

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

MONTHLY REVIEW OF

GENERAL BUSINESS CONDITIONS

IN FEDERAL RESERVE DISTRICT No. 8

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THE usual stimulation of fall and winter demand was reflected in general business throughout this district during the past thirty days. Production of commodities in the division of manufacture maintained the gains noted during the preceding month, and in a number of important lines further increases were made. The movement of merchandise into consumption was on a large scale, the total being considerably in excess of the month before, while compared with the corresponding period a year ago formidable gains were recorded. Whereas improvement was particularly marked in the retail end of distribution, wholesale interests also gave an excellent account of themselves. In the latter classification the outstanding feature of the month's activities was the heavy increase in orders for forward delivery, especially of goods for common consumption.

In spite of the high temperatures prevailing during November and the first week of December, buying of typically winter merchandise was marked by good progress. The movement of overcoats, suits and heavy clothing generally, which had been backward earlier in the season, was reported brisk, both in the larger centers of population and the country. Dry goods, groceries, hats and caps, millinery, hardware, furniture, bakeries, confectionery and boots and shoes were among the lines showing improvement. In the case of dry goods and hardware the usual seasonal slowing down in sales was less noticeable than in the past, and failed altogether to find reflection in reports of several leading interests. The comment is made that retail merchants and the public are still discriminating in their purchasing and insisting on values and quality, but are taking a greater variety and better grade of goods than at this time last year.

According to reports from department stores and other retailers generally through the district the Christmas holiday trade opened this year from two to three weeks earlier than in 1921. Indications are that the volume of this business will be well in excess of a year ago. Sales during the first two weeks in December show substantial increases over the corresponding period in 1921, and in case of jewelry, toys, musical instruments and other typical holiday goods are the largest since 1919. The stores were crowded with shoppers, and their spending was on a liberal scale. More than the usual amount of advertising of holiday goods was reported in the cities, with results in the main satisfactory. While purchases of gifts were largely

of useful articles, this feature was less marked than during the two preceding years.

In addition to improvement in manufacturing and merchandising, the period under review witnessed satisfactory results in other branches of activity. Increases in employment were indicated in reports received direct to this bank and through the U. S. Department of Labor. Involuntary idleness is at a minimum in most sections of the district, and in several important industries there is a scarcity of skilled workers. Slight gains in payrolls and per capita earnings were reported. Prices of farm products were well maintained. Cereal values, after downward reactions toward the middle of the period, closed higher than at the end of the preceding thirty days, and all show substantial gains over the corresponding period a year ago. The movement of cereals and live stock to market was in heavy volume, and with favorable marketing conditions, the general position of the farmer is showing augmented strength.

Reports of public utility companies in many instances show business close or equal to the peak months in 1920. Consumption of electric power for strictly manufacturing purposes developed moderate gains, while total sales of current for all uses were the highest thus far recorded. Conditions in the coal fields are better than at any time since the great strike was called last April, and in some of the larger mining communities are reported nearly normal. As contrasted with October, building permits in the district showed a slight decrease, but the aggregate expenditure represented was almost double that of the corresponding month in 1921. Architects and contractors report a large accumulation of construction projects in their vaults which are awaiting lower building costs.

In general the movement of commodity prices during the past thirty days was rather irregular. While declines were noted on a number of articles, notably pig iron and some cotton goods, the trend as a whole continues upward, though not as markedly as during the month before. For the most part food values advanced, both in the raw and manufactured forms. Some bakery products were higher, but not the more staple articles in this category. The report of a leading bakery interest shows no change in the price of bread as compared with a month ago, and as contrasted with a year ago there has been a reduction in the standard small size loaf of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in price and an increase of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent in weight of the loaf. In the large size loaf

a price reduction of 16½ per cent has taken place, with an increase of 15.79 per cent in weight.

Improvement in general financial and industrial conditions in the Southern sections of the district, noted in the preceding issue of this report, continued during the period under review. Marketing of the cotton crop has progressed rapidly, with demand excellent and prices high. Middling cotton in the St. Louis market ranged from 26¼ cents to 25¼ cents, per pound, closing at 25¾ cents on December 15. Planters are paying off their indebtedness and are in a position to make new purchases. Sentiment throughout the cotton section is more optimistic than in several years, and early returns indicate that the Christmas holiday trade will be exceptionally prosperous. Similar conditions obtain in the tobacco areas, where the markets have opened and producers are realizing satisfactory prices.

