

## NATIONAL INTERESTS.

The Southern extremity or half of Cape Breton is of vast importance, also, because of its position, and its possession of an unrivalled harbour in Louisburg. It is the "key to the St. Lawrence," and a "Gem in Her Majesty's Crown." It is the nearest harbour, to Europe, and within ready reach of the trans-Atlantic commerce of Europe and America. It splits that stream of commerce into two, diverging one northward, into the St. Lawrence, and the other southward along the shore of America. The immense coal-field in its vicinity would make it of supreme importance in time of war, and no doubt a point of ready attack and an object much to be coveted. What has the Dominion Government or engineers rather, done to utilize this important seaport? By adopting the central route of Railway through Cape Breton it has done all it possibly could to ignore its existence. It has removed its line of road as far north from it as it possibly could. It has selected a route which increases the distance from Louisburg to the Strait of Canso by one half, which in addition throws in an impracticable Ferry, and makes it impossible for the nation to take advantage of its nearest sea-port to Europe.

## AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS.

Why all this sacrifice? Ostensibly to serve the agricultural interests of Inverness and Victoria. Granting that these interests are important, what are they compared to the mining, the fishing, and the commercial interests of Richmond and Cape Breton counties, with the national importance of Louisburg. Besides the southern half of Cape Breton is not so far behind the northern half agriculturally, as it is represented to be. The total number of bushels of oats, potatoes and wheat, added together, grown in the two Northern Counties in 1881, was 986,700 against 796,833 for the Southern Counties. The number of tons of hay 67,252 against 39,573. A small difference indeed, when compared with the ten million dollars invested in Cape Breton county alone.

But the agricultural interests of Inverness and Victoria Counties will not be as well served by the Central route, as by the Southern with a branch 18 miles long from River Inhabitants to Whycogomagh. This will give these two Counties ready communication with Sydney,