

THE HOUSTON DAILY POST

—BY THE—

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DO WOMEN WANT THE BALLOT?

"If I had the power," declared Representative Barry Miller of Dallas, in his speech on the suffrage resolution, "I would leave this question to the wives and mothers of Texas, and I know it would be overwhelmingly defeated."

Perhaps it was extravagant for him to say that he knew it would be defeated, but that intelligent men have excellent reason to believe it would be is certain.

As a matter of fact, the movement in Texas has not assumed such strength among the women themselves as to indicate that they are desirous of suffrage. In the larger cities of the State, some excellent women of much intelligence and energy have promoted the movement.

It can be said with accuracy, we believe, that the majority of these women are of the leisure class. They have found in the study and prosecution of the work diversion and entertainment. Many have developed talents as orators and writers. They have had both the time and money, and the absence of domestic responsibilities, to enable them to travel and foster the suffrage propaganda, but chiefly in the cities.

But they have not shown up to this time that the majority of the women of Texas want the ballot, and they have not attempted to show it.

If the women of Texas were ever to demonstrate that they want the ballot, it would not be long withheld, in the judgment of The Post.

Why do not the proponents of the resolution—we mean the women—organize a referendum which will enable the women to state their wishes? No doubt a campaign would bring out a full corps of speakers pro and con to enlighten the great mass so that they could express their preference intelligently when the time came to vote.

The majority of the women of Texas live on the farms. They have not given the subject a thought so far. And of the city women probably not 10 per cent have given the subject the slightest consideration. Manifestly so important a thing as giving women the ballot ought not to be accepted before it is known that any considerable number of women want the ballot. The society women of leisure in a few of the larger towns ought not to determine so vital a change in our system of government.

There are 1,000,000 women in Texas 21 years of age or over. Of these, probably less than 25,000 have ever considered the subject at all.

Why do not the lady propagandists first ascertain that the women want the ballot before they submit the issue to our law-making bodies or even to the men?

It might accomplish one of two things, viz., an affirmative verdict might render unnecessary the further buttonholing of men or a negative verdict might suggest that the time is not ripe for disturbing the lawmaking bodies of the country when the women themselves prefer the serene atmosphere of domestic life to the clamor and tumult of politics.