THE ENGLISH MAIL

teresting Summary of New

DISTRESS AND CHEAP PROVISIONS. The Liverpoel Courier says:—Starvation in the midst of plenty would appear to the present position of a large proportion of our industrial population; that is, if ware to judge from the rates at which the chief necessaries of life can now be ef necessaries of life can now be ned. For the last three months, inde during the whole of the past year, an down to the present time, the wholesal prices of provisions—speaking of that grea and indispensable source of the nationa tood, the American supply—have beer nost unprecedentedly low; and if the conners have not had the full benefit these cheap rates it is evident that there something wrong in the intervening system through which the commodities reach the general public. This great and apparently exhaustless feeder of our people is remarkable phenomenon as well as an all-important factor in out exist ence as a nation. Within the las quarter of acentury the American provision trade has grown until new it has becom without exception the chief of our importing its bearing on the national life. Unite States cotton was at one time thought to b indispensable to the life of Lancashire in dustry, but though still largely depende on that part of the world for the materi of our cotton manufacture, other sources c supply have been discovered. But for the vast and increasing freights of food that we are constantly drawing from the Unit States and Canada, and whereon our dai

years will be of some interest at the present moment. Leaving out gain, which as is well known, was remarkably low in price during the whole of last year, and imported fresh meat, which has had some considerable influence in reducing the cost of the home supply, and confining our-selves to what is termed in Liverpool commerce American provisions, we shall find that these have been cheaper in the last twelve months than at any time during the past fifteen years. Taking bacon, for instance, the round prices in 1863, when the American war was still raging, were 31s to 23s per cent. In that amounted to 307,570 boxes. In 1875 the imports had fallen to 99,461 boxes, and the prices rose to 65s and 66s; in 1870 about the same quantity was imported, and slightly higher prices prevailed. But in 1872 the imports rose to 358,946 boxes, and price came down to 42s and 43s." The next year the price was about the same, and 495,568 boxes were imported. In 1876, when th imports were 525,456 boxes, the price ed from 45s to 46s; in 1877 the came down to 39s under a continuation the previous year's supply; and last year with a grand total of 673,473 boxes in ported, prices fell to the unexampled rate of 28s and 29s per cwt.; and further, i the quarter from October 1st to December 31st, when the imports far exceeded thou of any corresponding quarter during the last ten years, 23s to 24s per cwt. was the

subsistence depends, no substitute is where available; nor could they by means or in any degree be dispensed wit even were we to tax the utmost capacity

prevailing price.

Then, with regard to cheese, in 1863 to price was 50s. for fine and 42s. for ordinary; in 1868 it was 68s. and 50s.; and s and of 1878 it was 48s. for extra fin 8s for medium, and 25s. for ordinary. butter, prices have not fallen so greatled but they are now 25s, and 30s, per cw below what they were in 1869; and in the state of the last twelve months medium qualities butter have fallen 15s. per cwt. A sim

1878. Within the last few weeks, in the Within the last few weeks, in the al sence of speculation and in the face enormous stocks, the prices of all the classes of provisions have gone still lowe until now they stand at a rate altogethe surprising, and unprecedented in the hitory of the provision trade; and happil for consumers there is not much prospec of a sudden or serious rise.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE It has been decided to place the following It has been decided to place the followin inscriptions on the pedestal of Cleopatra Needle:—On the eastern face, "This obelisk, quarried at Syene, was erected at O (Heliopolis) by the Pharaoh, Thotmes III. about 1500 B.C. Lateral inscriptions were added nearly two centuries later b Rameses the Great. Removed during the Greek dynasty to Alexandria, the royacity of Cleopatra. It was there erected in the eighth year of Augustus Cæsar, B.C 23." Western face, "This obelisk, prostrate for centuries on the sands of Alexandria, was presented to the English nation a.D. 1819 by Mahommed Ali, Vicero of Egypt; a worthy memorial of our dis of Egypt; a worthy memorial of our distinguished countrymen, Nelson and Aber cromby." Embankment face, "This obe lisk, through the patriotic zeal of Erasmu Wilson, F.R.S., was brought from Alexan dria encased in an iron cylinder; was abandoned in a storm in the Bay of Biscay recovered and erected on this spot by Jonn Dixon, C.E., in the forty-second year of the reign of Queen Victoria, "1878." To face the river, "William Asken, James Gardiner, Joseph Benbow, Michael Burns, William Donald, William Pattan, perished in a bold attempt to succour the crew of of Egypt; a worthy memorial of our di in a bold attempt to succour the crew of the obelisk ship Cleopatra during the storn of October 14, 1877." The names of the

men who lost their lives in the attempted rescue in the Bay of Biscay were inscribed at the personal suggestion of her Majesty. GADSHILL.

The London correspondent of the Glas gow Herald says he is not able to confirm or deny the rumour that Mr. Otway, M.P. has become the purchaser of Gadshill, the favourite residence of Charles Dicken during his latter years. There is a counter rumour, according to which the house and grounds were purchased by Lady Burdet Coutts on behalf of the present Charle Dickens, who is, he believes, her godson with the stipulation that he should not reside there. In this way Mr. Otway may possibly have obtained a long lease, and the story got about that he was absolut owner of the place.

EMIGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS GADSHILL,

EMIGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS
The arrangements for the departure of party of locked-out agricultural labourer for New Zealand are nearly completed. The Agent-General for New Zealand has engaged a fast steamer, and the party will embark during the latter part of the present month. It is finally settled that Mr. Alfred Simmons, the general secretary of the Union, will accompany the party, the proposal having been warmly approved by the executive committee of the Union The official report from the Union office states that there are still 900 labourers "locket-out," and that large numbers of these men have offered to go back to work but the farmers keep their farms shut against them, telling the men that they must leave the Union before they will be taken on to work, which they refuse to do Placards have been freely circulated a Canterbury and elsewhere, giving a very dark picture of life in New Zealand; but the Union rely on letters which were received some time ago from labourers whemigrated from Kent to that colony to refute those statements, and upon the fat that there are already some 8,000 Kentis labouring people there, and, it is stated doing well. It was hoped that after the EMIGRATION OF AGRICULTURAL LABOURER that there are already some 8,000 Kentis labouring people there, and, it is stated doing well. It was hoped that after the recent County Court proceedings an am cable arrangement would be arrived at the farmers withdrawing their veto again the men belonging to the Union, and it he labourers, on the other hand, working for the reduced wages; but a settlement the dispute seems as far off as ever.

THE QUESTION OF RECIPROCITY.

A large number of signatures have be

A large number of signatures have be affixed to a memorial urging the Lo Mayor of London to convene a public meeting in the Guildhall to demand a parlimentary inquiry with the object of modern