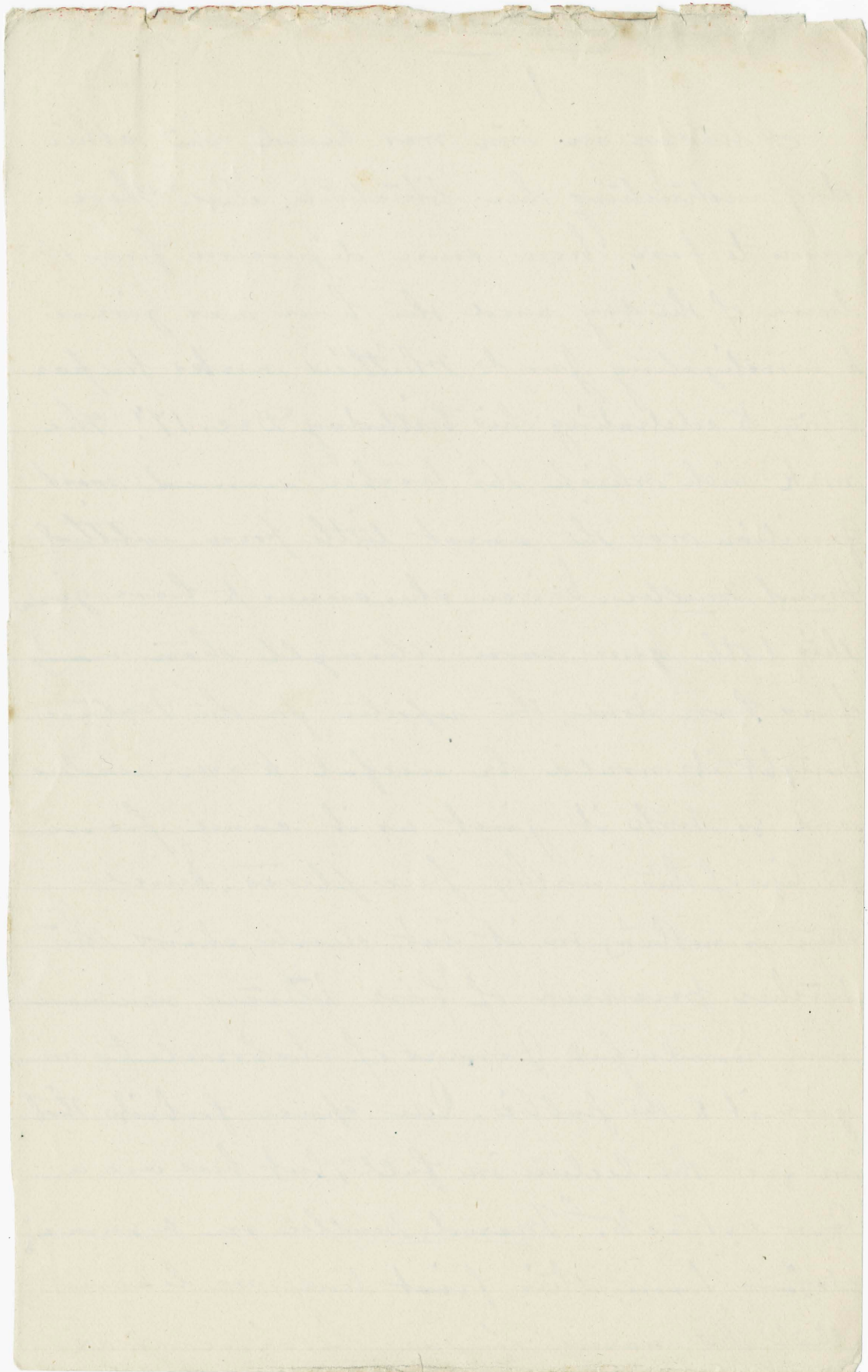
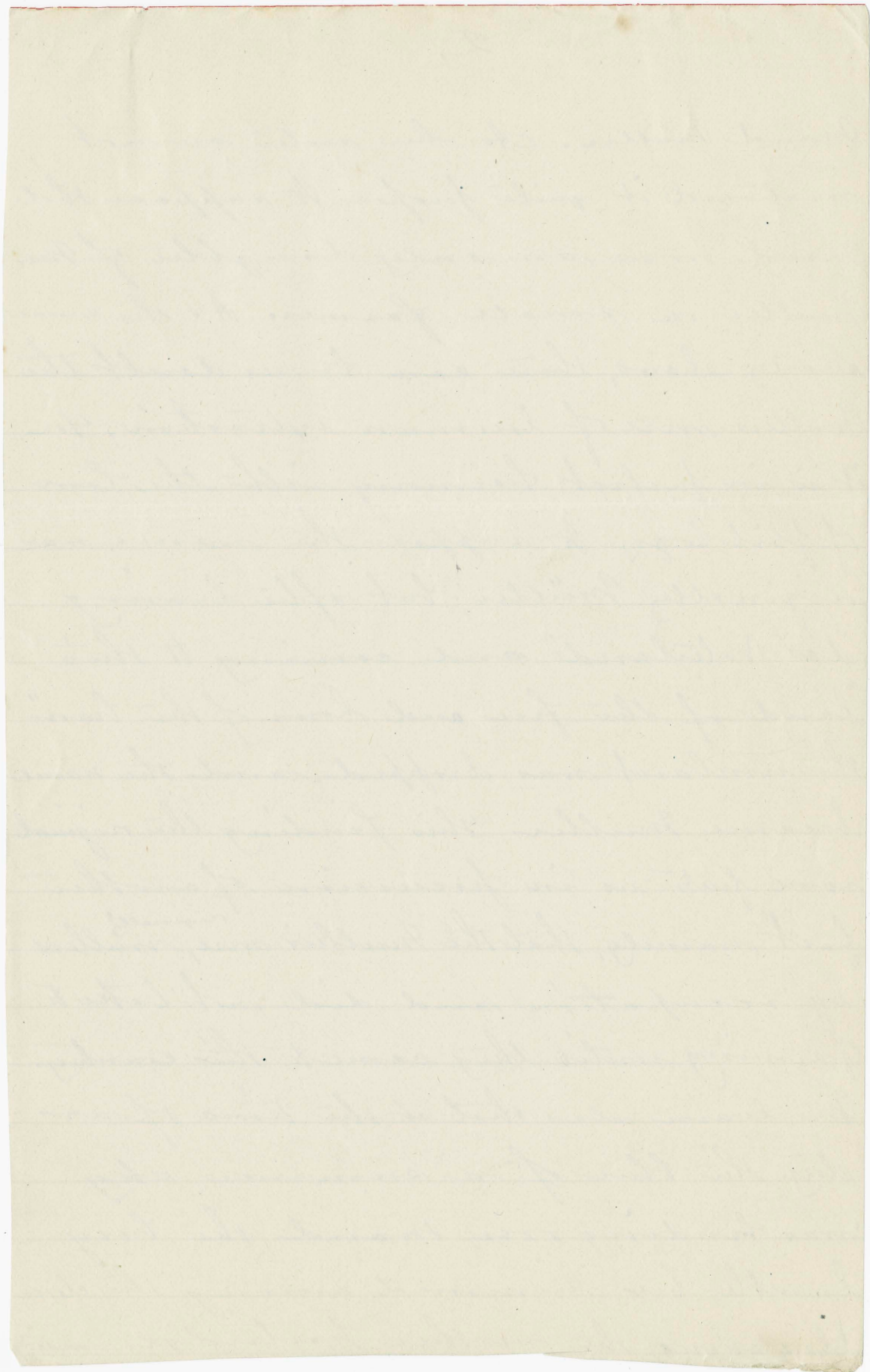


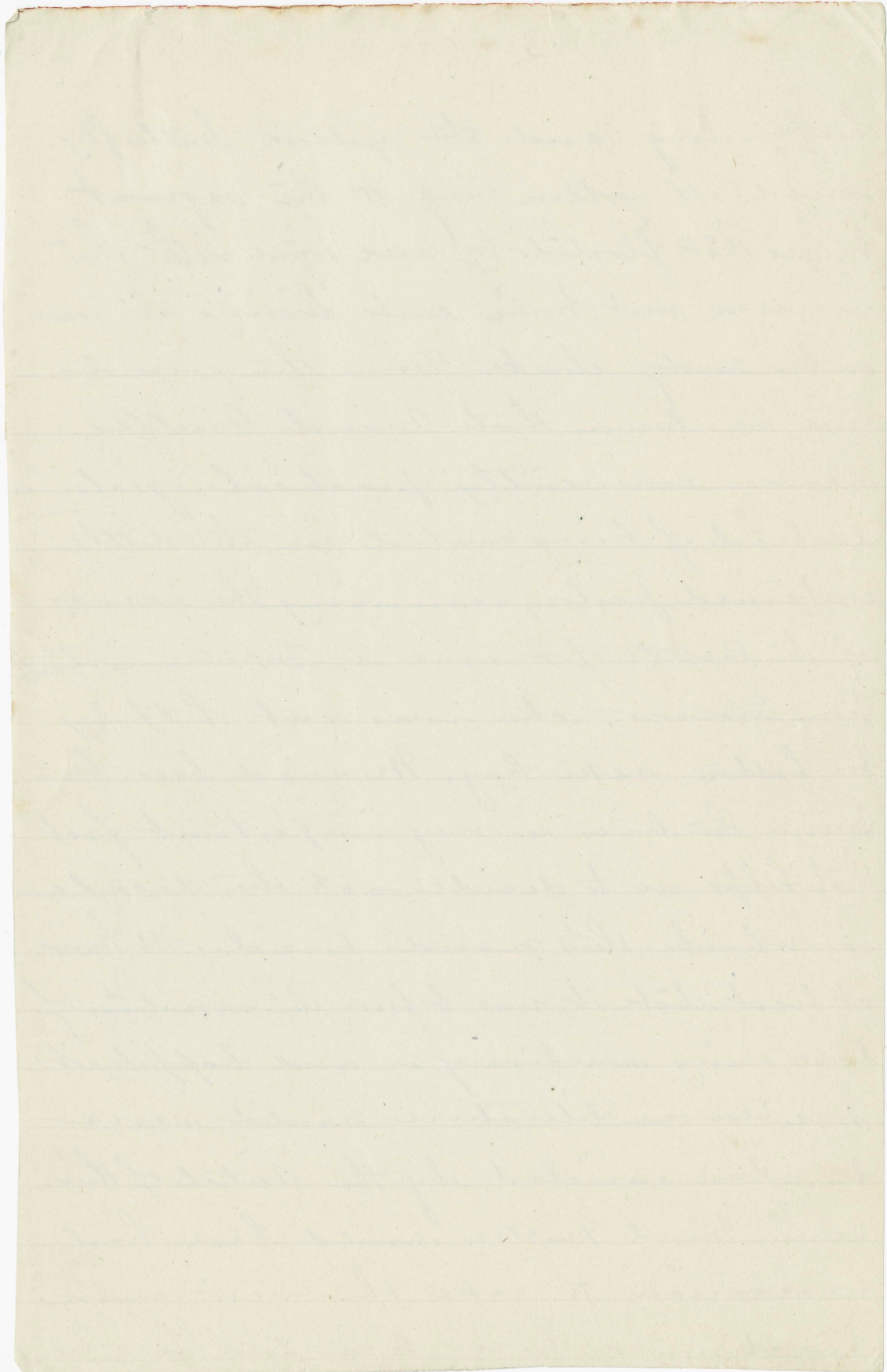
A teacher in town was heard the other day instructing her literature class. There seems to have been some digression from the lesson of the day and she soon was given to investigating Jas. B. Whittier's works preparatory to celebrating his birthday Dec. 17. The work with which the teacher seemed most familiar was the