According to officials of railroads operating in the district, traffic is holding up in good shape. The slight decrease in loadings during November as compared with the preceding month is accounted for chiefly by seasonal considerations and was considerably less than in former years. The weekly totals continue to exhibit heavy gains over the corresponding periods in 1921 and 1920. Loadings of coal and forest products made a particularly favorable showing, and the same is true of merchandise and miscellaneous freight. For the second consecutive month passenger business of the reporting roads showed a gain over the same month a year ago, the increase in November being approximately 7 per cent. The St. Louis Terminal Railway Association, which includes 26 roads operating through this gateway, interchanged 205,056 loads in November, against 209,036 in October and 152,349 loads in November, 1921. The decrease in November under October was due to the fact that the former month contains one more day than the latter. During the first nine days of December 59,336 loads were interchanged, against 64,767 loads during the same period in November. Continued betterment is reported in the car situation.

Coal producers and dealers complain of quietness in the demand for fuel. The unusually warm weather which lasted up until the second week in December retarded buying by domestic users, and purchasing of steaming coal continued on a hand to mouth basis. Consumers generally are looking for a further decline in prices, and putting off covering on their requirements as long as possible. As a

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

District	Number			Amount		
	Nov. 1922	Oct. 1922	Nov. 1921	November 1922	October 1922	November 1921
Boston, First	149	154	132	\$ 2,652,701	\$ 3,950,610	\$ 2,302,167
New York, Second	344	364	368	9,548,910	6,239,259	7,672,732
Philadelphia, Third.....	81	76	102	2,945,345	2,122,521	2,944,372
Cleveland, Fourth	122	151	141	6,395,906	5,653,108	10,689,437
Richmond, Fifth	121	91	143	2,938,562	2,317,926	3,825,412
Atlanta, Sixth	122	119	204	1,928,165	1,716,140	3,711,252
Chicago, Seventh	236	232	238	5,928,921	5,185,636	7,651,665
St. Louis, Eighth	120	91	98	2,060,085	1,661,606	2,028,340
Minneapolis, Ninth.....	82	86	120	1,270,805	1,496,211	3,413,504
Kansas City, Tenth	74	92	100	753,984	1,272,345	2,373,700
Dallas, Eleventh.....	83	91	145	1,361,108	1,014,291	3,484,803
San Francisco, Twelfth	203	161	197	2,480,805	2,017,785	3,372,455
Total.....	1,737	1,708	1,988	\$40,265,297	\$34,647,438	\$53,469,839

result mine operations have averaged only from two to three days per week. There has been some price cutting by independents, but generally standard grades hold steady with a month ago. The estimated cumulative production of soft coal this year to December 2 was 365,387,000 tons, against 377,286,000 tons for the corresponding period in 1921 and 505,366,000 tons in 1920. Metallurgical coke is moving into the district in somewhat heavier volume, and both demand and prices are easier. Domestic coke is scarce and strong in price.

Automobile production for the country as a whole increased slightly during November, the output of passenger cars by companies reporting direct or through the Automobile Chamber of Commerce being 215,408 against 214,090 in October. Production of trucks in November totaled 20,876 against 20,591 in October. Reports of 230 dealers scattered through the district indicate the usual seasonal shrinkage in sales, but the general comment was that business was well up to expectations and considerably larger than for the corresponding period a year ago. The demand for closed cars is described as good, and stocks of used cars have been largely reduced, and are lower than at any time this year. Sales of accessories were 10 per cent larger than a year ago. Reports of proposed advances in tire prices had a stimulating effect on dealers' purchases, and sales at retail were also in large volume. Sales of new passenger cars in the \$800 to \$1,200 class were relatively heavier than the more expensive makes.

From virtually all sections of the district reports of collections during the period under review were favorable. Current accounts of wholesalers and manufacturers are being promptly met, and a number of retail merchants who have not been in a position to do so for many months are now discounting their bills. In the South there has been further progress in liquidation of old indebtedness. Some backwardness is still noted in the coal fields, but as contrasted with the past several months marked improvement has taken place. Answers to 330 questionnaires addressed to representative interests throughout the Eighth Federal Reserve District asking for data relative to collections show the following results: 6.4 per cent excellent, 50 per cent good, 40.6 per cent fair and only 3 per cent poor.

The per capita circulation of the United States on December 1 was \$41.80 against \$41.44 on November 1, and \$41.93 on December 1, 1921.

MANUFACTURING AND WHOLESALE

Boots and Shoes — November sales of the 11 leading interests were 6.9 per cent larger than for the same month in 1921, and 13.6 per cent under the October total of this year. Business with all the interests is described as good, and returns for the first two weeks in December indicate gains from 20 to 30 per cent over the final month in 1921. As has been the case for several months, sales of men's shoes are relatively better than on women's wear, due to uncertainty relative to styles. Heavy ordering of the latter goods is looked for shortly after the first of the year. There was no change worthy of note in prices of finished footwear during the past thirty days, but a lower trend was noted in certain raw materials. This, however, has not gone far enough to put raw materials back to the levels on which present prices of finished goods were based. Factory operations were at from 96 to 100 per cent of capacity, and orders booked will insure continuance of this rate for the next sixty days.

