

best in the national life, and in his policies and acts he seeks to attain those results which will conform most nearly to the ideals and aspirations of the American people.

Surprise need not have been felt that, when drawn from the quiet of a judge's life, Mr. Taft speedily showed ability as an administrator far overshadowing his judicial record. Before he became a federal judge, he had been a newspaper reporter, a lawyer in private practice, a prosecuting lawyer, an internal revenue collector, a legal adviser, a United States Solicitor General, State Judge, and while a Federal Judge he dealt with not a few cases, such as railroads, strikes, boycotts and trusts, which took him deeply not only into the study of the economic laws but into their practical aspects.

You may ask, Is he a fighter for reforms? Yes and No. Here we must discuss him frankly as a compromiser. He will fight but he will first deliberately exhaust all peaceful means. As he said once to a pugnacious official whose methods won enemies for his measures: "Pull in your elbows. You can't make headway jabbing the crowd in the ribs." He believes in adjustment, in reconciliation of conflicting interests, in diplomatic negotiations, in compromise. (Witness the pending Reciprocity Treaty.) The general plan of the Phillippine Government, the Phil. Church property and friars' lands settlement, the pacification of Cuba, these are only the more commonly cited evidences of his preference for and his remarkable success with it.

Taft the man and Taft the official are two distinct entities. Politicians and office seekers have discovered with amazement the inflexible rigidity with which the line of separation is drawn. The best thing in Washington, said a New Yorker just returned from a visit to the then Secretary of War, is Taft's laugh. It is worth a journey from New York just to hear it. Everybody who has heard it will concur in this judgment. It is a laugh of a frank, open, generous, thoroughly human man, who likes his fellowmen and wishes to share with them all the fun that is going. It cannot be said of him, as of lots of others, that he laughs with the outside of his face only. He laughs all over, with his whole body, and the laugh is as big as the body, and that's some laugh. He weighs 295 lbs. when in condition.

The fun of life is one thing and the public business quite another. The Taft laugh has nothing to do with the latter. With him there is only one question. What is best for the public service? Nothing will swerve the big man at the desk from that point. When the question of public interest is raised, all per-