

Caliban
C A L I B A N

Winter '42
W I N T E R ' 4 2



COVER BY HANNES BOH

LARRY SHAW

Larry Shaw

F A P A

F A P A

CALIBAN #1 This is the initial FAPA squawk of a little squirt name o' Larry Shaw, spurting from the corner of Elm and State streets in the historic old town of Schenectady, New York. This issue has no even right-hand edges because I wanted, just once, to see how it felt to publish something without bothering with even edges. Next ish may or may not have even edges; depends on how I feel then. Next ish may or may not be; depends on how I feel then. I may decide to put out something completely different. Prepare for the worst!

Any resemblance of Caliban to other fapa publications is sheer plagiarism many resemble

Dedication-- Breathes there the fan with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said, ---Explanation
"I think I'll start another fanzine. . .?"

Breathes there the fan with soul so dead who never to himself has said "Shaw stinks!"

CAN SUCH THINGS BE?

(I tried to take some notes, I did, on my spontaneous reactions to the first mailing I received, but alas (and alack, too!), I was never very prone to such stuff as note-taking, so no notes got taken. I'll try to remember some of the things I said (and some of the things I was too polite to say) as I perused the Fall offerings. Anyway, some sort of comments are very evidently in order. Here goeth:)

BOBLIQUEP #1: First alphabetically, and the first thing to fall out of the envelope. I wondered just what kind of a hoax was being perpetrated until I spied the magic letters "F.A.P.A.". Now all I'm wondering is just what the devil it's supposed to be. I don't get it!

CERES Volume One, Number One: Sloppy, of course. Seems to me that even without previous experience in stenciling, Suddsy should have taken a little more care with his typing. Material quite mediocre, with the exception of "More on Femme Fans", which was very good, very entertaining, very true. I join EEE in welcoming the gals; femfans are my favorite people. Another one to keep an eye on (in more than one way) is "Sali" Green of Atlantic City. The mag, I think, would be bettered if Suddsy wrote more of it himself.

EN GARDE Fall 42: Ummm, I like that cover. Heck, with the money spent on some hobbies, NOVA is cheaply published. Anyway, I think mags of its type are, and should be considered, tributes to the fandom which could produce them, not products of "traitors". That review mag isn't a bad idea at all; I'd be glad to pay a nickel or dime for a large "Among the Hams and Pros" or something similarly well done. We have several capable reviewers with us now. I refuse to agree that we should shun nudity until it is made clearer in exactly what direction fandom is expected to "evolve". The idea in "We Need Noses" is good but, it seems to me, unnecessary. First you'd have to get the fans to talk about themselves more. Heck, I have several correspondents about whom I know very little personally, altho I consider them very good friends. The trouble is that fans love to talk about everything in the universe more than about themselves. And there isn't much that can be done about that! "Fantasia" could have been good, but as is it only serves to make me dislike dear Victor more than ever.

THE FANTASY AMATEUR September 1942: Serves its purpose much better than very well. I am completely in accord with Speer's suggestions about members outside the U. S. and in the armed services. However, I hope that these latter will try to be with us in some manner, a la

Milty or Forry. Juffus' statement about poor mail service for the service amuses me somewhat; shux, my brother at Fort Knox gets his mail as fast as and more often than I do!

FANZINE SERVICE FOR FANS IN SERVICE August 1942: Fine.

HORIZONS vol. 4, no. 1: Harry, more than anyone else, seems to have that knack of writing conversationally. Naturally, it's only sensible to use the most popular pronunciation of a word, but dictionaries that don't and can't keep up with the popular pronunviations of a changing language fast enough just tend to keep everyone confoozed. But who has a solution? After my too-brief talk with Mr. Koenig in N'Yawk, I have decided that this NAPA is very fine stuff. But how many fans are really interested in publishing for its own sake, as I am? Just wondering. All these fans talking about their favorite music are finally beginning to affect me; I feel a desire for something more satisfying than the popular junk one is swamped with around here. I know very little about such things, tho; you just don't hear good music in this vicinity unless you go to a good deal of trouble. (As a center of culture, Schenectady is a marvelous boom town.) And I've never been that interested in music up until now. I am indirectly responsible, I'm afraid, for Raym's pestering Harry with all this "Ark of Fire" business, since it was thru me that Raym was able to read (and, undoubtedly, reread) his beloved classic again. Some day, somehow, I want to publish the 40-page satire on it which he sent me; it's a riot!