Clothing — Reports of the leading interests are somewhat irregular, some showing good gains while others indicate decrease in sales and shipments as compared with the corresponding period a year ago. Unseasonably warm weather and higher prices are given as the main causes holding back buying. Manufacturers report liberal orders of men's and boys' wear for spring delivery, but advance business on women's cloaks, suits and skirts is relatively less satisfactory. The recent cold weather has stimulated ordering of overcoats and other seasonal garments, and some difficulty has been experienced in meeting the belated demand. The trend of prices continues upward. Sales of the 23 reporting interests in November were 2.1 per cent less than in October and 5.9 per cent larger than for the corresponding period a year ago.

Iron and Steel Products — The outstanding feature under this classification has been the resumption of pig iron buying. Melters, who were holding off for lower prices, have come into the market in force since December 1, and tonnages placed during the first half of the month were larger than for the preceding eight weeks. Covering on first quarter requirements has been in fair volume, though still under normal for this season. Pig iron prices receded sharply, No. 2 Southern (1.75 to 2.25 per cent silicon) dropping to \$21, furnace, while the low on Northern of the same grade was around \$26.75. In the immediate past there have been a stiffening in prices, Southern reacting to \$23 and Northern to \$28 per ton. Production of finished and semi-finished materials showed a slight increase over the preceding month, and was about 30 per cent greater than for the same period a year ago. The demand for plates, sheets, bars and miscellaneous warehouse materials was reported excellent, with stocks light. Shipments from Eastern and Northern producing points are arriving more promptly. Fabricators of structural material report less than the usual seasonal decrease in demand for their wares. Railroads are still buying in large volume, and sales to the automobile interests and oil fields are holding up well. Stove manufacturers, 7 reporting, show November sales 38 per cent in excess of a year ago; wire rope makers, 5 reporting,

show November sales 42 per cent larger than in 1921; farm implement makers, 6 interests reporting, showed 30.1 per cent larger sales in November than last year; railway supplies, 5 interests reporting, showed a gain of 22.5 per cent in November sales over a year ago and boiler makers, 6 interests reporting, showed November sales 18.3 per cent in excess of the same month in 1921.

Hardware — The period under review developed increases in both tonnage and dollar value in this line, as contrasted with the corresponding time in 1921. Sales during the first half of December indicate that the increase for the whole month will make an even more favorable showing than October in the comparison with the corresponding month last year. Replies to questionnaires addressed to the leading hardware interests state that the improvement extends well through the entire line. Goods and supplies used on farms are in particularly active demand. Wire and wire products are moving well, and shelf hardware, sporting goods, and cutlery sales reflect stimulation of the holiday trade. Aggregate sales of the 12 reporting interests during November were 24½ per cent larger than for the same month in 1921 and 7.5 per cent in excess of October this year.

Electrical Supplies — The open winter, which has permitted of building operations being continued later than is ordinarily the case, has had a beneficial effect on this line. Orders for wiring devices and general electrical installations have been exceptionally large for this season, and sales to railroads and public utility companies during the period under review were heavy. The demand for holiday goods, such as heating apparatus, radio outfits, household appliances, electrical toys, and fancy lamps was reported brisk, with the volume of these goods disposed of being well in excess of a year ago. Sales of the 7 reporting interests in November were 24.2 per cent larger than for the same month in 1921 and 6.4 per cent in excess of October this year.

Flour — Production of the 11 leading mills in the district during November was 385,306 barrels, the largest output for any month this year, and comparing with 365,306 barrels in October and 261,400 barrels in November, 1921. New business during late November and the first week of December was dull. Buying for domestic account was in small lots, and no improvement whatever developed in the export situation. With the rise in wheat prices during the past two weeks, the inquiry for flour has improved, and shipping instructions on old contracts were large enough to keep many of the mills grinding at capacity. Operation during the period under review averaged about 77 per cent of capacity. Buying into 1923 is in small volume.

Dry Goods — A feature of the business in this line during the past six weeks has been the sharp increase in advance orders. The rise in prices of certain staples, particularly those based on cotton, has had the effect of stimulating buying. The sold up condition of many Eastern and Southern mills has resulted in competition for surplus stocks. The condition of hosiery and women's ready to wear garments is reported somewhat better than thirty days ago, though hosiery is not moving as well as

at this time last year. Sales of the 11 reporting interests were 35.2 per cent larger than for the same month in 1921, and 9.6 per cent less than those of October this year.

