

# BROWN CHILD

• Awarded First Prize in the  
Literary Contests in connection  
with the Golden Jubilee of the  
Educational System in the Philip-  
pines, 1951.

He was a watcher of the forest fires;  
The hunger for the sea was in his eyes;  
He heard far voices calling in the night;  
He felt a hunger gnawing in the mind.  
He crossed the oceans through the mist and rains  
To where the beaches checked the flight  
Of vintas folding multi-colored sails.

His lore was of the jungles and the plains;  
He learned the language of the purling waves;  
For him there rose no suns beyond the gates;  
He was strengthened by his native faith,  
The brown child friendly to the tropic sun.  
There blew breezes from the mains  
To make strange mixture of the loam and sod.

He burned rare incense for his native gods  
Until a new world opened, and the drums  
Of Empire broke the silence, doves of doves  
Perched on crossed silhouettes against the suns,  
And new worlds burst within him, lit his life,  
Leavening unredeemed dust  
With inner glowings spiritually bright.

Slowly the days dawned—died with certain flight,—  
A new star shone upon the sunburned child—  
Bared him new mansions where the soul may hide,  
Pointed the way where new horizons rise,  
Adorned the arbour where may hide the dream,  
Made the blade bloom to life,  
Made this the basis of the apothegm.

Made mankind the inspirer and the theme  
Of his brave dreams, to warble to the breeze,  
Making the need of others his own need,  
Making their hopes his hope, their dread his dread.  
The brown child has become a mature man,  
Heir to the composite deed.  
In him the blood which in his forebears ran.

The world grows smaller in his mental span,  
A world of rebelling atoms that dance.  
How keep his balance in a world grown mad,  
How keep his bearings when the taut string snaps?  
The Brown Man challenges, he will hold his throne.  
He will be faithful to his past.  
The Brown Man will not die—will hold his own!

*By C. Faigao*