LET'S LOOK AT THE RECORD: To be corny but frank; you look at it, I don't care to. I wouldn't mind knowing more about Technocracy, but this was boring. I go for these cute formats, tho.

MUTANT Volume One, Number One: Promising. Gergen is to be complimented for not throwing the original mag in anyway; some guys would have let it get by, I'm afraid.

THE NUCLEUS Vol. 3, #4: I was in a fog over most of the editorial. However, there is one thing that is quite obvious about anyone who criticises Koenig as strongly as Jenkins has done. He has never met Koenig. Spencers reviews were swell, and the quotations, it seems, a little too applicable. Gilbert and Sullivan appears to be another subject which I must investigate more fully.

SCIENCE-FICTION GOO Vol. 1, No. 1: Luckily for Sam, the second page was rather better than the first -- the stenciling, that is. The writing is interesting all the way thru, and I look for ward to Sam's "Critic", as well as his book!

SUSTAINING PROGRAM Fall: Maybe I'm nuts, but I liked the cover. For that matter, I liked the whole thing. Not much in the discussions that I want to get tangled up in, howsomever (last word copyright by Raym Washington, Jr.). "Quotworthy Quotes" is marvelous. Chee! I must have a good intelligence; I deciphered all but two or three words on the back cover, "starting from scratch". Wouldn't mind learning more about this either.

A SUPPLEMENT TO THE IMAG-INDEX: Interesting, tho my copy was very pale. I assure you, the next one (containing the complete Weird Tales index) will be well mimeod. Shaw is doing it!

A TOUR OF THE 'EVANS Vol. I, Number 38. I love to read about other people's trips (and to tell about my own). The type of story described in "A bit of discussion" would be well-nigh perfect, as far as I'm concerned. As it is, tho I've tried to remain faithful for a long time, fantasy is rapidly supplanting science-fiction as my favorite reading matter. "Science" and illustrations much okay.

WALT'S WRAMBLINGS: Perhaps fantasy books can be found anywhere, but up here they certainly hide themselves well. There is one second-hand book store in Sch'dy, and that is a dump. (For that matter, there are only two new book stores worth mentioning -- this in a town of 90 to 100 thousand people.) Hope Walt can keep up the wramblings; 'sgood.

THE WAR LOCK Fall 42: Surprised and glad to see it. I like Ackie more than ever. But if there was a "Fandamn" in the mailing, I must have been robbed too, 'cause I didn't see it!

YHOS #4: Ding-bust it, but I like that cover, I do! Now. Has anyone ever proved that man runs the planet? Not to me, they haven't! For instance, which annoys the other most, man or mosquitoes? Shux, I've never especially annoyed any mosquitoes that I've noticed. But they've annoyed me plenty. So who's to say that mosquitoes don't rule the planet? A much better example strikes me as I stencil. Cats. Yes, cats. Plain, ordinary, house-cats. They live off man, but they're pretty darned independent when it comes to serving him. Ask the next cat you meet who rules the planet. I'll bet that the answer would be surprising. If the little pet would deign to answer. The policy of "Walk softly -- but carry a big stick" is only necessary as long as there are separate nations on earth, and I shall continue to hold to my ideal that nations are no more necessary than war. With a world united under one government, such things as the cleaning out of unfit cultures would be mere minor details. But I doubt very strongly if war is the factor that will finally unite the world under that one government. From my standpoint, Nazism is an unfit culture, but this war certainly isn't cleaning the world of Nazism so far! I am not prepared to say what the NFFF needs -- certainly it is in a bad way just now! -- but the attitude of Art and LRC is one of the worst things that could happen to it. I say that most of the fans in the NFFF are sincerely interested in it, and would do a lot for it if given the chance. But there are a lot more fans who aren't in, and who aren't hearing enough about how to get in. The United States was doing pretty badly about the time of the Constitutional Convention, but it seems to be standing on its own feet now. So the NFFF shouldn't be completely hopeless, should it, fellows?

