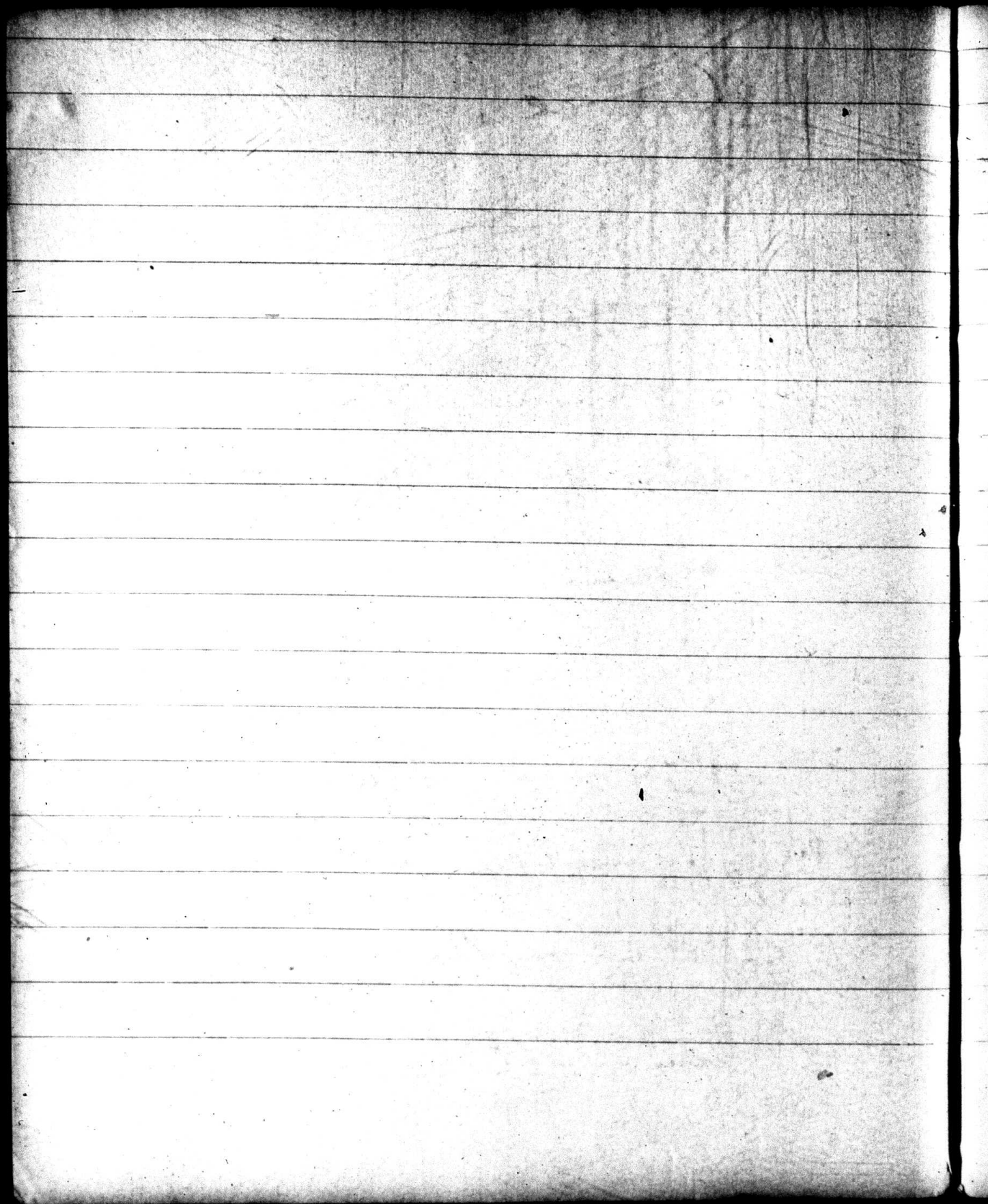


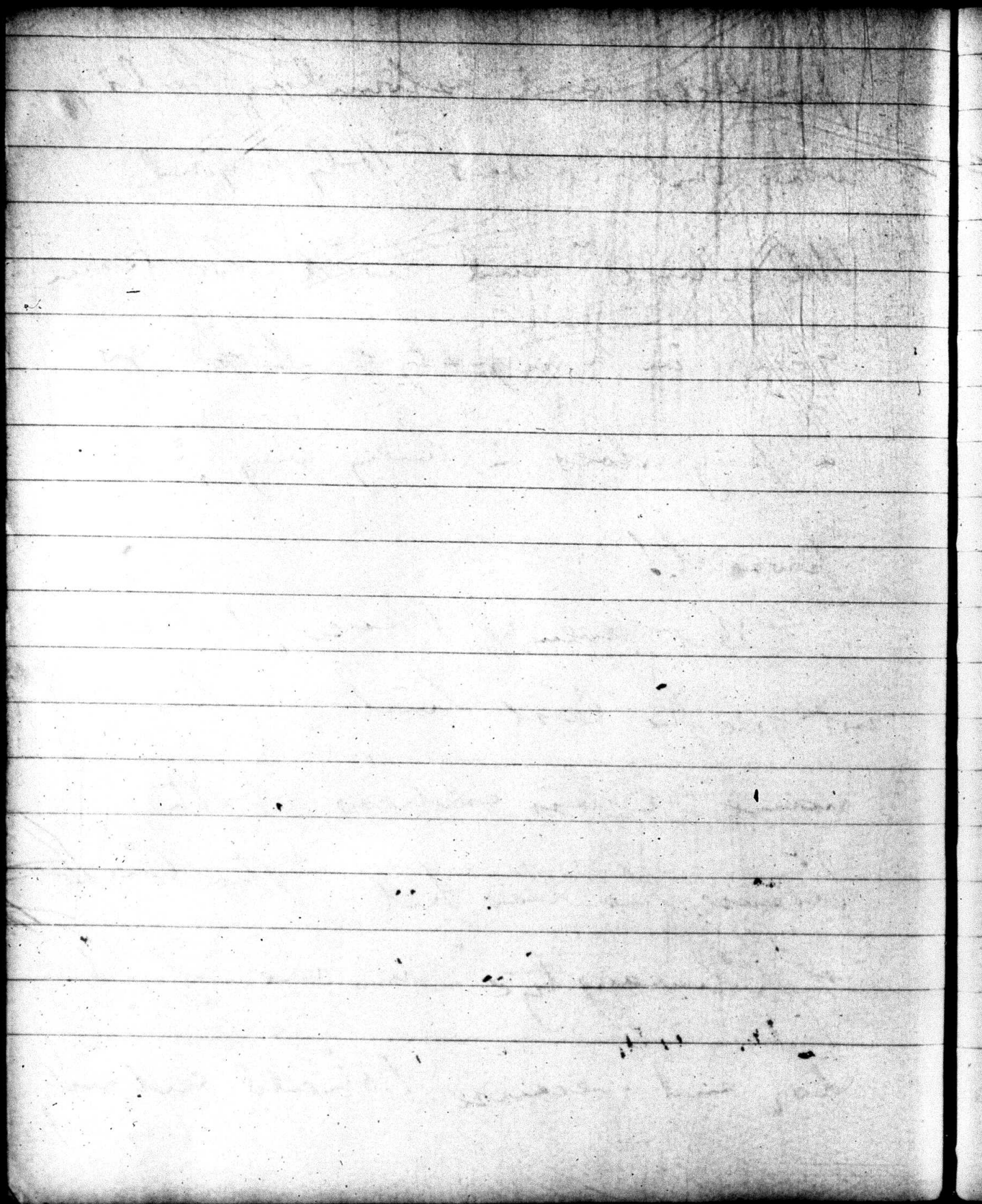
Chance?

On my honor, I don't know if
he is a Chinaman or not. He
calls himself Ching Chang,
which means "Parity and
Stillness" and he says that he
is really K'o Hsuan, that
crazy drunken miracle-worker
of the third century who upset
all China with his weird



practices and astounding facts,
who said he was "Holy beyond
utterance" and lived for seven
years in a pig-stye, ~~to~~ as
a pig does in every way, to
prove it!

