	295	94	1,997,250	470,550	233	330	178,300	83,650
Memphis	427	191	1,340,280	395,292	29	56	20,600	31,020
Little Rock.....	69	69	176,275	205,825	143	145	43,258	46,124
Evansville	85	44	180,740	33,504	109	72	25,060	10,437
April totals.....	1,553	962	\$5,400,263	\$1,983,911	1,097	1,116	\$676,421	\$419,646
March totals.....	1,405	927	4,510,577	2,083,569	915	1,164	502,030	488,705
February totals.....	844	545	3,762,435	1,298,016	632	653	388,052	328,833

FINANCIAL

The past thirty days have developed a further easing in the credit situation in this district, particularly in the larger centers. City banks are liberally equipped with loanable funds, and the falling off in demand from their commercial customers is causing them to seek investments in order to increase their revenues. Settlements in April and early May with important wholesale lines were unusually heavy, so that these interests are not borrowing as heavily as is frequently the case at this season. Holdings of bonds and commercial paper, also U. S. notes and certificates of a number of the city banks show fair increases. In the country there has been little change in the general status of the money situation. Resources of the banks in rural communities are pretty well employed by seasonal agricultural requirements. In the South cotton planting and the movement of early fruit and vegetable crops have absorbed a considerable volume of credits. Throughout the territory, however, both in the grain and cotton areas, and sections of more diversified production, the comment is made that crops are being put in at smaller cost than in many years. The continued high prices of hogs has resulted in the liquidation of a fair volume of live stock loans, but the demand for financing the live stock industry is still very strong. The recent advance in cotton has resulted in a moderate reduction of credits based on that staple. The trend of rates asked by the commercial banks is lower, though no marked changes were recorded during the period under review. The discount rate of this bank remained unchanged at 4½ per cent on all classes of loans and maturities. Between April 16 and May 16 the net deposits of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis increased

\$3,884,000, and Federal Reserve notes in circulation decreased \$5,414,000, while bills discounted for member banks increased \$3,248,934. As a result of these movements the total reserve carried against combined deposit and Federal Reserve note circulation decreased 6.9 per cent, standing at 67.2 on May 16.

Acceptances—Almost complete apathy has featured the market for acceptances in this district during the past month. The further decline in rates on unendorsed bills to 3½ per cent has served to dry up the demand. No bills to speak of have originated hereabout, and offerings from outside territory are light. Acceptances purchased in the open market by this bank in April totaled only \$150,743, a decrease of \$1,023,056 under the amount purchased in March.

Commercial Paper—The improvement in the preceding issue of this report was pretty well maintained during the period under review. The demand came almost entirely from financial institutions in the larger cities, country banks playing but an insignificant role in the purchasing. Brokers report a good outlet for all choice paper, but buyers are inclined to discriminate against the less well-known names. A fair amount of paper is being put out. Rates sustained a further decline, ranging from 4¼ to 4½ per cent, which compares with 4½ to 5 per cent during the preceding thirty days.

Bonds—While having quieted down somewhat as contrasted with the recent activity, the investment bond market continues brisk, with prices firm. The demand for good bonds of the longer maturities is quite as brisk as ever, with prime municipals and Government obligations in particular favor.

Interest Rates—Between April 16 and May 15 the high, low and customary interest rates prevailing in St. Louis, Memphis and Little Rock, as reported by banks in those cities were as follows:

	St. Louis			Louisville			Memphis			Little Rock		
	H	L	C	H	L	C	H	L	C	H	L	C
Customers' Prime Commercial Paper:												
30 to 90 days.....	6	4½	5½	6	5	6	8	6	6½	8	6	7
4 to 6 months.....	6	4½	5½	6	5	6	8	6	7	8	6	7
Prime Commercial Paper purchased in open market:												
30 to 90 days.....	5¼	4¼	4½	5½	4¾	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
4 to 6 months.....	5¼	4¼	4½	5½	4¾	5	.....	.....	.....	5	4½	4½
Loans to other banks.....	6	5	5½	6	5	5½	7	6	6	7	6	6-7
Bankers' Acceptances of 60 to 90 days:												
Endorsed	4	4	4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Unendorsed .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Loans secured by prime stock exchange collateral or other current collateral:												
Demand	6½	5	5½	6	5	6	8	6	7	8	7	8
3 months	6½	5	5¾	6	6	6	8	6	7	8	6	8
3 to 6 months.....	6½	5	5¾	6	6	6	8	6	7	8	7	8
Cattle Loans.....	7	6	6½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	8	8	8
Commodity paper secured by warehouse receipts, etc.....	6	5	6	6	6	6	7	6	6	8	7	8
Loans secured by Liberty Bonds and certificates.....	6½	5	5½	6	6	6	7	6	6	8	6	7

Savings Deposits—The changes in the number of savings accounts and the amount of savings deposits, exclusive of postal savings deposits, since a month ago and a year ago, as reported by the largest member banks in the leading cities of this district, are shown in the following table:

	May 3, 1922			April 5, 1922		May 1, 1921	
	Number Banks Reporting	Number Savings Accounts	Amount Savings Deposits	Number Savings Accounts	Amount Savings Deposits	Number Savings Accounts	Amount Savings Deposits
St. Louis.....	12	235,191	\$ 63,795,000	234,558	\$ 63,462,000	222,666	\$ 60,738,412
Louisville	7	133,912	20,502,000	133,167	20,431,000	117,905	17,669,894
Memphis	7	55,395	13,437,000	56,889	13,209,000	51,699	12,459,057
Little Rock.....	5	25,222	6,101,000	24,092	6,183,000	22,349	5,399,194
Evansville	4	20,935	8,155,000	21,023	8,190,000	19,898	7,952,303
Total.....	35	470,655	\$111,990,000	469,729	\$111,675,000	434,517	\$104,218,860

