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Much-Feared Man is Monsieur Deibler

Paris.—Monsieur Deibler is the most feared man in France. Deibler lives comfortably and respectably in a snug bourgeois suburb of Paris. He is a large, jovial-looking man and his neighbors know that he has some permanent position or other with the Ministry of Justice. They do not fear Deibler on the Avenue de Versailles, where he lives, because they do not know Deibler.

Every so often Deibler and three heavily built men go off on a mysterious trip. They are accompanied by a boxcar that carries the very grimmest load a French train has ever hauled. It is these trips that have earned Deibler his name of the most feared man in France, for in the boxcar is a guillotine.

Deibler is the permanent public executioner of France. He receives a fixed salary and fees for executions out of which he pays his three husky assistants. One of his assistants is his son-in-law, who, when business is light, runs a small cafe.

Deibler has two guillotines. One is a very large model, a replica of the grim framework that stood in the Place de la Concorde when the tumbrils jolted along the cobbled, narrow way of the Rue St. Honore. The large guillotine is used for executions in Paris. The other guillotine is much smaller and is kept loaded in a special box ready to travel with Deibler and his three aides to any part of the provinces.

Under the French law a condemned prisoner is not told the time of his execution until an hour before it is to occur. Execution takes place at daybreak. The condemned man is aroused, signs certain papers, is given a cigarette and a drink of rum, the barber is called in to shave the back of the prisoner's neck and he is marched out to meet Monsieur Deibler. The guillotine is set up just outside the prison gate and troops keep any spectators a hundred yards away. It is the French law.

When it is all over, M. Deibler and his three muscular assistants take down the guillotine and go back to Paris, where the son-in-law totals up the receipts of his cafe and Monsieur Deibler returns to his family. The Avenue de Versailles is glad to see him back, he is a very jolly man, and his neighbors say: "Deibler's back. He's been away on another of his trips for the government. I wonder what this Deibler does, anyway?"