

PHOTO BY LUGENE BUTCHINSON, CHICAGO

Colonel George Fabyan

COLONEL GEORGE FABYAN, leading cipher writing expert of the United States, is head of the Riverbank Laboratories, at Geneva, Illinois, where he engages in scientific research. During the World War he trained most of the men who decoded enemy messages for the Government. Colonel Fabyan is a native of

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Boston, where he was born fifty-seven years ago. As a young man he worked on the cattle ranges of the West. Later he became a cotton manufacturer, and it was while seeking a code for use in his business that he began his studies in cryptography. In the whole world there are not more than twenty experts in this line.

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He Solves the Secrets Of Cipher Writing

"I have yet to find a message in secret code that cannot be read," says Colonel George Fabyan, one of the greatest cipher experts of the world—He has unlocked the private codes of spies and criminals, and has mastered the most dangerous cipher in the world He explains here how his work is done

By John Kidder Rhodes

unnoticed in the back of the was one that stirred the interest of an already war-excited public.

A political conspiracy had been set on foot; a royal prince of India had cast his lot with revolutionists who aimed to overthrow the British Government in India; Berlin was implicated; secret service operatives of two countries had pursued the plotters on a globe-encircling trail; threads of evidence had been woven into a pattern of facts; and finally some of the conspirators had been arrested in San Francisco. The whole business was dramatic; but there was one especially sensational feature. Among the evidence submitted was document in **a** cipher or pseudo code! This had been translated-worked out into plain language-and it was deadly testimony against the conspirators. At the back of the court-room, the watching Hindu listened to the reading of the translated document. Himself one of the conspirators, he had been released on bail. To him, there was but one explanation of the deciphering of that incriminating piece of evidence.

HERE had been no treachery. However, the swarthy-skinned well devised that no outsider could possi-Hindu, who had taken his seat bly have read it without possessing the Fully convinced that his conclusion

The trial was being held in San Francisco, in sacred secrecy by a small band of men. over the heads of a score of people and but it was headline news all over the Who would or could have given it away, fired at the witness. The latter crumpled country. This was in 1916; and the case unless it was one of that band?—another up in his chair, and died almost instantly.

Biliteral Cipher



was correct, the watcher suddenly rose, unnoticed in the back of the key. court-room, did not know that. Yet the key to the cipher had been held a revolver in his hand. Swiftly, he aimed

> The bullet had penetrated his brain.

For a moment the shocked spectators sat motionless—absolutely stunned; and in that moment the bailiff drew his own revolver. It was risky business, firing over the heads of the crowd. Nevertheless, he fired. And his bullet went true. The murderer died as suddenly as had his victim!

THIS double shooting concluded a tragedy of error. For the murdered man had not given away the secret of the cipher. Nobody had given it away. It had been discovered by the patient work of a man who never even had seen any of the Hindus implicated in the case.

Colonel George

aaaba-C	abbba-P
a a a b b=D	abbbb-Q
aabaa-E	baaaa-R
aabab=F	baaab-S
aabba-G	baaba=T
aabbb-H	baabb≖U-V
abaaa-I-J	babaa-W
abaab=K	babab-X
ababa-L	babba-Y
ababb-M	

aaaaa-A

aaab-B

abbaa-N

abbab=O

later in the article). The white bricks represent the *a* letters, the shaded bricks the *b* letters. Begin at the top of the wall, below first flag, read from left to right, and assign an a or b to each brick on that principle, dividing the resultant a's and b's into groups of five. Then refer to the accompanying cipher code, which will show for which letter of the alphabet each group stands. The result will be amusing as well as interesting and instructive.

This architect's sketch shows an interesting

method of using the Biliteral Cipher (described

The cipher message above and the four others that accompany this article are mere child's play to cipher experts, but to the rest of us, who have had no training in this highly specialized field, they are difficult enough to be entertaining, and to constitute a test of patience and ingenuity. Colonel Fabyan selected these curious-looking messages as examples of ciphers which the average person will be able to read if he tries hard enough. By furnishing in each case the key-which under ordinary conditions could be discovered only by experts—he has performed for you the really difficult part of the solution.

In each instance correct reading of messages will be found at the end of this article.