sweet little poem entitled Maud Muller. Since she seems to have given this little gem more thought than many of us have done, the reporter for the Venture thought it would be useful to our readers and so took it just as it came from the lips of this worthy preceptor. Since there is nothing in it but clearly shows the teacher possessed of fine literary acumen and wonderful powers of elaborating on give it to the public. Our space forbids that we give the lecture in full; but here are a few extracts. "Maud Muller on a summer day" from this first line we learn that the name of our heroine was



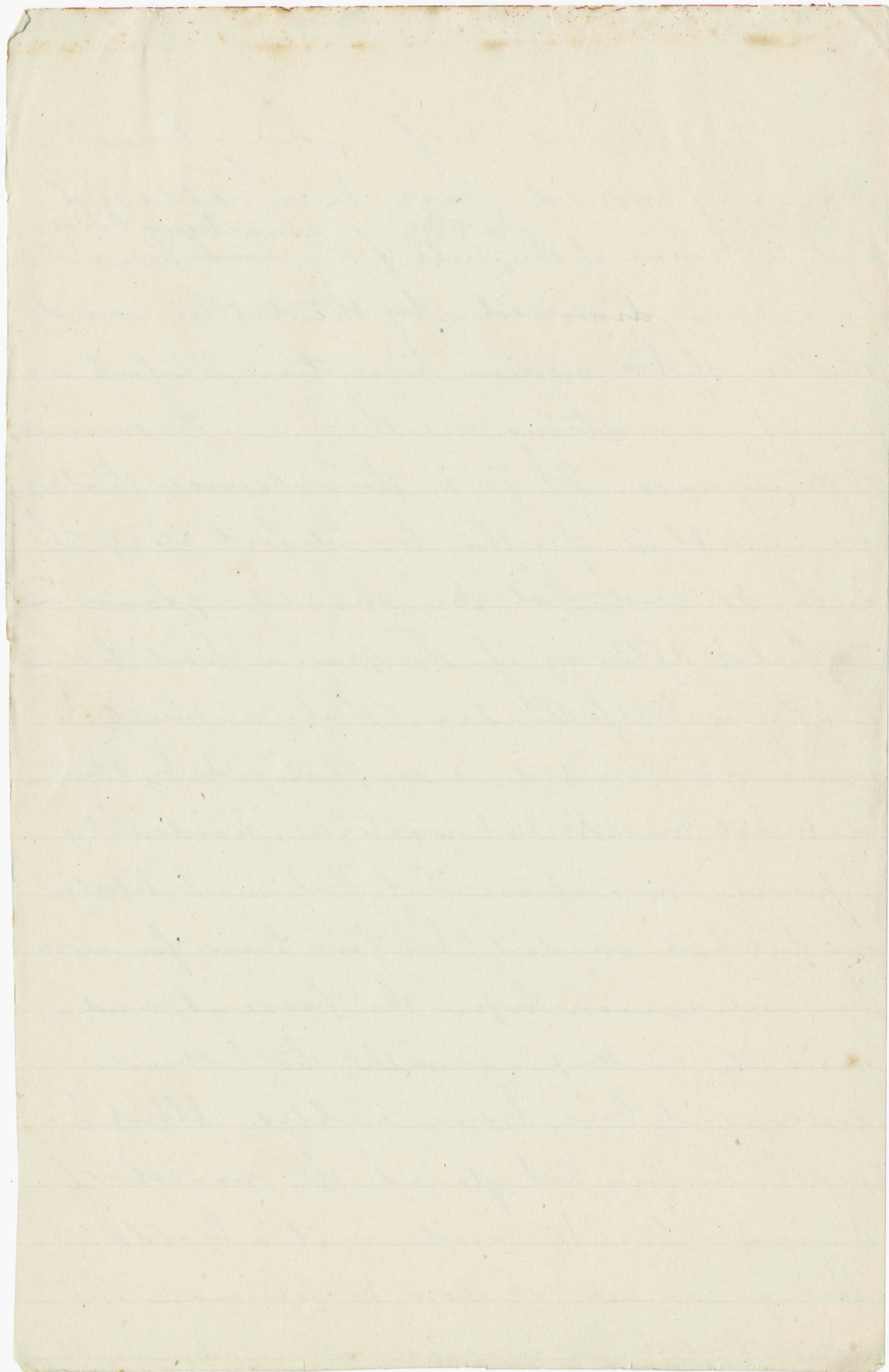
Maad Muller. As her sister are not mentioned it quite proper to suppose that Maad was an only daughter of Mr. Muller a small farmer. As the name clearly shows, there can be no doubt the Mullers were of German extraction. For it is in perfect harmony