Groceries—Reports of leading interests in the grocery line covering November, indicate that the business has returned to a basis more nearly normal than at any time since the reaction began in 1920. Price stabilization has advanced far, and the comment is made that profits are more dependable than has been the case in many months. Specifically, sales of the 17 reporting interests in November were 8.3 per cent larger than for the same period in 1921 and about 3.3 per cent less than in October this year. Price changes during the past month have been negligible, save on certain canned goods and dressed meats, which were higher. Collections are mainly good.

Drugs and Chemicals—Further declines in sales as compared with a year ago were shown in the November questionnaires of leading drug and chemical interests. The losses are explained in part by unseasonable weather and a slowing down in buying of crude chemicals by large manufacturers. The movement of sundries and specialties for holiday trade was large, but a less favorable showing was made by proprietary medicines, remedial drugs, essential oils, etc. Price movements were more numerous during the past six weeks, with the tendency toward higher levels. Sales of the 7 reporting interests in November were 8¾ per cent under the same month in 1921, and 6 per cent less than in October this year.

Industrial Power Consumption—Reports for November indicate a continuance of the upward trend in power consumption, except in St. Louis. The decline in this case is accounted for by the use of current in large refrigerating plants and by the motor car industry, both of which undergo a seasonal contraction at this time. Comparative figures follow:

	Representative Customers	Nov., 1922		Oct., 1922		Nov., 1922 comp. to Oct., 1922		Nov., 1921 comp. to Nov., 1921	
St. Louis	67	11,613,554	k. w. h.	12,233,005	k. w. h.	— 5.1	9,196,023	k. w. h.	+26.3
Memphis	31	1,221,070	"	1,007,280	"	+21.2	1,046,290	"	+16.7
Little Rock	11	726,069	"	626,606	"	+16.3	597,458	"	+21.5
Louisville	81	3,084,000	"	3,015,351	"	+ 2.3	1,950,000	"	+58.2
Total	191	16,644,693	"	16,882,242	"	— 1.4	12,789,771	"	+30.1

RETAIL

The arrival of more seasonable weather and the holiday demand had a stimulating effect on retail trade during the period under review, with activity particularly marked since December 1. Reports from all the large cities tell of stores crowded to the point of congestion with Christmas shoppers. Heavily augmented sales forces in many instances have been unable to adequately serve the crowds. Virtually all varieties of goods were being purchased in large volume, with luxuries and articles not strictly in the classification of necessities figuring more prominently in the demand than was the case a year ago. Accounts from country stores indicate relatively as great activity as those from the cities. Winter merchandise is moving briskly, particularly overcoats and other heavy garments. Reporting clothing interests show sales in November from 10 to 20 per cent in excess of the same period in 1921, and 5½ per cent larger than the

Furniture—Sales of the 11 leading interests in November were 19¾ per cent larger than for the corresponding period a year ago, and approximately 7 per cent in excess of the October total. Factory operation averaged about 90 per cent of capacity, with several of the larger plants working full time. Stock orders have been unusually large, and some factories are booked up for the next ninety days, and are not accepting orders further ahead than March. Virtually the entire line has participated in the improvement, but the movement of household furniture and hotel and hospital supplies has been particularly heavy. No price changes in finished goods worthy of comment were reported, but the trend of raw stock is upward, particularly glass, lumber and hardware. The winter markets will be held in Chicago and Grand Rapids during January, at which prices for the ensuing three months will be determined.

Lumber—During the past thirty days there has been great price stability in building lumber, with seasonal decline in demand. In factory lumber, on the other hand, autumn activity was maintained in good volume through the early part of December, and the period was marked by advances in hardwoods and shop grades of cypress. Everything in the hardwood line moved up, more or less, except quartered gum, which held about stationary. There was some price improvement, also, in railroad ties and collateral lines of forest products. The year's volume of the lumber movement to and from the St. Louis market will show an increase of probably a little more than 30 per cent for receipts, over 1921, and around 20 per cent gain for shipments

preceding month this year. Jewelers report their business very satisfactory, with sales running as high as 30 per cent over last year. Purchasing of gems, silverware and watches is in large volume, with many expensive pieces being taken. Hardware dealers report the usual seasonal quietness in certain lines, but this has been more than offset by their sales of seasonal and holiday goods. November sales of the reporting hardware interests were well in excess of the corresponding period in 1921. Stationery interests and printing shops report no change worthy of note during the past month, but comment on the heavy buying of Christmas specialties. The activity reported in the preceding issue of this review by furniture dealers was well maintained during the past thirty days. Their sales of household goods showed large gains over a year ago, and throughout the line improvement was shown.