Condition of Banks—The condition of banks in this district and changes since a month ago and last year, are reflected in the following comparative statement, showing the principal resources and liabilities of member banks in St. Louis, Louisville, Memphis, Little Rock and Evansville:

	May 10, 1922	April 12, 1922	May 11, 1921
Number of banks reporting.....	37	37	37
Loans and discounts (excluding rediscounts):			
Secured by U. S. Govt. obligations.....	\$ 13,346,000	\$ 12,754,000	\$ 17,793,000
Secured by stocks and bonds other than U. S. Bonds..	126,635,000	124,986,000	118,708,000
All other loans and discounts.....	274,112,000	280,913,000	293,420,000
Total loans and discounts.....	\$414,093,000	\$418,653,000	429,921,000
Investments:			
U. S. Bonds.....	27,011,000	25,134,000	27,706,000
U. S. Victory Notes.....	3,403,000	2,724,000	2,142,000
U. S. Treasury Notes.....	6,212,000	5,692,000	.....
U. S. Certificates of Indebtedness.....	5,090,000	4,395,000	1,077,000
Other bonds, stocks and securities.....	75,828,000	74,322,000	66,331,000
Total investments.....	\$117,544,000	\$112,267,000	\$ 97,256,000
Reserve balance with Federal Reserve Bank.....	44,837,000	41,476,000	41,111,000
Cash in vault.....	7,039,000	6,957,000	7,629,000
Net demand deposits on which reserve is computed.....	320,080,000	319,964,000	310,899,000
Time deposits.....	161,493,000	159,173,000	143,636,000
Government deposits.....	6,454,000	4,461,000	4,707,000
Bills discounted with Federal Reserve Bank.....	4,316,000	6,587,000	29,452,000
Bills payable with Federal Reserve Bank.....	3,353,000	1,618,000	14,824,000

Debits to Individual Accounts—The following table gives the total debits charged by banks to checking accounts, savings accounts and trust accounts of individuals, firms, corporations and U. S. Government and also certificates of deposit paid, in the leading cities of this district during the past month and corresponding period a year ago. Charges to the accounts of banks and bankers are not included. These figures are considered the most reliable index available for indicating actual spending by the public during the periods which they cover.

Debits for four weeks ending.....	May 17, 1922	April 19, 1922	May, 1922 comp. to April, 1922	May 18, 1921	May, 1922 comp. to May, 1921
St. Louis.....	\$506,408,000	\$508,358,000	- .4	\$513,305,000	- 1.3
Louisville	124,565,000	122,601,000	+ 1.6	118,518,000	+ 5.1
Memphis	102,433,000	90,037,000	+13.8	82,742,000	+23.8
Little Rock.....	35,756,000	35,099,000	+ 1.9	35,119,000	+ 1.8
East St. Louis and Natl. Stock Yards..	39,721,000	33,715,000	+17.8	35,426,000	+12.1
Evansville	26,636,000	22,820,000	+16.7	19,174,000	+38.9
Springfield	10,309,000	11,658,000	-11.6	10,189,000	+ 1.2
Quincy	8,721,000	9,038,000	- 3.5	9,181,000	- 5.0
Owensboro	4,415,000	4,853,000	- 9.0	.....	.....
Greenville	3,171,000	3,532,000	-10.2	.....	.....
Helena	3,699,000	3,360,000	+10.1	.....	.....

FEDERAL RESERVE OPERATIONS

In April the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis discounted \$56,597,306 of paper for 278 member banks, which is an increase of \$15,578,507 over the amount discounted in March and a decrease of 9 in the number of banks accommodated. Acceptances purchased in April amounted to \$150,743, a decrease of \$1,023,056 under the preceding month. The discount rate of this bank remained unchanged at 4½ per cent.

Changes in the assets and liabilities of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis since a month ago and last year are shown in the following comparative statement (in thousands of dollars):

RESOURCES:	May 17,	April 19,	May 18,	LIABILITIES:	May 17,	April 19,	May 18,
	1922	1922	1921		1922	1922	1921
Gold Reserves.....	\$ 83,999	\$ 93,447	\$ 94,648	Capital paid in.....	\$ 4,691	\$ 4,633	\$ 4,475
Legal tender, notes, silver, etc.....	17,679	18,435	11,224	Surplus	9,388	9,388	8,346
Total Cash Reserves..	\$101,678	\$111,882	\$105,872	Reserve for U. S. Govt. franchise tax.....	8	92	594
Discounts secured by U. S. Govt. obligations.....	7,540	7,300	32,040	Deposits	68,554	73,138	67,645
Discounts otherwise secured or unsecured..	14,762	18,136	42,516	F. R. notes in circulation	72,496	76,963	108,600
Bills bought in open market.....	2,190	820	435	F. R. Bank notes in circulation	3,335	3,365	6,982
U. S. Govt. securities....	28,216	24,940	14,261	Deferred availability items	34,301	31,115	31,446
Total earning assets....	\$ 52,708	\$ 51,196	\$ 89,252	Other liabilities.....	771	666	1,640
Uncollected items.....	35,556	32,873	32,832	Total liabilities.....	\$193,544	\$199,360	\$229,728
Other resources.....	3,602	3,409	1,772	Combined reserve ratio..	72.1%	74.5%	60.1%
Total Resources.....	\$193,544	\$199,360	\$229,728				

(Compiled May 20, 1922)