

# BE A SPUG AND STOP FOOLISH XMAS GIVING

## Mrs. August Belmont Launches Society to Fight Petty Holi- day Grafting.

### 1,000 WORKING GIRLS JOIN

Will Gravelly Wear Spug Button and  
Refuse to Contribute for Pres-  
ents for Those "Higher Up."

Are you a giver of Christmas gifts? If you are, do you give them in the true spirit of generosity or in the hope that you may get presents or favors in return? If that is the way you have been offering holiday remembrances, and if you wish to rebel against this hypocrisy, then you are eligible for membership in the Spug Club.

What is a Spug? According to Mrs. August Belmont, creator of the word, Grand Sachem of the Spugs, and guardian of their traditions, a Spug is a woman who has vowed never again in all her life to give any Christmas gift that is not offered with a whole heart. A Spug is a working girl who has put her foot on all the usual Christmas-time schemes for raising money with which to buy Christmas presents for those "higher up." Hereafter, when any store or shop collector approaches one of these working girls for the customary Christmas collection for the floorwalker or head saleslady, the collector will be rebuffed with the rejoinder:

"Not me. I am a Spug. I don't believe in giving useless Christmas gifts."

In other words, a Spug is a member of the Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving, a society which made its debut last night under the wing of Mrs. August Belmont at the celebration in Terrace Garden of the first anniversary of the starting of the Working Girls' Vacation Fund, whereby thousands of working girls who never had a Summer vacation before were enabled last Summer to spend two weeks in the country by virtue of their own systematic economies.

#### To Wear Spug Button.

This Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving is being furthered because of evils in shops and stores which Mrs. Belmont has unearthed, and which she is hoping to do away with. The society was rushed into being with almost unanimous acclamation, nearly a thousand girls joining it within a few minutes and pledging themselves to wear a Spug button from now until Christmas, and during every ante-Christmas season in the future.

With Mrs. Belmont in helping on this scheme were Miss Anne Morgan, Miss Gertrude Robinson, originator of the Working Girls' Vacation Fund; Miss Elisabeth Marbury, and Mrs. Josephine Daskam Bacon. One of the large halls in Terrace Garden was filled long before Mrs. Belmont arrived, and in the hall was only one man. He was Judge Alton B. Parker, who professed as much interest in the new movement as did the thousand girls themselves. He had come to the meeting with his daughter, Mrs. Charles Mercer-Hall, and his niece, Miss Mercy Dawes.

The stage was set with a simple decoration. It was a giant Christmas cake, on which burned a single candle, designating the age of the Vacation Fund. After telling how the fund had grown from \$27.60 since Nov. 14, 1911, to \$30,000 on Nov. 14, 1912, and how the number of depositors had increased from the original circle of 43 girls to 6,000, Miss Smith introduced Mrs. Belmont.

Mrs. Belmont addressed the women as "Dear depositors and going-to-be depositors." She reminded the girls that Christmas was coming, and then told them of her discoveries of petty graft in the shops and stores. Her delivery was dramatic, and many of those who remembered her as Eleanor Robson, the actress, remarked that she never appealed to any audience more than she did to the working girls in Terrace Garden last night.

Then, at the very end of her speech, came the suggestion to start the Spug Club. There were cheers from every part of the room, including the balcony, which was packed to the railing.

"I want to get your opinion on this subject, my girl friends," concluded Mrs. Belmont. "If there are any against the formation of such a club I want them to express themselves here so that we can convince them in public. Of course, I expect to find some antis."

#### Only One Anti Heard.

There was one anti, a young woman of about 25 years, who addressed Mrs. Belmont from the gallery.

"Why are you not in favor of a Society for the Prevention of Useless Giving?" asked Mrs. Belmont.

"Because such a society isn't necessary," replied the anti. "I think that girls with common sense can use their own judgment about giving as they see fit."

"But, my girl friends," retorted Mrs. Belmont, addressing herself to her whole audience, "Is it not true that these evils do exist, and that you must give many useless Christmas gifts simply because it is the custom?"

"Yes, it's true. Start the Spug Club," came the reply, and the anti's force was spent in the enthusiasm all about her and below her in the main auditorium.

Then the piano struck up "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Mrs. Bacon playing, and the big Christmas cake was hauled down from the table.

"Do you see this cake?" said Mrs. Belmont, when the ragtime had subsided. "It is a fake cake. It is only a box decorated with pink tissue paper. It is as false as the Christmas gifts which you have been giving. Now we will do something serviceable with it. We will put a hole in its top and pass around slips of paper. Each girl who wishes to become a Spug will put her name and address in the box."

Then moving pictures were displayed while the piano played soft music in accompaniment to a hospital scene, and when the cake was passed to Mrs. Belmont it was filled with little slips of yellow paper. There were not more than one or two girls in the hall, it was said, who had not enrolled as Spugs.

Miss Anne Morgan read the final resolutions consigning useless giving to the funeral pyre, and then there were more moving pictures, followed by ice cream and dancing.

Each charter member of the Spug Club, it was announced by Miss Smith, would receive by mail ten copies of Mrs. Belmont's speech, with a request that nine of the copies be given away and that the other copy be safeguarded as a souvenir of an evening well spent.