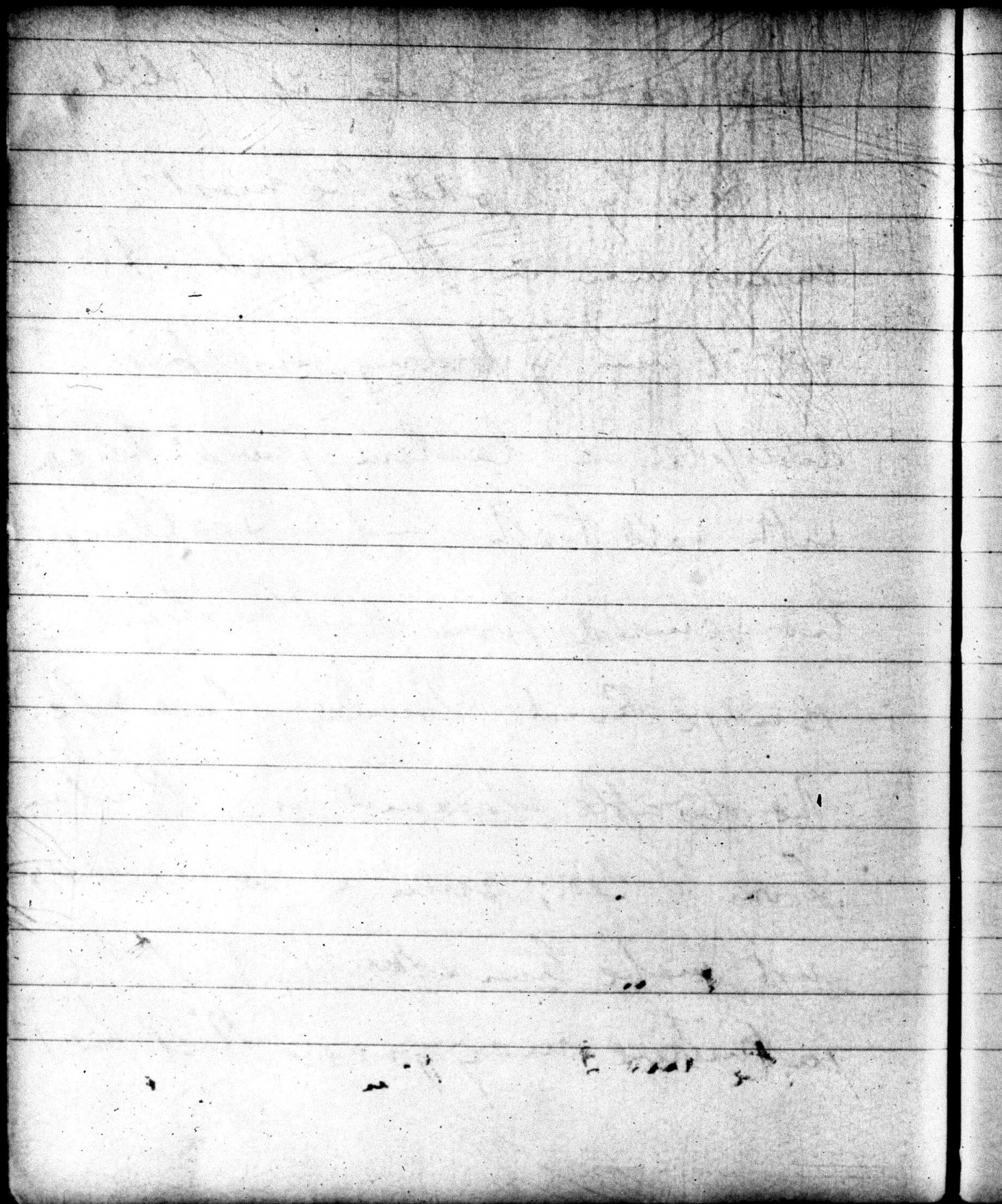
But even if I knew, I should
not give the least hint of his
name or his address, both
because he has put "The Curse
of Chuangtze" on me if I
do, and because I should certainly



never see him again if I did.

