A SUIT THAT INTERESTS LUMBERMEN.

The Title of Seven Thousand Acres of Timber Lands in Bay County, Michigan, Determined—Supreme Court Decision In the Case of Johnson vs. Ballou.

In the case of Abner C. Johnson vs. Dexter A. Ballou, which was decided in both the Bay and Saginaw county circuit courts in favor of Ballou, the supreme court has rendered a decision reversing judgment. This decision, while of little importance on account of the case in question, practically decides another relative to the title to 7,000 acres of land in Bay county.

Some years since congress passed an act granting to such parties as should build the Amboy & Lansing and other railroads, certain lands to be deeded to any company building roads as rapidly as it should complete them. The Amboy, Lansing & Traverse Bay R. R. Company constructed a road from Lansing to Owosso, filed certificates of construction with the governor, and obtained certain lands. Subsequently the company became insolvent and a portion of their lands were disposed of at mortgage sale. The company also sold to Messrs. Geo. Campbell, Geo. H. Van Etten, and A. C. Maxwell, of this city, 7,000 acres of land in Bay county, on the line of what is now the northern extension of the J. L. & S. R. R. On the ground that the A. L. & T. B. R. R. had disposed of these lands before earning them, the J. L. & S. R. R. Co. upon building its road filed a bill in chancery praying that the title to the lands be set aside. This suit has not yet been decided, but the case of Johnson vs. Ballou has such bearings upon it that it is regarded as practically settled, and it is considered doubtful if it ever comes to trial.

The case in question is this: Daniel Burns cut some logs on Section 17, and afterward sold them to Abner C. Johnson of Flint. Johnson attempted to sell them to Wm. H. Monroe, whereupon an investigation as to Johnson's title was had, and the fact revealed that he had no title. Accordingly Monroe obtained a bill of sale of the logs from the J. L. & S. R. R. Co., and afterward disposed of them to D. A. Ballou. Ballou and Johnson each claimed the logs—hence the suit, a decision of which was rendered to-day by the supreme court.

It being claimed that Ballou secured his title through the Amboy, Lansing & Traverse Bay Railroad, the opinion is that the title to the land is practically decided in favor of Messrs. Maxwell, Campbell and Van Etten.

THE APPROACHING TIMBER FAMINE.

From the Stove and Tin Trade Journal.

We have repeatedly spoken of the swiftly approaching scarcity of timber, growing out of its increasing legitimate uses and its reckless waste, in the hope that congress or our state legislatures might be induced to give the subject the attention which its magnitude deserves. However hackneyed the topic may have become, no one can dispute the fact that in the not very distant future it will become the great economical question of the day. For many purposes iron will no doubt take its place, but still it is very hard to imagine how people are to get along without it. Many of our bland optimists, however, believe that the good Lord will gratify us with some sort of equivalent when it is gone, as He did when petroleum was discovered. They point to the fact that we were literally on our last legs for light; but just at the opportune moment the vast storehouses of carbon oil were opened up, and a chance given to the whales to increase and multiply again. In the future, according to these predictions, whale oil will again be cheap and plenty, if it is needed; and so nature ever provides for the necessities of her creatures.

This reasoning would prove more to our mind, were it not for the fact that in some foreign countries—Palestine and Persia, for instance—the timber has not only disappeared, but civilization has gone with it. The population have gone back into barbarism, and the land has become a prey to desolating famine. In ancient times these regions were noted for their fertility; but with the disappearance of their forests the whole face of the country has been changed, as well as the character of the population, to a very great extent.

Our attention is called to this subject just now from reading some remarks by Mr. James Little, of Montreal. He says that the people of the United States will, within the next ten years, use up all their pine, spruce, and hemlock timber east of the Rocky Mountains. These supplies are chiefly found in Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota, and