fields is a matter very much to be desired, in providing a cheap source of fuel supply for the surrounding country. The coal is said to be a good lignite, and well adapted for heating purposes. The mines would at once provide a good traffic for a railway reaching them. At one time this winter at Brandon, Pennsylvania coal—the only article in the market at the time—was held at $13 per ton. And yet here are large coal fields within 100 miles or so of that town. The region offers every inducement for railway development, and with the large land grant of 6,400 acres per mile, which the Company gets for building the road, there would seem to be no need of any further sacrifices to have the road completed at once. It is within the power of the Dominion Government to force the construction of fifty miles of the road this year, simply by holding the Company to the terms of the Act previously mentioned, for if so held the Company will certainly do the work rather than lose the grant. If the Company is allowed another extension of time wherein to complete the line, it will mean simply another sacrifice of western interests at the bidding of the C. P. R. monopoly.

WEST LYNNE'S DEBT.

THE COMMERCIAL last week devoted an article to the report of the commission on the financial condition of Emerson. The commission has now submitted its report of its investigation into the financial affairs of the town of West Lynne. West Lynne, as stated in the article dealing with Emerson last week, was united with Emerson in one corporation, in 1883, and this union was dissolved by act of the Legislature in 1886. On this account the affairs of the two municipalities have a relationship which necessitates their being considered jointly to some extent. A number of the claims presented for the consideration of the commission were against the city of Emerson, and were contracted during the union of the two towns, under the corporate name of the city of Emerson. These claims were considered according to the supposed meaning of the act of separation, which provides that each town shall be responsible for its share of the liabilities contracted during the union in one municipality. Liabilities contracted before the union to remain charged against the town which contracted such indebtedness. Working on this ground the commission find the indebtedness of West Lynne to be as follows:—

Ontario Bank for principal	$20,000 00	
For interest........................	6,643 00	
		$26,643 00
Proportion of Federal Bank claim for principal.........	$65,279 53	
For interest........................	10,178 57	
		$75,458 10
School debentures for principal	$ 1,000 00	
For interest........................	210 00	
		$ 1,210 00
Floating miscellaneous indebtedness....................................		$ 2,052 05
Judicial Board		1,635 21
		$106,998 36

Interest is calculated to January 14th, last, except in the case of the Federal Bank, which has been calculated upon the judgment.

The claim of the Ontario Bank, as above, was contracted by West Lynne before the union with Emerson. The bank held notes for advances to the corporation for improvements, but subsequently debentures were issued, which were exchanged for the notes. The issue was for $20,000, at 6 per cent. interest. The claim of the Federal Bank was described last week, in dealing with Emerson. It was contracted during the union, in connection with the construction of the railway and traffic bridge over the Red river. The full claim amounts to $216,313, of which the amount stated above is apportioned to West Lynne. The claim of the merchants' Bank, amounting to $51,148, was placed entirely against Emerson.

In considering the means which the town has to meet these liabilities, it is shown that there is no source of revenue other than taxation, worth being taken into consideration. The population of the place is given at only 150. In 1882 the assessment was $732,600, and in 1887 $121,934, showing a shrinkage to about one-sixth of the former year named. The last assessment is undoubtedly too high, in view of the small population. The area included in the corporation is very large, but the principal portion is of no value as town property, and can only be considered as farming land. The shrinkage in the assessment is of course due largely to the disappearance of the imaginary value formerly placed upon these outside lots. A number of houses have been moved from the town to farms, and a number remaing are not occupied.

The estimated cost of carrying on municipal government is placed at $2,000, about one-half of which would be necessary to maintain schools. This sum the commissioners think is about all that could be raised during the forthcoming year, owing to the state of the town's finances, and the difficulty of collecting taxes. The commissioners, however, think it possible that the town may be able to pay a small interest upon about twenty per cent. of its indebtedness as given above, or a sum of $21,400. Interest on this amount is placed at not over one per cent. for the first year, two per cent. for the second year, and thereafter at three per cent. It would require a rate of 20 mills on the dollar, of the present assessment, for the first year, 22 mills for the second year, and 25 mills thereafter, to meet the requirements of a settlement on the basis proposed, including expense of municipal government. This rate provides nothing for a sinking fund to pay the principal of the remaing portion of the debt which would hold against the town, were a settlement concluded on the basis proposed.

In considering the future prospects of the town, the commissioners do not take a very sanguinary view. They point out that the town has no territory to the south to draw from, on account of its being located on the boundary. The Red river and Emerson cuts off on the east and northeast, and to the west other towns are growing up on the C. P. R. branch railways. Settlers coming in from the west can also pass on over the bridge to Emerson, where there are facilities for marketing grain. The construction of the Red River Valley railway would give the place a slight impetus, but even this would not greatly improve its prospects in the opinion of the commissioners. The commissioners evidently take a sensible view of the case, when they hint that it would be an advantage to all concerned, if the town were attached to the adjoining municipality. The expense of maintaining seperate municipal government would thus be done away with, without lessening the value of the property. The place is certainly too small to maintain existence as a municipality to advantage.

In stating the amount which the town may be able to pay interest upon, the commissioners take the view that the inhabitants might meet this amount, as an alternative to repudiation and total loss of property. It is doubtful, however, if a settlement on this basis could long be carried out, unless some improvement in the size and value of property in the town is made in the future. Altogether the situation is less pleasant to contemplate than in the case of Emerson. Each succeeding investigation seems to reveal a more hopeless state of affairs.