Department Stores—The condition of retail trade during November, 1922, in the leading cities of this district is reflected in the following statement, compiled from reports of 20 representative department stores:

(Percentages)	St. Louis	Louisville	Memphis	Little Rock	Evansville	Quincy	8th District
Net Sales:							
Nov., 1922, compared with Nov., 1921.....	+ 4.1	+ 6.6	+15.7	+ 1.8	- 1.7	+ 6.9	+ 6.1
Period July 1 to Nov. 30, 1922, compared with same period in 1921.....	+ 4.7	+ 1.7	+11.3	- 6.0	-10.3	+ 1.7	+ 4.3
Stocks at end of November, 1922:							
Compared with same month in 1921.....	+ 0.2	-15.4	- 2.7	+ 5.7	-19.7	- 3.5	- 2.0
Compared with stocks at end of Oct., 1922.....	+ 2.3	+ 1.2	+ 6.3	+ 2.9	- 4.2	- 4.5	+ 2.7
Average stocks on hand at end of each month since July 1, 1922, to average monthly sales during same period.....	366.6	364.6	468.0	443.2	673.3	493.5	392.8
Outstanding orders for November, 1922, compared with previous year's purchases.....	6.0	3.3	12.4	5.3	1.0	4.4	6.4

AGRICULTURE

Generally through the grain areas of the district, winter crops have been making rapid growth and are entering the cold weather in a strong position. Rains over the Northern stretches of the district furnished needed moisture, but there is a lack of snow protection. Reports from all the cereal producing states show less Hessian fly damage than usual, due to general observance of fly immune dates in seeding. Fall plowing and farm work is well up, and the condition of live stock is exceptionally good. Farm help is plentiful, but farmers in many localities are refusing to pay wages asked, and are doing much of their own work.

Husking of corn is largely completed, and the greater portion of the crop is housed. Most recent returns indicate quality of the crop good, though there are still numerous complaints of undersized and light ears, due to the drouth early in the growing year. Unusually large quantities of corn are being cribbed for feeding on farms.

Yields of white potatoes are larger than early estimates as a rule. The movement of this crop continues slow, with prices and marketing conditions not uniformly favorable for growers.

Most recent reports indicate favorable conditions in the tobacco sections. The burley loose leaf floor auction markets, for sale of the 1922 crop, opened at most points ten to fifteen days earlier than usual, but have been retarded by dry weather. Recent rains are expected to accelerate movement of the crop. Common, medium and good grades are selling much higher than the preceding two

crops, while fine grades are somewhat lower, resulting in an average price to date of 29 cents per pound. The Green River District opened its loose leaf auction market at Owensboro, Kentucky on November 20, and has sold approximately 4,000,000 pounds at an average price of 24 cents per pound in green condition. The Henderson stemming district loose leaf auction markets have sold in that district to date about 1,250,000 pounds at an average price of 16½ cents per pound, and the one sucker loose leaf markets have disposed of about 5,000,000 pounds to date at 13½ cents per pound, green weight. The trend is to advance prices on common to medium and good grades, with reasonable limits on good tobacco, the best dark manufacturing leaf selling at 20 cents per pound.

The Cooperative Marketing Association in the Green River, Henderson and One Sucker districts has not opened to receive tobacco and has not announced prices.

Threshing of rice in Arkansas is practically completed, and returns indicate a yield of 84 to 85 per cent of normal, or 45½ bushels per acre. Prices have not changed materially during the past thirty days, but the demand is active and clean rice is selling at about \$1.05 per bushel on blue rose grades. Honduras types are particularly strong and bringing from \$1.25 to \$1.40 per bushel. Weather conditions were favorable for harvesting and threshing, and the crop is moving out as rapidly as exigencies of transportation will permit. The total output of rice for Arkansas will be approximately 7,350,000 bushels.