ZIZZLE-POP One: Too bad it's so sloppy; it's interesting enough. See comments on the NFFF above.

MAILING AS A WHOLE: I gather that it is much, much slimmer than usual, but I enjoyed it very much. Glad to be with youse guys; hope you can tolerate me.

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Since I intend to have Caliban or some other mag in every mailing as long as possible, and since Leprochaun (my sub pub with the drape shape) is in a very precarious state just now, I think it wise to

transfer the following, supposedly regular, column, of which this installment is the second, from "Lep" to "Gal". Take it away, LeM:

PURELY PERSONAL

by Leonard Marlow

We read with great apprehension Campbell's statement in the last Astounding to the effect that he was looking for stories that slighted science. To our mind the possibilities of such a trend were -- for the most part -- perfectly horrendous. As we saw it, there were just about two ways a story of that type could be written, (a) the atmosphere story or (b) straight action. Now we like 'atmosphere' stories, in fact they're our favorite type, but 110,000 words of atmosphere is just a trifle too much. And as for action -- well, Palmer has two mags that seem to fill the bill quite adequately. Mixtures of the two types seemed equally unpromising; we gloomed.

At this point, however, we began to remember reading such stories as "Breakdown", "Medusa", "The Embassy", Jameson's "Captain Bullard" series, and "The Twonky" in recent issues. Swell yarns, all of 'em, with little or no actual science, and with atmosphere and action in just the right places and proportions. If this is the kind of stuff Campbell is refering to we're all for him, but -- remember those '39 Astoundings, when such a sweeping change was being made? No matter what kind of stories may come, though, AST at least isn't going to remain static.

We take time out now to relegate to the Limbo of Forgotten Things the gentleman who so rashly predicted that AST would read like a scientific text book in short order.

Sudden Thought Dept. -- Campbell used to be one of the leading exponents of the 'heavy science' story! We remember one of his stories, in fact, that was so utterly heavy it was completely indigestible (Piracy Preferred -- June, 1930, AMZ). About half way through it got so completely boring we simply threw up our hands and quit. And when we even pause briefly during the perusing of a Campbell epic it is a matter of great moment.

Maybe we're crazy, but we understood that Hannes Bok was through with illustrating, and was going in for writing instead. Now it seems that he's back at it again. Will somebody make up their mind, please? Personally, we'd be satisfied if he'd just forget the whole thing.

Any of youse guys in the audience read Harry Warner's "The Perils of Complatenoss" in #4 SPACE TALES? All about how hard it is to get a half way decent collection and stuff like that there. It surprised us somewhat, but we were even more surprised when all the letters in the next issue agreed with him. We decided forthwith that our personal demon must be a right sort of guy, because we haven't had much trouble getting what Warner seems to think are rare items.

To start things off with a bang, we did what HW says is impossible. We just walked into a second hand book store and purchased complete sets of Astoundings from Oct. '33 to Dec. '38, Amazings from Jan. '34 to April '38, and Wonder from Nov. '33 to Dec. '36. All were in very good condition, and the total cost was only \$12.50. With this

the dealer also threw in seventeen tape copies of Amazing from '26 to '33, and half a dozen good Clayton Astoundings. A short time later he also sold us a large file of Fantasy Magazine, the series of small, paper bound booklets put out by Wonder, a bound volume containing both issues of Miracle Stories, complete collections of Scientific Detective Monthly (originally Amazing Detective Monthly), Marvel Tales, and Unusual Stories, as well as several other unusual items. This set us back the tremendous sum of \$5.70.

Next on the program was the buying of a complete set of Amazings from Jan. '28 to the Aug.-Sept. '33 issue, followed by Wonder from June '29 to Oct. '33. In with this group were some '27 Amazings and more Clayton Astoundings. All these were at publication price, and were really in marvelous condition. Most of those from '27 to '30 could have come off the presses today.

Such things as Strange Stories, Startling, Super Science, Astonishing, Marvel, Dynamic, Fantastic Adventures, and the more recent Amazings, Wonders, Astoundings, and Weird Tales were mere incidentals, of course. That took about two weeks of buying at half publication price.

