

creased 6.4 percent from the total for October–December 1951 but declined 17.2 percent from that for the third quarter of 1952. The increases resulted from the growth in economic activity; the declines followed the seasonal pattern observed in past years and resulted from the operation of the limitation on taxable wages.

The number of employees with taxable wages in January–March 1953 (estimated at 48 million) and their taxable wages (estimated at \$37 billion) increased seasonally 11.6 percent and 54.0 percent, respectively, from the total for the preceding quarter. Increases of 6.7 percent and 11.4 percent from January–March 1952 were the result of over-all gains in employment and wage rates.

The expansion of economic activity is also evident in the number of employees and amount of wages paid in covered employment in the fourth quarter of 1952 and the first quarter of 1953. In October–December 1952, an estimated 48 million employees, with a total payroll of \$39 billion, earned an average of \$812 in covered employment. These totals represent gains of 3.2 percent, 8.3 percent, and 4.9 percent, respectively, from those for the corresponding quarter of 1951; they were 1.1 percent, 8.3 percent, and 7.1 percent higher than the figures for July–September 1952.

Seasonal declines in January–March 1953 reduced the estimated payroll 2.6 percent from the preceding quarter's total to \$38 billion, and the average earnings per worker dropped 2.5 percent to \$792. In line, however, with increases in employment, hours of work, and wage rates, these January–March totals were substantially higher—11.8 percent and 4.8 percent—than those in the same quarter of 1952.

In the calendar year 1952, according to preliminary estimates, 56 million persons received taxable wages amounting to \$118.7 billion—increases of 2.6 percent and 7.0 percent, respectively, from 1951. The average taxable wage of \$2,120 was 4.4 percent more than the average a year earlier. These changes resulted in the main from the increase in business activity. An estimated 4 million persons reported taxable earnings from

self-employment covered by the program amounting to \$9.3 billion for 1952.

The estimated number of employers paying taxable wages was about 3.6 million in each quarter from the beginning of 1952 through January–March 1953. For the calendar year 1952, the total number of employers is estimated at 4.4 million, approximately the same as in 1951.

Revision of Public Assistance Tables

Effective with data for July 1953, which appear in this issue of the BULLETIN, the tables presenting information on public assistance cases and payments have been revised. In the past, the basic tables for all programs have excluded vendor payments for medical care and cases receiving only such payments.

The revised tabulations for old-age assistance, aid to the blind, aid to the permanently and totally disabled, and aid to dependent children now include all cases receiving money payments, vendor payments for medical care, or both types of payments; they also show the total amount of assistance, including money payments to recipients and vendor payments for medical care (tables 18, 19, 20, and 21 in this issue). For the case counts the changes from those previously published are relatively small because few recipients aided under these programs receive only vendor payments for medical care. Inclusion of vendor payments raises substantially total payments and average payments, however, in some of the States that make vendor payments for medical care.

In previous issues of the BULLETIN the total and average amounts of vendor payments, and the average payments including vendor payments have been published for those States reporting such payments from funds for the special types of public assistance. These tables will continue to be published (tables 14 and 15 in this issue). Table 15 has been expanded to include the average money payment for those States making vendor payments. Thus it will be possible for any-

one to find out the average amount of money payments by referring to table 15 or to the specific program table. Tables 14 and 15 now carry totals for all States combined.

Table 22, showing data for general assistance, will continue to exclude cases receiving only vendor payments for medical care and the amount of such payments. Because of differing policies among States regarding the use of general assistance funds to pay medical bills for recipients of the special types of assistance, it seems inadvisable to change the base of the published data for the general assistance program.

Data in tables showing trends in cases and payments (tables 11 and 12 in this issue) reflect the above changes. For the special types of public assistance the series has been revised back to October 1950—the first month in which the Federal Government could contribute to vendor payments—and the continuous series appears in this BULLETIN. Although vendor payments for medical care from general assistance funds are excluded from the column for the general assistance program, the total amount of such payments is included in the "total" column. Some States report vendor payments for medical care from general assistance funds on a semiannual rather than a monthly basis. "Total" payments in table 12, as indicated in the footnote to the table, include an estimated monthly amount for such States. The "total" column also includes payments from special medical funds administered by assistance agencies in a few States; in addition it gives an estimated amount for one State that reports semiannually on medical care payments from funds for the special types of assistance.

National average payments, including vendor payments for medical care for the special types of public assistance, by month, October 1950–July 1953, are also shown in this issue (table 13).