Fabyan, in whose laboratories at Geneva, Illinois, the work was done, knows more about ciphers than anybody else in the United States. There are not more than twenty great cipher experts-cryptanalysts, they are called—in the world! Colonel Fabyan is one of the foremost among them.

Years ago, seeking a code for use in messages connected with

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his business, he became deeply interested for codes occurs when banks telegraph in the subject and made profound study of it. Finally, the World War broke out; and the need for secret methods of communication brought a tremendous revival of codes and ciphers.

To fight spies and treachery, the Government had to find out the contents of "That authorizes the New York bank secret messages. Colonel Fabyan was the trained to it under his direction.

The Riverbank Laboratories at Geneva are extraordinarily interesting, being devoted purely to scientific research, chiefly along the line of physics and medicine. Cryptography is only one phase of Colonel Fabyan's interests. Scientific discoveries of far-reaching importance have been made here in recent years. These have been given freely to the world, even though they might—if commercially developed—mean a fortune to him.

instructions about money. A bank in Chicago, let us say, wants to wire a bank in New York the following message:

"Pay twenty-five hundred dollars to Adam K. Bell, and charge to our account. Identification waived."

to pay twenty-five hundred dollars to the only man in the country who could give first man who comes in and says he is the quality of help needed. Hence, most Adam K. Bell. Naturally, such a message of the men who did the actual work of could not go in plain words, for every ferreting out hostile messages were telegraph operator, messenger boy, stenog-

"Here's another instance of a business use for ciphers. A number of years ago, I had information which cast grave doubts on the financial soundness of one of our important customers in the West. In trade circles, so far as I knew, not an unfavorable word had been breathed against this concern. Nevertheless, I was uneasy, and wired our New York office these instructions:

"Cancel all shipments to (naming the concern). Have information I cannot confirm that they are about to fail.'

> "Of course I sent the message in cipher—partly out of fairness to the firm itself. Rumors have a way of starting from very small beginnings. The concern might not be as badly off as I believed. In that case, my telegram, if openly read and circulated about, might have the effect of giving the finishing push to a company which otherwise would perhaps manage to pull through. As it was, however, within a week after I sent my cipher telegram, all creditors were accepting fifty cents on the dollar from this house, and glad to get it. "On the occasion of the death of any powerful banker of international importance, the news will travel around the world in cipher ahead of the news dispatches. It may mean hundreds of thousands of dollars to traders who are able to secure the infor-

LOWEVER, my purpose in I going to the laboratories was to have Colonel Fabyan talk about ciphers. I wanted to know what people use them for: whether ordinary folks, like you and me, could have a cipher of our own; and some of the interesting human stories that must have centered around this fascinating subject. I found that ciphers are used in peace and in war, in love and in business, by courtiers and by criminals. Diplomats send important messages in cipher. Business firms use this method when secrecy is essential. When money is telegraphed to you, the dispatch is sent in cipher. In fact, ciphers rapher, and clerk to read. The temptahave been used for secret messages for tion to impersonate Mr. Bell might be too thousands of years, and are still used all over the world. "I could show you thousands of ciphers and codes," Colonel Fabyan said to me. "They could be multiplied and varied, until you would be sick of the sight of them. One of the common business uses

The Route Cipher

In Harding June Director named nineteen came of Dawes hundred to to the as twenty-one in see Washington budget the President the what for and first way could a Dawes of be year reducing done expenses.





Hint: Number the words in the message and route them through the square in the order indicated by the arrows.

strong for somebody to resist.

"Sometimes a bank keeps its cipher in a locked box which can be opened only when two keys are inserted. As each key is in the possession of a different man, no message can be sent or deciphered unless both are present.

mation secretly, even just a little in advance of others.

"THERE is no end to the means of secret communication. During the war we found that an expert engraver was communicating with the enemy by engraving secret messages microscopically on the heads of pins. A woman could use, in her clothing, enough of these pins to carry a long message; and she could pass any inspection under the sun! By chance, we found one of the pins, and discovered the trick.

"Some of the old kings used to shave a slave's head and tattoo a message on his scalp. When the hair grew out,

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the slave was sent to the person who was to receive the message. The latter again shaved the slave's head, and there was the tattooed communication.