All this took just one year, starting in Jan., 1941. We've been resting from our labors, so to speak, during the last eight months or so, but we'll be at it again soon. By the time 1943 rolls around we hope to have gathered up Air Wonder, Amazing Quarterly, Wonder Quarterly (those first three are in the bag right now), and Weird Tales. As for Magic Carpet, Black Cat, etc., we'll worry about them when the time comes.

(We might mention here that our personal demon apparently didn't want us to get certain issues of Unknown. It took us all of one year and seven months to get the May, '39 issue, and up to four months ago we didn't have half of the others. Probably thought we'd find out too much about Them!)

Just a little more than a year ago we read a very excellent story by Isaac Asimov entitled "Nightfall". At the time, however, we were inclined to believe that he exaggerated the effects of claustrophobia somewhat. Now we know better.

It all started when we decided to inspect a large stack of old Stf mags in the basement of one of this fair city's leading second hand book emporiums. We had purchased stuff there before, and the owner, an elderly Jew, remembered us and was profusely polite, inviting us to browse around as long as we wished. There was quite a respectable pile of stuff, and we proceeded to lose ourselves in it.

Time passed swiftly, and before we knew it the only thing left was a small stack of Weird Tales. Just as we reached for this, however, the lights suddenly flickered and went out, leaving us in total darkness. We had reached the conclusion that a fuse had probably blown when the muffled sound of the door being bolted was heard. The so-and-so had forgotten us and was getting ready to close! The prospect of spending the night there wasn't exactly pleasant, and the darkness was beginning to get on our nerves. We started out to find the stairs.

"Don't lose your sense of direction!" was the one thought uppermost in our mind. We knew just exactly which way to go, so we turned to the right and carefully followed a row of shelves down to the far wall. From here we should have turned right again, then right once more, and we would have been at the foot of the stairs. We turned right okay, and walked for what we thought was the proper distance.

Then -- Klono knows why -- we turned left and moved forward gingerly, expecting the steps, which, of course, weren't there. Although we didn't know it at the time, we had walked through a small doorway and into a large, empty, interconnecting basement. It may seem rather silly, but with sense of direction gone, no matches, and apparently no one to hear our calls, the next few minutes we spent in that utter blackness were the most horrible we have ever experienced.

Finally, we stumbled over a length of two by four, with which we proceeded to beat on the ceiling 'till the plaster rained down ~~around~~ ~~our~~. This brought immediate results, in the form of a burly individual who demanded in no uncertain terms to know what was coming off. It also brought light -- a big, beautiful forty watt bulb -- and after some frantic and incoherent explaining on our part, as well as profuse apologies from the bookkeeper, we finally staggered out of the accursed place, white faced and weak.

So the moral for all collectors is: if you have a younger member of the family who insists on ripping the covers off your mags and coloring the pictures, don't kick their teeth in. Just lock 'em in the closet during a blackout and scare the hell out of 'em.

Say, this reads like a True Fan Confessions, doesn't it?

((Shaw sez: Naturally, the publication of this column here doesn't necessarily mean that I agree with everything in it. For instance, I find the science-forsaken stories in Astounding these days just plain dull. But let me know if you like the column. I don't intend to use many "outside" features in Caliban, but if you approve of this one, it'll be kept.))

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OF COURSE, YOU'VE ALL SEEN ---

"Predictions of Things to Come". This is a little pocket-size magazine which I picked up on a newsstand the other day, and put back again. It is not dated, except for the "Number 1", apparently being an experimental issue. The idea behind it, as explained in an editorial on the first page, is to make attempts to predict the future. The various articles are concerned with future fashions, foods, automobiles, political education, and stuff like that there. Tho I didn't read any of it, I hereby pronounce judgement: It is an out and out robbery, the same things being available in much better form in any of the popular science pubs, home magazines, and even Sunday supplements. Interesting as a collector's item, perhaps, but that's all.