with the laws of philology to suppose the name was originally Müller; but after leaving "das Vaterland" and coming to this "land of the free and home of the brave" the umlaut was dropped and the name became Muller. This finding the original name puts us in possession of another fact namely, that the Mullers were, ^{originally} millers by occupation and did not take to farming until they came to this country. We learn also that at the time of our story the blue of a summer sky was bending over Maad, the busy bumble bee hummed among the clover blossoms, the mother partridge nursed



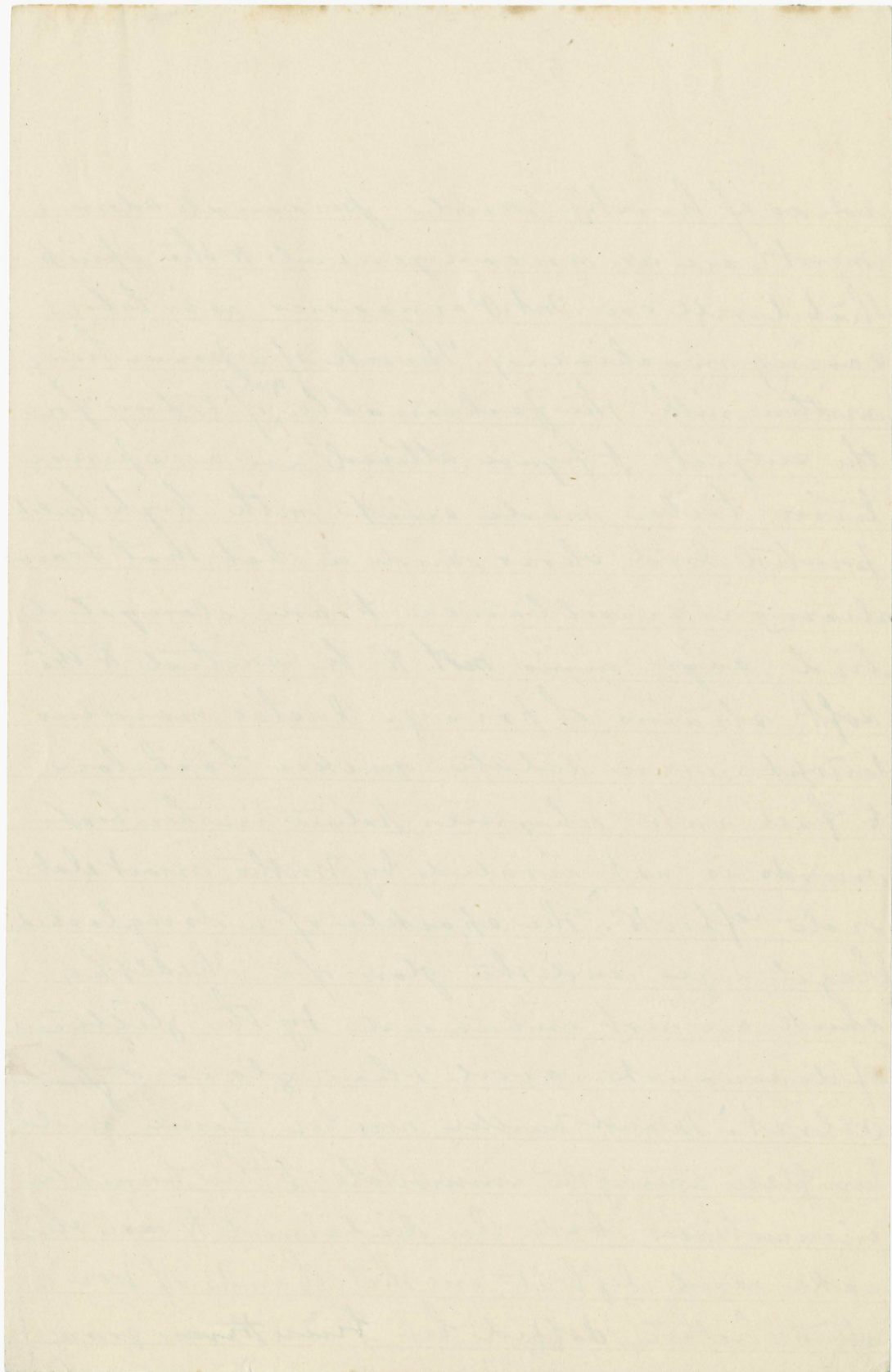
her young and the yellow butterfly
 spread its golden wing to the fragrant
 bugs that floated by and toyed with the
 maidens not from curls kissing the roses
 on her rosy cheeks. From the second
 line we learn that Maud Muller
 was an eminently practical girl.