"In deciphering any secret message without the key, you usually have to 'cut and try,' as we express it, until you find a solution that fits. We have several h indred ways of attacking cipher messages. Some messages are so simple and obvious—although they may look complicated to inexperienced users—that one glance is sufficient to tell a trained we how to proceed. Others may licad to a tremendous amount of work before they can be broken. But I have yet to find one that and d' be broken if enough work was put on it. What one mind has locked up another can unlock! "One of my assistants, Miss Cora Jensen, has an immense working knowledge of ciphers and of the ways to attack them. When there is a message to be deciphered, she starts with 'work sheets' of foolscap paper, crossined. If it seems to be one of the common ciphers, she makes a few tries,' according to well-known methods, putting each attempt down on a work sheet. "Naturally, an expert does not waste time putting down silly must not destroy any of the work sheets, but must return all that have been given to him. So he thinks in his head, as far as possible, not on paper.

VJLU		The Corn COJフ	-	コンロン	LAVEJ
JJLL	LAJLA	JCLÝC	ALEJC	コロシ	CVEO
	Eanej	۲۲٦٦٨	JC>NT	いしこう	ETELA
JUCAL	しくにこう	LINT	ノこう		



guesses. For one thing, the 'translator' E, T, A, O, N, I, S, H, R, D, L, C, U, F, M, P, W, G, Y, B, V, K, X, Q, J, Z. "On the average printed page, filleen per cent will be E; whereas only two per

the new code, but did not know what it meant. Now, when it was repeated in the old code-which we, of course, had broken and understood perfectly-it was the simplest thing in the world to break the new code. "Here was a rather amusing thing: When codes were changed, the operators used to practice them for a while; and they usually did so by sending proverbs! One fellow apparently knew only one proverb. He used to tune in every morning at ten minutes past seven. Knowing his limitations, we never had much ones would be discovered sooner or later. trouble with a new code when we caught About as soon as a new code came into him practicing it over and over with the

"THERE can be only one correct read-I ing of a cipher message. An incorrect solution may fit up to a certain point, but it is sure to strike a snag somewhere. So it is a case of trying, over and over again, until a perfect fit is found. In the case of the Hindu cipher we translated for the San Francisco case, the total number of work sheets used was fifty."

"How are ciphers invented, or constructed?" I asked.

"Well," said Colonel Fabyan, "a cipher can be made up by using other letters and symbols in place of the correct nes. To decipher a message of that kind, it is necessary to know which letters of the alphabet occur most frequently in eneral use. We made a study of this, counting the letters on thousands of pages of printed matter. We found that this is the order of frequency in which the letters of our alphabet occur:

cent of the letters will be κ , x, Q, J, and z, all together.

"Knowing this, we can count the times the different letters appear in a cipher message where wrong letters are used for right ones. And this helps us to find out enough right ones to give us the clue.

"During the war, of course, the various Governments were constantly changing their own codes, for they knew the old use we knew the fact, and would set to solitary proverb he knew! work to break it; that is, to decipher it. Sometimes we were helped by the very men who were most anxious that we shouldn't succeed—the agents of the foreign Government that was changing its code. They would send this message, in the old code, to their superiors:

"Haven't received my new code book yet. Repeat your message in the old one.

"We would then wait for the repeated message. We already had received it in

"THERE was one message that upset all the experts who studied it. It came in a strange cipher which nobody could fathom. When I saw it, I thought it had a familiar look, and I took it to Mangasar Mangasarian—a noted man among his people in Chicago-and asked him if he could help me with it. He called a stenographer, and rapidly dictated the English translation. It was simply a letter written in Armenian! "Once a message came to us to be deciphered. It had originated in Spainalthough we did not know this. It looked like a difficult and unusual code. But what had happened was probably something like this: The man who was to send the message wrote it out and left his assistant to translate it into cipher. The assistant handed the job to the stenographer. And I should judge that she handed it to the office boy! "When the message came to us to be deciphered, several people were completely baffled. It was finally given to a stenographer to copy. She happened to know some Spanish; (Continued on page 60)

The Rail Fence Cipher

OEWOOLBFRUAEHBGNIGSVRTIGTMNHW UDEOTNTTEEINNIEEYHN

 $\mathbf{A} \qquad \mathbf{A} \qquad$

Divide the letters in this message into two parallel lines, putting a letter at each point in the zigzag rail fence, and continuing the fence until all letters are used. Then, if you have divided the letters in the right place, the message will be apparent