"Creeps by Night". I don't recall ever seeing any reviews of this anthology in the fan or pro mags, but that doesn't prove it hasn't been reviewed, so I won't go into detail. It calls itself "A collection of spine-chilling stories by modern authors, wherein things that can't happen and ought not to happen do happen". Surprisingly enough, most of the stories selected by Dahlioll Hammett are pretty good. On the whole, it strikes me as quite a bit better than the average ghost story omnibus; and it's a very good-looking book, besides. Hammett gives as one of his own favorites, attributing it to Thomas Bailey Aldrich, the following cute bit: "A woman is sitting alone in a house. She knows she is alone in the whole world; every other living thing is dead. The doorbell rings." Short but sweet, eh?

THE HERMIT SITS ALONE

(Even his best friends won't tell him.)

"Bonfire" came yesterday. I'd better explain here that I was one of the new members of the NFFF who didn't receive EEEvans' letter and ballot. However, now that I know what the shooting was all about, I certainly approve of EEE's move, and of the officers elected by it. The comments on the NFFF in the first few pages of this mag, which were written, stenciled, and mimeod some time ago, are now rather out of date. It certainly looks as if the NFFF would really go places now, and I think that the suggested changes will do a lot to make the club a real working organization at last. And if all the members who still have any spare time at all are put to work on some worthwhile projects as soon as possible, there should be no need to worry about the club for a long time to come. Your hermit certainly heads the list of those who could, and is very anxious to, get to work on any projects the club undertakes.

In the meantime, I have a few vague ideas of my own. These are not, it is true, directly related to fandom; but since the fans continue to talk about better world conditions without doing anything about them, it ought to fit in nicely. There is no reason to believe that the fans could change world conditions on a large scale, but there are some things right here at home which definitely should be changed, and which the fans as a whole might be able to have some small effect on. What about the World Calendar movement? What about having the metric system accepted as our legal standard? Not that the fans are going to be able to do a whole lot toward having these reforms carried out, but they could do something. This something would be mainly along the lines of a little propaganda spreading, probably. If every one of us talked these matters up wherever we happened to be, and kept pushing them all the time, perhaps some of this push would be translated to others. These changes are, after all, inevitable, but the sooner the better; and the more favorable publicity they receive, the sooner they will be brought about.

Or am I just being dumb? Maybe the fans couldn't accomplish anything at all. Maybe they aren't even interested. But there's no harm in discussing it, is there? I haven't given this much thought at all, but a little argument on the subject might bring out some very good ideas. Suggestions, please. Let's do something.

If Caliban turns out to be a comedy of errors it is because Iran out of correction fluid
dtwostencilisagoifcalibanturnsouttobeacomedyoferrorsitisbecauseiranouto

A MATTER OF COLOR

Somebody, in a recent issue of Astounding, complained about the frequent use of the dark-green background on the covers, and asked why the gray background wasn't used more often. If this person had looked at the covers a little more closely, he would have found out the answer to his question, methinks. Personally, I think that the choice of colors for the borders of the covers on ASF has been very good; what's more, I can prove it. In every case so far, the color chosen has been the best of those available to make the cover painting stand out to best effect. This was particularly noticeable in the two covers which had double borders; each was helped immensely by this trick, which gave a much smoother appearance to the whole thing. It seems obvious

that each painting has been tried out against the various background colors to see which looked the best. Whatever may be wrong with ASF, the art editor is certainly no dumbbell!

But somebody ought to tip him off to a fine artist right under his nose. There's a fellow name o' Frank Tinsley, who does illustrations for Street and Smith's aviation pubs, with a style that's very smooth and realistic. After seeing some of his swell airplane drawings, I have no doubt that he could do a much better job on stf illustrations than most of the illustrators ASF is using now. William Timmins, who did the cover on the latest Astounding, also started in the air pubs, and did some very competent work there. Campbell has no need of going out after chumps like this Fax fellow, when he has so much better talent right close to home.

~~There is no truth to the rumor that there is no truth to the rumor that there is no truth~~

SHIPS THAT DON'T QUITE PASS

I don't know what it was that made me read the story in the Saturday Evening Post. There was nothing about it to make one believe, before reading, that it was fantasy. Perhaps I have developed a nose for such things. At any rate, when I flipped the pages of the Post for the first time, I barely noticed it. But I happened to go through the mag more carefully, and an illustration by one Douglas Crockwell--it did have rather a fantastic tone to it, at that--stopped me. I still don't know why I went any further than that, but something made me scan the story, and gradually I picked up the notion that it was very definitely fantasy. So I went back and gave it a careful reading.

