

Sylvester Schaffer is entitled to call himself the all-round champion entertainer of the universe, for he is about a dozen different kinds of an artist; nor has he been able to determine in which particular form of art he excels. His father, Carl Johann Schaffer, the all-round champion entertainer of his generation, thrust greatness upon him. Mr. Schaffer, having conquered Europe and preferring to hear people say "there he goes" rather than "how natural he looks," has come to America. He is the only man who gives a complete 10-act music hall show all by himself. If the joy of life consists in doing things—well, Schaffer should be the happiest man in the world. He owns a castle in Berlin and a chateau in France, both of which, according to the latest advices, were still standing, and he has been one of the sensations of the amusement world of Europe for many years. He is 26 years of age, with a boyish face, clear-cut Roman features and the figure of a Greek Mercury.

His work requires that he keep himself in perfect physical condition, and he is trained to the minute, with muscles hard as steel. His magnificent physique is the result of a course of gymnastic exercises begun when he was a child under direction of his father.

His ambition is to be a composer of music, but as he was literally born to the music hall stage, and became a performer as soon as he was able to walk, his personal tastes have been forced into the background. His father and grandfather were eminent as jugglers, acrobats and entertainers in their day. It was the ambition of his father to make something more than a mere montebank of his son, so young Schaffer was taught music, painting, dancing, acting, pantomime, horsemanship and a host of other things.

As a little boy Sylvester was not robust. Like Annette Kellermann and several other now perfect specimens of humanity who have developed their bodies through proper exercise and training, he was once so frail and weakly that his life was despaired of and so his father put Sylvester through a rigid course of gymnastics and athletic training himself, which the son has followed ever since. A short time after he went into training he began to get strong. Since then he has never been sick and does not know what it is to have a headache or a cold.

Young Schaffer became quite expert as an acrobat and tumbler. His first visit to America was during the Chicago world's fair, when he was a small boy and a member of his father's troupe of

acrobats appearing at the Chicago Auditorium. After the fair Schaffer returned to Europe. He did not come to America again until this summer, when he was engaged to tour the B. F. Keith circuit. When the Schaffer family returned to Europe the father determined to teach his boy to dance. He studied for three years, becoming very proficient in this specialty. Then came a long apprenticeship under a leading teacher of the violin. He became proficient in this art.

One of the most popular features he will present at B. F. Keith's Theatre this week is his performance of a transcription of a Chopin nocturne for the violin. He plays all Paganini's compositions, and the works of other great composers.

The training of animals appeals to him as much as does violin playing. When Schaffer landed in New York one Saturday, he was due to open the following Monday evening at one of the theatres. The herd of trained deer for one of his specialties had died on board ship. The American managers had not yet realized what a man they had to deal with. Schaffer went to the curator of the Bronx zoo, bought several deer, and worked all Saturday night and all day Sunday training them. When the act opened Monday night, the deer were letter perfect in their parts.

Schaffer regards equitation as an art; not horseback riding such as is seen in every circus, but the higher training, riding and development of the horse. He studied under some of the greatest riding masters in Europe, and was taught all they knew about horses and riding. He selected the Spanish high school as the best example of equitation, and his demonstration of this ancient form of riding and training is unique.

There is only one thing Schaffer cannot do—that is, sing. It was a great disappointment to his father, who made him learn drawing and painting. He includes a lightning sketch in oils among his other accomplishments in his act.

Schaffer is a tireless worker and rehearses incessantly in his spare moments. Every morning is given up to practice, and after a matinee and night performance he works for nearly an hour or two before going to bed. His work is such a strain upon his nerves that he carries a physician with him and two skilled masseurs.

Sylvester Schaffer has been to vaudeville what Napoleon was to war. Without question the most complete and versatile genius in the world, he is also the highest salaried artist in the world. He receives a weekly stipend of \$5000.