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The American Magazine

He Solves the Secrets of Cipher Writing

(Continued from page 30)

like a cipher at all.

paratory to being translated into the do you see there?" cipher. But before this was done the message was sent out by mistake—simply a hashed version of the real thing. "Once a message in an unknown cipher was brought to us, a message so short that different angle, as well as at a different distance; and very often you will notice something that escaped you before. "The message I speak of fell with its back up, and I saw that there was a smudge on that side of the paper. It turned out that the man who had received the message originally, some correspondent who possessed the key, had decipered it and written the translation on the back, then scratched it out with his lead pencil. It was easy enough to read through this smudge and get the message.

message, while it was sadly cut up, letters a and b. You could use squares and they differed. looked a good deal like Spanish, and not circles, dots and dashes, trees and bushes -any two things that can be made to look "That, in fact, was just what it was- even slightly different. Look at this." straight Spanish! The letters had been Colonel Fabyan whirled about in his divided off into groups of fives, pre- chair and pointed to the wall. "What

"A photograph with a lot of soldiers." "Anything special about them?" "Not that I notice." nevertheless. That photograph was spe- his method of making use of the cipher. looking sideways represent the b's in the cipher as I showed it to you; the others represent the a's. " 'Plans have been worked out for sending messages with this cipher in bouquets of flowers. One color flower stands for a, another for b." cipher which Colonel Fabyan called the most dangerous in the world. Instead of some other for the alphabet. A simple to Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup." plan is to start off with a key word, then follow with the remaining letters of the ROM one of these books of Bacon's "SHALL I show you what is the most alphabet in proper sequence. Say you "deciphered writings, I asked permission dangerous cipher in the world?" have decided to use the word "united." to make a couple of quotations. The first, Then the key to the cipher would read:

and after a few lines it struck her that the is the fact that you don't have to use the the letters minutely in order to see how

"In Bacon's day," Colonel Fabyan pointed out, "three inventions were most important: gunpowder, the compass, and the printing press. There were only four type founders and twenty licensed printers in the whole country, and it was a penitentiary offense to possess any part of a printing press without a license.

"The two styles of type used in the "Well, there is something special, original printing of Bacon's writings were we could not hope to decipher it without cially posed to show a way of using the "Bacon had good reasons for not some clue. I had none—so I threw the cipher, and it carries the message, 'Knowl- revealing his private method of using the paper on the floor. I did this with a pur- edge is power.' Most of the soldiers, you cipher. So, for three hundred years and pose; and I advise you to try it yourself observe, are directly facing the camera; more, there lay hidden in books known sometime when you have handwriting a few are looking sideways, but not to have been written by him, and in many that you can't read. You will see it at a enough to seem unnatural. The fellows others not thought to have been written by him, secret revelations of an astonishing character. "Of course, Bacon didn't do it all himself. He had amanuenses and secretaries. "Talk about patience!" he went on. "The work of using the cipher in the first place was certainly no greater than There is another way to vary the the work of deciphering it after all these years. We have spent thirty years at it. I guess, and we have ream after ream of allowing the first group of five letters to Bacon's secret writings here to-day! The represent"a," and the next five "b," employ credit for that must go where it belongs,

to make a couple of quotations. The first, taken from his autobiography as he tells it in the cipher (hidden in the other text), shows very clearly why, in an age of political intrigue, there was much that Bacon could not publish openly. It reads:

Udangerous cipher in the world?" asked Colonel Fabyan.

I said that nothing would please me better, so we sat down opposite each other at a table; and on a foolscap sheet of paper I wrote what he told me to. When was through this is what I had:

abbaa—N aaaaa—A abbab---O aaaab—B abbba-P aaaba---C abbbb-Q aaabb---D baaaa—R aabaa—E baaab—S aabab—F baaba—T aabba--G baabb---U & V aabbb--H babaa--W abaaa—I & J babab—X abaab—K babba—Y ababa--L babbb—Z ababb---M

"That," Colonel Fabvan repeated, "is

because it is capable of being almost in-

aabab---D aaaaa—U aaaab---N aabba—A aabbb—B aaaba—I aaabb—T abaaa--C abaab---F aabaa--E (etc.)

You can use any key word of any length, or any combination of letters you like; and so long as the person addressed knows how you have varied the key, he can decipher any message you have written. There are almost infinite possibilities in this one cipher.