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

	Close Nov. 15	High	Low	Close Dec. 15	Close Dec. 15, 1921
December wheat.....Per bu.	\$1.18¾	\$1.22¾	\$1.14¾	\$1.22	\$1.08¾
May wheat..... "	1.16½	1.23½	1.12½	1.21¾	1.10¾
July wheat..... "	1.06¾	1.13½	1.04½	1.11¾	1.00½
December corn..... "	.70¾	.75	.69	.75	.46½
May corn..... "	.70¾	.74¾	.68¾	.73¾	.51¾
July corn..... "	.70¾	.73¾	.67¾	.73¾	.52¾
December oats..... "	.45	.76½	.43¾	.46¾	.33¾
May oats..... "	.44¾	.48	.43	.48	.38¾
No. 2 red winter wheat..... "	\$1.27 @ 1.31	1.41	1.29	1.40	\$1.20 @ 1.21
No. 2 hard wheat..... "	1.21 @ 1.22	1.24	1.16	1.24	1.10
No. 2 corn..... "	.72 @ .72½	.76	.70	.76	.47¾
No. 2 white corn..... "	.71½ @ .73½	.77	.70½	.77	.47½
No. 2 white oats..... "	.45¾ @ .45½	.47½	.44	.47½	.34½
Flour: soft patent.....Per bbl.	6.00 @ 7.00	7.00	6.00	\$6.00 @ 7.00	5.75 @ 6.75
Flour: hard patent..... "	6.45 @ 6.50	6.85	6.40	6.75	6.25 @ 6.70
Middling cotton.....Per lb.	.26¾	.26¾	.25¾	.25¾	.18
Hogs on hoof.....Per cwt.	7.00 @ 8.40	8.60	6.15	7.10 @ 8.35	5.25 @ 7.80

COMMODITY MOVEMENT

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

	Receipts			Shipments		
	Nov., 1922	Oct., 1922	Nov., 1921	Nov., 1922	Oct., 1922	Nov., 1921
Flour, barrels	392,610	417,860	439,440	637,060	638,140	515,910
Wheat, bushels.....	4,277,518	3,945,936	1,583,005	3,674,970	2,909,580	1,544,610
Corn, bushels	2,189,382	2,524,600	1,816,644	1,519,425	1,949,550	1,802,870
Oats, bushels	2,988,000	2,820,000	1,044,000	2,405,695	2,001,190	900,590
Lead, pigs.....	265,080	372,350	184,150	192,290	288,190	76,660
Zinc and Spelter, slabs.....	225,550	244,140	239,980	216,640	270,120	310,780
Lumber, cars	12,855	13,659	15,436	10,445	10,834	11,762
Meats, pounds.....	17,779,300	22,967,100	17,503,900	28,205,000	21,315,700	23,128,000
Fresh beef, pounds.....	198,700	102,900	324,500	21,365,300	21,947,500	19,615,300
Lard, pounds.....	4,674,100	5,247,200	4,225,100	8,801,700	10,866,300	6,206,100
Hides, pounds.....	6,250,400	4,790,100	4,641,100	9,128,500	6,550,300	7,621,700

LIVE STOCK MOVEMENT

	Receipts			Shipments		
	Nov., 1922	Oct., 1922	Nov., 1921	Nov., 1922	Oct., 1922	Nov., 1921
Cattle and Calves.....	153,733	207,283	125,189	110,283	129,420	80,510
Hogs	361,772	295,819	261,902	233,992	185,872	227,693
Sheep	39,119	53,861	38,419	14,061	22,889	13,167
Horses and Mules.....	12,661	13,798	6,333	12,487	13,236	7,429

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:

	Men	Women	Wage Earners			Pay Roll
			Total	Normal	% of Normal	
Nov. 30, 1922.....	115,502	20,510	136,012	158,460	-14.2	\$10,432,084.17
Oct. 31, 1922.....	115,428	20,305	135,733	158,671	-14.5	10,411,542.30
Nov. 30, 1921.....	105,805	18,630	124,435	158,460	-21.5	9,301,476.14

It will be noted that the number of employees of reporting interests increased 11,577 (men increased 9.2 per cent while women increased 10.1 per cent) between November 30, 1921, and November 30, 1922. Wages, figured on a semi-monthly basis, increased 2.6 per cent during the same period.

BUILDING

Building permits in the five leading cities of the district showed a slight decrease in November under the October total, but the dollar value represented was nearly double that of the corresponding month in 1921. Up until the second week in December weather over virtually the entire district was auspicious for outdoor work, and considerable progress was reported on buildings under way. As has been the case for the past several months, residential construction predominates in new permits issued, but the November list includes a liberal portion of industrial plants, hotels, hospitals and municipal buildings. Makers of building materials report a slight seasonal decline in sales of their goods. The total production of Portland cement in the United States in October was 11,349,000 barrels against the record October output of 12,287,000 and 8,291,000 barrels in November, 1921.