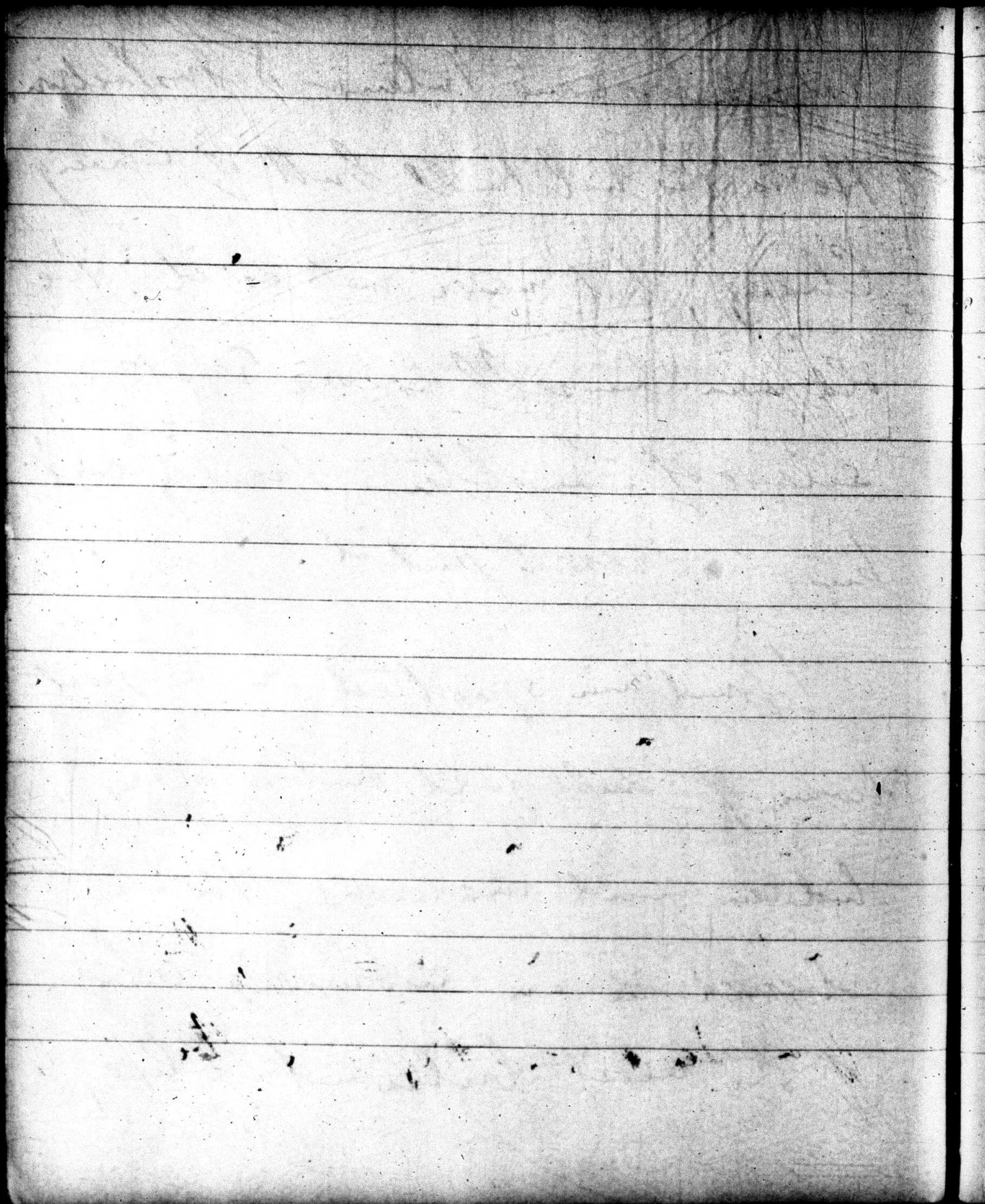
He is by long odds the most curious man in New York. I got to him by bribing his chief disciple, a lantern-jawed person with gold teeth, and a scolding housemaid from the Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, for a wife.

The disciple aforesaid is a Puritan from Wales; even a dollar does not make him smile, but the intuitive may guess that he



experiences some Intense Satisfaction.
He is the habitual butt of Ching
Chang, but never notices it. The
old man himself is one vast
silence of Laughter - I really don't
know how else to put it.

I found him squatted on a great
divan of dull gold embroidery,
hidden amid cushions. He was
dressed in an enormous robe
of the most brilliant blue,



with golden symbols worked in
thread all over it. He ~~was~~ is entirely
bald, although still young. His
face reminded me a little of
the great Napoleon, but more of
Ho Tai, that smiling god with
the huge abdomen whose image
we see in all the Chinese Shops.
His eyes, though, are amazing. They
hint unutterable Evil, the Joy
of a Devil gloating over the souls

Handwritten text on lined paper, appearing to be a letter or journal entry. The text is mirrored across the page, suggesting bleed-through from the reverse side. The handwriting is cursive and somewhat faded.

Dear Mr. [illegible]
I have just received your letter of the 10th inst. and am
glad to hear from you. I am well and hope these few lines
will find you the same. I have not much news to write at
present. I am still in the same place and doing the same
work. I have not much time to write at present. I must
close for this time. I will write again soon. I am
Yours truly,
[illegible]

But he has bred to Damnation.

Yet there is no cruelty in his smile;
we would say that even Eternal
Punishment seems to him but
one more joke.