"NOW come with me," Colonel Fabyan went on; "we'll go up-stairs and take a look at the way Sir Francis Bacon used the most dangerous cipher in the world, the cipher which he invented."

He led the way to a moving picture projection-room on the top floor of the laboratories. Here he directed on the screen an amazing exhibition of human ingenuity and patience. It consisted principally of slides reproducing pages from the original editions of Sir Francis Bacon's writings. Colonel Fabyan him-Elizabethan literature, and his researches have taken him far afield to consult other In instance after instance, the slides allow her marriage to the Earl of Leicester showed the striking fact that for every to be made known; and why she would letter in the alphabet, both capitals and not recognize publicly her two sons, nor small letters, two distinct kinds of type allow her first-born, known to the world column you have eight a's, under them had been employed. The differences, as Francis Bacon, to be recognized as the eight b's, and so on. And in the first especially in the capital letters, were heir apparent to the British throne. column you have sixteen a's, then eight b's. instantly noticeable in some cases; but in The following cipher passage, from "What makes this cipher so dangerous other cases it was necessary to examine much further along in the same book,

Though constantly hemmed about, threatened, kept under surveillance, I have written this history in full in the cipher, being fully persuaded, in my own mind and heart, that not only jesting Pilate but the world ask: "What is truth?"

The principal work is, as you may suppose. writing a secret story of my own life, as well as a true history of the times. Yet it is much mixed or twined into many others herein given. Indeed, a whole national record must be changed by the revelation which I have prepared with much pains for posterity.

That this shall be such true history that it shall be worthy of preservation I have not blenched aught, howsoever much it may irk me, or weary those who readit. But some of it I would I could forget after it hath been set down. I am, indeed, by virtue of my birth, that roval, though grossly wronged, son to our most glorious, vet most faulty, Queen Elizabeth, of the stock that doughty Edward truly renowned. Of such stock Henries the Fifth, Seventh, and Eighth, historic battle kings, came, like branches sent from the oaks.

finitely varied, and almost perfectly disguised. It is known as the biliteral cipher, and was invented three hundred vears ago by Sir Francis Bacon. It is just as dangerous to-day as it was then. "If you learn how its combinations are made, you can tear up your copy and reproduce it at any time from memory. self has a rich library of Baconian and Read from top to bottom on the key vou have just written. There are five columns of letters. The fifth column volumes which he does not possess, and reads a, b, a, b, from top to bottom. The which money cannot buy. fourth column is a, a, b, b, a, a, b, b, all the way down. They go down in twos. The third column reads a, a, a, a, b, b, b, b, and so on-in fours. In the second

My true name is Tudor. . .

Bacon explains in subsequent pages why Queen Elizabeth, who loved the title of the Virgin Queen, would never

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The American Magazine

appears to shed light on a very old controversy among students of Shakespeare: vertical columns, this was what he had:

My plays are not yet finished, but I intend N to put forth several soon. However, the biliteral work requiring so much time, it will readily be seen that there is much to do after a book doth seem to be ready for the press, and I could not well say when other plays will come out. The next volume will be under W. Shakespeare's name. As some which have now been produced have borne upon the title page his name, though all are my own work. I have allowed it to stand on many others which I myself regard as equal in merit. Having put forth a number of plays in his theatre, I shall continue so doing, since I do make him the thrall to my will. . . .

"Don't bring me into any discussion of who wrote Shakespeare's plays!" Colonel Fabyan warned me emphatically. "I don't know whether Bacon wrote them or not, and I don't care. But as a cryptanalyst I am interested in cipher writing, wherever I find it. "We've proved the accuracy of various passages in Bacon's secret writings in any number of ways. For instance, he told in one passage about a panel in a wall which could be moved when a secret spring was touched, revealing a compartment behind it in which certain articles would be found. We sent the instructions he gave over to England. They found that the building was still in existence; and the wall, panel, and secret spring were all where he said they'd be!"

When the sender was preparing it, in

eed	don't	my	bonds	proceeds
	let	safety	sell	must
t	John	box	then	have
	know	and	WIIC	tn
oncy	go	get	me	hand
uick	to	two	the	Tuesday

 \mathbf{O}

m

qu

By starting at the top of the left-hand column and reading down, the message becomes plan:

Need a lot of money quick. Don't let John know. Go to my safety box and get two bonds. Sell. Then wire me the proceeds. Must have in hand Luesday.