Comparative building figures for November 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.....	635	468	\$2,601,930	\$ 777,410	451	359	\$248,859	\$197,715
Louisville	198	95	1,255,900	351,500	85	48	48,075	45,650
Memphis	288	214	1,159,040	767,280	56	11	30,575	43,260
Little Rock.....	89	73	254,550	241,600	145	115	90,150	55,712
Evansville	56	31	108,200	79,495	45	37	14,700	11,085
Nov. totals.....	1,266	881	\$5,379,620	\$2,217,285	782	570	\$432,359	\$353,422
Oct. totals.....	1,513	1,179	5,892,607	3,355,088	979	790	461,030	333,396
Sept. totals.....	1,461	1,273	4,919,432	5,453,742	912	874	464,510	483,883

FINANCIAL

Aside from a somewhat more active demand for credits, the financial situation underwent no change worthy of note during the period under review. Liquidation in all sections of the district continues on a satisfactory scale, and is particularly notable in the case of large borrowers of banks in the cities. Throughout the South the results of heavy cotton marketing and high prices are reflected in excellent payments to both merchants and banks. A considerable reduction has been recorded in the total of old indebtedness. Grains have moved to market in larger volume, and loans based thereon are being paid off. There is still an active demand for funds to purchase live stock, especially in the Northern areas, where the number of cattle and hogs on feed in some counties is the largest on record for this season. The rice and tobacco markets have opened, and initial prices paid to producers of these products have been satisfactory. Deposits are holding up well, with totals of this bank and reporting member banks larger than thirty days ago. Funds with the commercial banks are plenti-

ful, and interest rates slightly easier. Between November 15 and December 15 net deposits of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis increased \$5,997,000. Federal Reserve notes in circulation decreased \$790,000, and there was a decrease of \$5,224,240 in paper discounted for member banks. The total reserve carried against combined deposit and Federal Reserve note liability decreased .7 per cent, standing at 70.2 per cent on December 15.

Commercial Paper—The demand for commercial paper continued active during the period under review, with sales of reporting brokers showing gains in November ranging from 20 to 52 per cent over the corresponding period a year ago. Returns for the first half of December indicate heavy increases over the corresponding time in 1921. Both city and country banks are in the market, and paper originating is insufficient to fill the demand. Many large commercial interests which usually put out paper at this time of year, are not in the market for funds. Rates range in the extremes between 4½ and 5 per cent.

Interest Rates—Between December 15 and November 15 the high, low and customary interest rates prevailing in St. Louis, Louisville, 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	4	5	6	4¾	6	6	5½	6	8	6	7
4 to 6 months.....	6	4	5	6	5	6	6	6	6	8	6	7
Prime Commercial Paper purchased in open market:												
30 to 90 days.....	5½	4¾	4¾-5	4¾	4¾	4¾	.....	.....	.....	5	4¾	5
4 to 6 months.....	5	4¾	4¾	4¾	4¾	4¾	.....	.....	.....	5	4¾	5
Loans to other banks.....	7	5	5½	6	5	6	7	6	6	7	6	6
Bankers' Acceptances of 60 to 90 days:												
Endorsed .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4¾	4½	4¾
Unendorsed .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Loans secured by prime stock exchange collateral or other current collateral:												
Demand	6½	4½	5½	6	5	6	6	6	6	8	6	7
3 months	6½	4¾	5½	6	5	6	6	6	6	8	6	7
3 to 6 months.....	6	4¾	5½	6	5	6	6	5	6	8	6	7
Cattle loans.....	7	5½	6	6	6	6	.....	.....	.....	8	7	8
Commodity paper secured by warehouse receipts, etc.....	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	8	6	7
Loans secured by Liberty Bonds and certificates.....	6	4½	5½	6	5	6	6	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:

	Dec. 6, 1922			Nov. 1, 1922		Dec. 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	244,042	\$ 68,661,000	243,362	\$ 67,204,000	226,352	\$ 61,067,441
Louisville	7	141,871	21,496,000	141,568	21,447,000	122,160	18,313,801
Memphis	7	58,539	15,314,000	57,930	14,503,000	55,328	13,599,361
Little Rock.....	5	26,093	6,528,000	25,014	6,332,000	24,083	5,384,266
Evansville	4	22,340	8,590,000	22,215	8,572,000	20,535	8,186,307
Total.....	35	492,885	\$120,589,000	490,089	\$118,058,000	448,458	\$106,551,176

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:

