

# philippine studies

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## **Filipino Poet Abroad: The Wounded Stag: Fifty Poems**

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or hurricane is unlike any other. Dr. Tannehill supplies us with the first hand accounts of these brave men who risk their lives that warning may be given in time to save many other lives. Fortunately, due to the painstaking preparation, few of these investigating parties have been lost.

There are many questions answered in this book: why typhoons are called by girls' names; how lives and property have been saved from the destroyer; why much remains yet to be learned about tropical storms. But the answers take second place to the story of the men who have explored the secrets of the world's most devastating winds and rains. We can agree with the conclusion (p. 271) of Dr. Tannehill:

"In the last few years men have had the courage to fly into these monsters. . . . Here people can see how it happened, how it was done, and feel admiration for the men who did it—the hurricane hunters."

JAMES J. HENNESSEY

## FILIPINO POET ABROAD

THE WOUNDED STAG: FIFTY POEMS. By Bienvenido N. Santos. Introduction by Manuel A. Viray. Manila: Capitol Publishing House. 1956. Pp. xvi, 71.

Mr. Santos was in the United States at the outbreak of war in 1941 and the result of his prolonged exile abroad are two little volumes published recently: one is a charming little volume of short stories which we hope to review soon; the other is this collection of fifty poems.

These are little pieces competently written in the modern key. Mr. Santos does not try to achieve meretricious effects by juggling words inanely. He has generally something to say, something presumably worth saying, though it is not always lucidly clear just what it is.

What he does say however (such of it as we have understood) is not always new. It has been said before and more compellingly by other poets. Several figures are recognizably Eliot's: the

sound of cicadas, the thunder, the dry grass, the thoughts of an old man in a dry season waiting for rain. One figure (the tiger) goes back through Eliot to Blake.

Not only imagery but certain phrases or rhythms seem derivative. For instance the following lines are an echo of *Geron-tion*:

history is now an old man  
Raving for the lost toys in a desolate corner  
Of another childhood.

And the following lines recall both *The Waste Land* and *Prufrock*:

I have fled them all  
.  
.  
.  
In this dull sanctuary  
Of an inland lake...

There is of course good precedent in Eliot himself for this type of poetry, and we have tried to justify it in an article published earlier in these pages ("Poetry by Allusion" I, 1953, 223-235). But we suspect that Mr. Santos has not found himself. We hope he does because there is a certain sanity in his outlook which we like.

There is one thing we miss—the genuinely Filipino note that makes Filipino poetry in English as distinctive as Irish poetry in English. These poems, written abroad for the most part, are American in tone and idiom. This is of course no defect: it is merely a fact worth noting. Now that Mr. Santos is back home, within sight of Mayon Volcano, we hope that the sound of the sea and the smell of the grass and the sight of that beautiful mountain will haunt his dreams and demand utterance.

MIGUEL A. BERNAD

## PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC

THE ETHICS OF RHETORIC. By Richard M. Weaver. Chicago: Henry Regnery and Company. 1953 Pp. 234.

This is a book which every professor of rhetoric should read. It is not a "practical" work, not a "handbook" for teacher