ANOTHER simple plan is to use the dic-La tionary. Small pocket dictionaries, exactly alike, should be in the possession of the persons communicating by this method. Instead of sending the word you mean, you agree to select one somewhere close to it. For instance, you can select the word which comes fire places after the one you mean, or five places before it, or twenty places after or before it wherever you want. A result something like this may be what you will get:

We want you to get some dynamite and meet us the usual place midnight Wednesday.

The Hindus involved in the plot mentioned at the start of this article used a "book cipher." Whenever they wanted a cipher symbol for a certain letter, they turned to any page in the book that had been agreed upon among them, found the letter they wanted, then referred to it by page, line and letter, thus: 52-7-28. meaning that the letter would be found on page 52, line 7, 28th letter in the line.

In this instance it was not absolutely necessary to find the book used by the conspirators, as their cipher could be read by comparing it with certain known words, such as the names of the people who were arrested along with the leader. But the book used by the Hindus actually was found—though Colonel Fabyan declares the finding of it was a "fluke." Colonel Fabyan's office at the laboratory has very peculiar windows, about the size and shape of portholes. These date from the period of the recent war, when he was doing work there which was of vital importance to the Government, and when there was danger of some alien sympathizer taking a pot shot at him. His peace-time clients are mainly government departments - the Navy, the Army, and the Department of Justice.

TF YOU want to experiment in ciphers, Perhaps with some friends, here are some you can try. They are really very easy to understand. The first is made by dividing the alphabet into groups, then selecting a symbol to represent each group. You repeat the symbol one, two, or as many times as the cipher calls for, to represent a letter within the group. For example, divide the alphabet into four groups, and let the symbols be a dollar mark (\$), an asterisk (*), a zero (0), and the small letter (x). Then your cipher key looks like this:

Weapon warble youth toboggan ghastly somnolent dyspepsia Andersonville melancholy usurp their utensil plain midway weevil.

Which, translated, reads:

Solution to Biliteral Cipher

My business is to write prescriptions, And then to see my doses taken; But now I find I spend my time

Solution to Music Cipher

Men must work and women must weep



Suppose you want to convey secretly, with this cipher, the message "Send the jewels to Sam." Then your message looks like this:

()()()())\$\$\$\$\$()\$\$\$\$x**\$\$\$\$\$***\$\$\$\$ $$$$$$^{****}((h)(h)(h)_{X}(0) = 0000005^{******}$

Endeavoring to out-Bacon Bacon.

Solution to Route Cipher						
I In	JUNE	6 Ninfiern	IO Hundred	15 Twenty-one	21 President	
2 Harding	5. Named	9 Dawes	14 As	. 20 Тне	26 First	
4 Director	8 Of	I; The 18	19 Budget	25 And 20	30 Dawes	
CAME II	12 To 17	WASHINGTON 23	24 For 28	29 A 32	YEAR 35	
То 16	SEE 22	Wнат 27	Ēould 31	BE 34	Done 36	
In	Тне	WAY	Of	REDUCING	Expenses	

In June nineteen hundred twenty-one, President Harding named Dawes as the first Director of the Budget, and Dawes came to Washington for a year to see what could be done in the way of reducing expenses.

Solution to Corner Cipher

If you want to send on a post card a message that will probably stump the delivery clerk who tries to read it, a simple but baffling cipher can be made by merely transposing the words of the message. Of course, the person who is to receive it must know how they are transposed.

First, write the message in vertical columns, one word under the other, as many columns as you happen to need. Then, when you send it, write the words as they read across these columns.

Here is an example. The message as sent reads:

Need don't my bonds proceeds a let safety sell must lot John box then have of know and wire in money go get me hand quick to two Luesday.

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The alphabet would look like this:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z Λ < ٦ Π シΠ Υ Θ Ε Ξ Α Π Ε Θ Υ Π Ε Ι Γ Ι Γ Ι

This world would be a far pleasanter place And in heaven more pews be took, If women were all they wished to be And men as good as they look.

Solution to Rail Fence Cipher

OEWOOLBFRUAEHBGNIG TMNHWUDEOTNTTEEINN S V R T I G I E E Y H N

To men who would be fortunate the beginning is everything.