The story? "You Can't Miss Him", by Zachary Gold. It was in the November 14th issue of the Saturday Evening Post. Rather shorter than the usual Post short story, it concerned a small boy who met up with death, but decided not to tag along with him when invited to take a ride on his boat across the river. But it was very well written, and neatly developed. Easily worth the time it would take you to look it up and read it.

~~The temptation to add "deft" to the title of this last deft was almost overpowering!~~

CONCERNING SCIENTIFNIC PHEENOMEENA

It is surprising how many sources of fantasy and science fiction you can find if you just keep your eyes peeled. There is a large amount, for instance, in the comic strips. Oh, I realize that you all knew that, but I'll bet that several of you have missed one of the cleverest ideas to turn up in some time--and one of the most fantastic. I'm referring to the "Popeye" story that's been running in the Sunday papers for the past month or so now. The one-eyed sailor was having quite a time; he had developed a "time-bomb" punch which didn't knock the punchee down until ten minutes after he was punched. This "scientific pheenoena" (I love that!) puzzled the sailor greatly, until the problem was solved by Mr. J. Wellington Wimpy, of hamburger fame. It seems that Popeye had been cooking his spinach--the source of his terrific strength--according to a clock that was ten minutes and twelve seconds slow. As a natural (and completely logical, by the "Unknown Worlds" type of logic) result, his punch was also ten minutes and twelve seconds slow. I've never seen anything quite like this idea before, and it was really tremendously enjoyable.

Your obedient hermit has a theory. 'Tis a very simple little theory; concerning itself merely with the fact that no magazine of any type should be published without having at least one little bit of poetry somewhere about the premises. Or, if it can't have poetry, it must at least have some sort of verse. Failing in that, you can certainly expect it to have some insipid doggerel. As a last resort, it is positively worthless if it doesn't have anything at all, no matter how putrid, that shows some attempt at rhyming. Since Caliban has none of these, the following will have to serve instead. I wonder if any of youse guys listen to popular music often enough to recognize this as the stfnal version of

STRIP POLKA

There's a wonderful stf mag that the fans love to buy;
 It has stories by Binder and Asimov, I.,
 But each month you will notice, without failures or slips,
 There's a girl on the cover -- and she strips!
 "Take her off! Take her off!" writes Joe Fann in a note,
 "Take her off! Take her off! She is getting my goat!"
 But the ed just ignores him, without reason or rhyme;
 He won't stop -- she'll be there every time!

Her sarong will be slipping; she'll be clad in a mist,
 And she's never embarrassed, tho she's often hissed.
 She will keep right on smiling; thru the fans' boos and quips
 She'll be there on the cover -- and she strips!
 "Take her off! Take her off!" all the customers yell,
 "Off the front! Off the front!" ... but the mag seems to sell,
 So the ed doesn't answer, as he rakes in each dime;
 The dame stays -- she'll be there every time!

Oh, the "artist" that draws her never has signed his name,
 But the fans say "Remove him! And remove that dame!"
 They can stand Bug-Eyed Monsters, and they love rocket ships,
 But that girl rules the cover -- and she strips!
 "Take her off! Take her off!" says Joe Fann once again,
 "We have had much too much of that frowzy old hen!"
 But that female's persistent; tho her clothes may be fine,
 She'll discard 'em -- 'til the end of time!

BangbangandanotherMartianbitthedustbangbangandanothermartianbitthedust

THE WORLDS OF IF

If all the fans donated their Buck Rogers pistols to the scrap metal drive, enough metal would be obtained to build three battleships.
 If Raymond Washington, Jr., doesn't fall into an ecstatic trance when the issue of FFM containing "Ark of Fire" appears, it will be a sure proof that the Minnefans really have murdered him, and he is another of these zombi-fans.

If Tucker ever stops saying "and etc.", the world will come to an end immediately.

If this stuff is completely lousy, it is because in order to fill up the page I had to do some spur-of-the-moment thinking -- in other words, spontaneous combustion!

Thankyoucallagainthankyoucallagainthankyoucallagainthankyoucallagain