	Dec. 13, 1922	Nov. 8, 1922	Dec. 14, 1921
Number of banks reporting.....	37	37	37
Loans and discounts (excluding rediscounts):			
Secured by U. S. Govt. obligations.....	\$ 18,656,000	\$ 15,855,000	\$ 19,642,000
Secured by stocks and bonds other than U. S. Bonds	138,931,000	132,666,000	123,783,000
All other loans and discounts.....	286,908,000	284,664,000	297,096,000
Total loans and discounts.....	\$444,495,000	\$433,185,000	\$440,521,000
Investments:			
U. S. Bonds.....	52,937,000	52,557,000	26,611,000
U. S. Victory Notes.....	2,917,000	2,592,000	1,315,000
U. S. Treasury Notes.....	12,514,000	12,272,000	140,000
U. S. Certificates of Indebtedness.....	3,635,000	3,561,000	2,887,000
Other bonds, stocks and securities.....	87,922,000	86,874,000	70,246,000
Total investments.....	\$159,925,000	\$157,856,000	\$101,199,000
Reserve Balance with Federal Reserve Bank.....	42,267,000	41,510,000	41,160,000
Cash in vault.....	9,008,000	10,384,000	8,255,000
Net demand deposits on which reserve is computed.....	356,617,000	341,210,000	302,701,000
Time deposits.....	176,419,000	176,443,000	149,262,000
Government deposits.....	11,541,000	4,992,000	3,974,000
Bills discounted with Federal Reserve Bank.....	9,044,000	9,707,000	25,392,000
Bills payable with Federal Reserve Bank.....	7,514,000	6,491,000	10,584,000

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 for indicating actual spending by the public during the period which they cover:

	For four weeks ending Dec. 13, 1922	For four weeks ending Nov. 15, 1922	Dec., 1922 comp. to Nov., 1922	For four weeks ending Dec. 14, 1921	Dec., 1922 comp. to Dec., 1921
Debits for four weeks ending.....					
East St. Louis and Nat. Stock Yards, Ill. \$	41,974,000	\$ 40,397,000	+ 3.9%	\$ 33,205,000	+26.4%
Evansville, Ind.....	28,943,000	28,986,000	— 0.1%	18,798,000	+54.0%
Fort Smith, Ark.....	12,846,000	14,066,000	— 8.7%	.....	.....
Greenville, Miss.....	4,745,000	4,130,000	+14.9%	.....	.....
Helena, Ark.....	6,197,000	8,318,000	—25.5%	.....	.....
Little Rock, Ark.....	58,552,000	61,703,000	— 5.1%	39,869,000	+46.9%
Louisville, Ky.....	135,886,000	130,022,000	+ 4.5%	99,128,000	+37.1%
Memphis, Tenn.....	162,919,000	161,199,000	+ 1.1%	105,722,000	+54.1%
Owensboro, Ky.....	6,275,000	4,646,000	+35.1%	.....	.....
Quincy, Ill.....	10,009,000	9,358,000	+ 7.0%	8,955,000	+11.8%
St. Louis, Mo.....	549,165,000	572,923,000	— 4.1%	469,498,000	+17.0%
Springfield, Mo.....	13,187,000	12,324,000	+ 7.0%	10,440,000	+26.3%
Total.....	\$1,030,698,000	\$1,011,194,000	+ 1.9%	.....	+27.4%

FEDERAL RESERVE OPERATIONS

During November the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis discounted for 211 of its 608 member banks, which compares with 260 of its 608 member banks accommodated in October. The discount rate of this bank remains unchanged at $4\frac{1}{4}$ 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			LIABILITIES				
	Dec. 13, 1922	Nov. 15, 1922	Dec. 14, 1921	Dec. 13, 1922	Nov. 15, 1922	Dec. 14, 1921	
Gold Reserves.....	\$104,893	\$104,212	\$ 98,608	Capital paid in.....	\$ 4,813	\$ 4,801	\$ 4,591
Legal Tender, Notes				Surplus	9,388	9,388	9,114
Silver, etc.....	11,048	8,887	12,917	Deposits	70,725	67,701	66,397
Total Cash Reserves.....	\$115,941	\$113,099	\$111,525	F. R. Notes in Circulation	94,501	95,792	97,708
Discounts secured by Govt. obligations.....	13,451	13,721	24,877	F. R. Bank Notes in Circulation	1,457	2,456	3,642
Discounts otherwise secured or unsecured..	14,258	18,281	36,711	Deferred Availability Items	40,922	53,234	34,376
Bills bought in open market.....	12,660	9,730	180	Other Liabilities.....	1,161	1,051	2,932
U. S. Govt. securities....	21,116	22,215	7,969	Total Liabilities.....	\$222,967	\$234,423	\$218,760
Total Earning Assets..	\$ 61,485	\$ 63,947	\$ 69,737	Combined Res. Ratio.....	70.2%	69.2%	68%
Uncollected Items.....	43,955	55,754	35,570				
Other Resources.....	1,586	1,623	1,928				
Total Resources.....	\$222,967	\$234,423	\$218,760				

(Compiled December 20, 1922)