

American tires are doing well ; but the others repeatedly lodge complaints at this consulate about the miserable quality of the tires, which, while they look well, will not hold the air and necessitate constant repairs. If American tire manufacturers do not immediately remedy the evil, which I know to exist from personal experience, as I am often called upon to examine the articles, I fear this important bicycle market will be lost.

BUILDING MATERIAL FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

The quantity of builders' material which is being bought in the United States for the South African market is said to be quite satisfactory and unusual. Not only does this business include transactions in the iron line, but also in wood-work, such articles as doors, blinds, flooring, etc., to a very large extent having recently been contracted for. Metal ceiling is meeting with some demand also ; nearly \$10,000 worth was shipped in one week and new orders are reported in the market. An order was placed a day or two ago with a manufacturer for \$11,300 worth of mining machinery, and upward of \$20,000 worth of such machinery went out to various parts of South Africa in one ship. Extensive shipments have also been made in car material, \$15,000 constituting the value sent to one port. In iron pipe the present transactions are considered good, purchases being constantly made. In one week upwards of \$22,000 worth of harvesting machinery was shipped to South Africa. In contractors' supplies several good-sized orders have been placed which include such items as road-scrapers, wheel-harrows, shovels, picks, etc. The general condition of the South African trade is said to be good.

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

According to a British Foreign Office report (annual series 2076), sales of English machinery amounted to 35 portable engines and steam threshers, valued at £18,617 (\$90,599), in 1897, against 50, with a value of £26,596 (\$129,429), in 1896. United States machinery was sold as follows: Reapers, 300, valued at £7,181 (\$34,946); binders, 30, worth £957 (\$4,657); mowers, 200, valued at £3,191 (\$15,529); hayrakes 300, at a value of £2,074 (\$10,093). In the preceding year there were sold 600 reapers, 50 binders, 200 mowers, and 300 hayrakes, of a total value of £24,415 (\$118,816). There was a decrease in value during 1897, on account of the large stock of machinery on hand. Three hundred plows, mostly of