 Instead of being seated in the little
 curtained parlor, remembering the scenes
 of the Battle of Prague or Napoleon's retreat
 from Moscow she was out helping
 her father rake hay. We read here to-
 ward the lines a very important fact
 that helps us to decide as to the decade
 in which this Maud lived. We know
 at least that it was before the invention of
 labor saving machinery - and happily it
 was. Else our literature would never
 have been enriched by the recital of this
 scene. Maud Muller would have had
 no occasion to rake the new mown
 hay. It would have been done by a man.



new, bright red self-raking harvester. Her song would have been replaced and the hum of the ^{the & the} trill of the ^{mocking} bird would have been drowned by the rattle and clatter of this modern invention. Useful as recent inventions are they are the enemies of the muses. It is to their absence that we are indebted for the beautiful story of Ruth: No need that she should glean in the fields of Boaz if the grain had been cut by a Self-Binder. That Mr. Muller's means were limited is emphasized by the fact that Maude's hat was torn. Evidently not even new straw hat; but most likely one that had shaded her fair brow for more than one season before the present, and was quite in keeping with the tattered gown and bare, brown ankles. Albeit beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth of simple beauty and rustic health. Strange we are so slow to appreciate the value of such possessions. Our advanced



ideas of haughty and personal adornment are as uncongenial to the spirits that dwell on Mt. Parnassus as is labor saving machinery. Think of a poem being written with the fashionable ^{girl} of today for the subject. A figure attired in a spruce trim tailor made suit with high heeled pointed bird shoes and a hat that bears strong resemblance to an elongated bird cage seems not to be suited to the soft strains of poetry. Rustic maidens tempt even sedate quaker bachelors to fall into rhyme. Nature in her best moods is not rivalled by man's most elaborate efforts. The sparkle of a long-lashed hazel eye and the glow of a healthy cheek are not enhanced by the glitter of diamonds and the gloss of velvet. Mand Muller owes her fame and her place among the immortals to her humble circumstances. Had she disdained to use the rake, and left it in the hands of her sturdy brother, doffed her trim, tawny gown

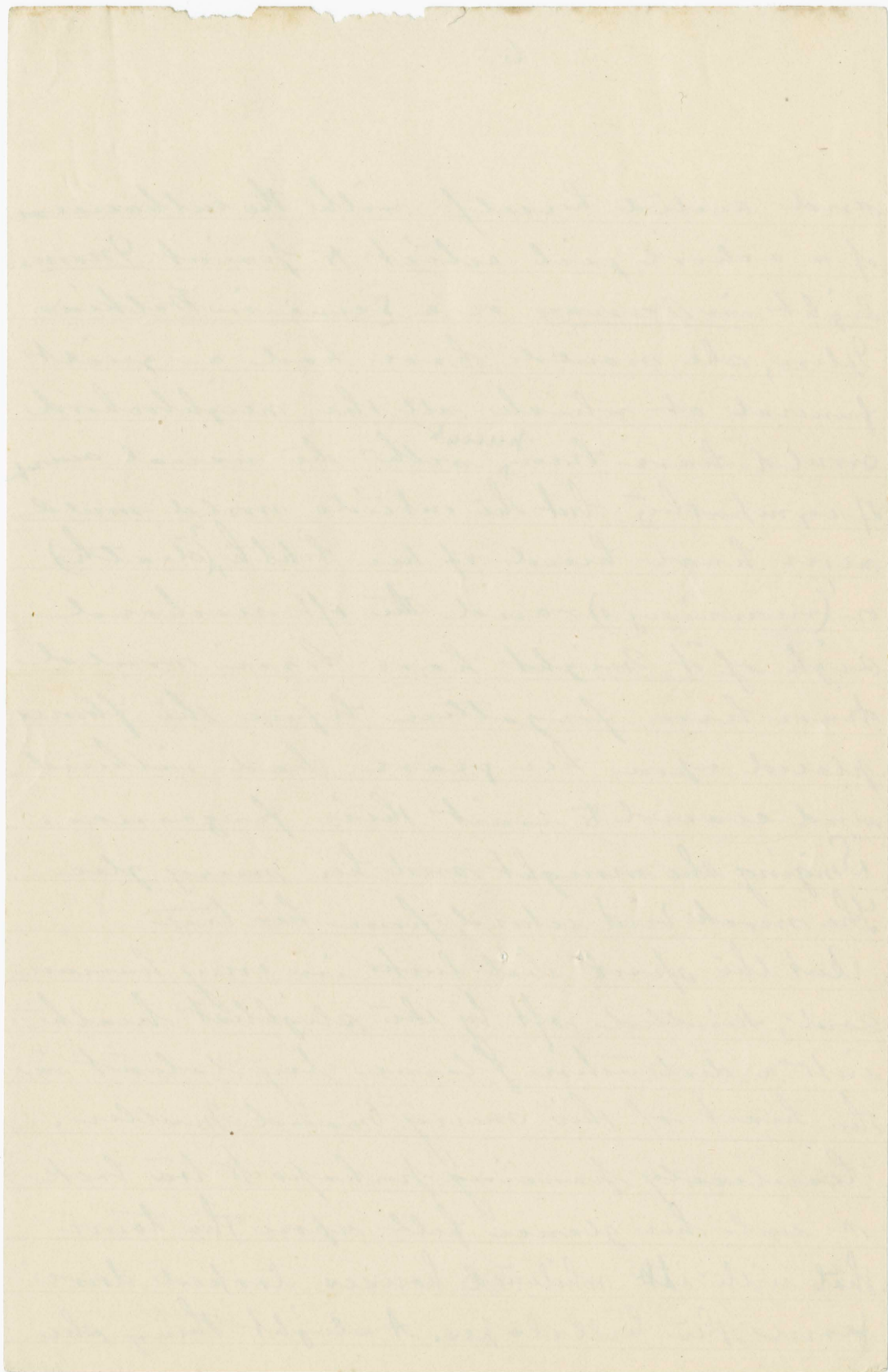


and suited herself with the enthusiasm of a school girl artist to paint Moonlight in Norway or a Scene in Melkies Glen, she would have had a quiet funeral at which all the neighborhood would have been ^{present} with the usual amount of sympathy; but the outside world would never have heard of her birth, (death) or (marriage) and the oft recorded sigh of "it might have been" would have been forgotten before the flowers placed upon her grave had withered and ceased to emit their fragrance.

Singing she wrought and her merry glee
The mock bird echoed from his tree.

But the spark that lurks in every human soul, kindled oft by the slightest breath into a destructive flame by latent in the heart of this merry maid Muller.

Carelessly pausing perhaps to turn back a curl her glance fell upon the tower that with its whitened houses looked down from the hill slopes. A slight thing she



may have often looked at the same
 scene quite indifferent to all it might
 contain - quite content with her own lot.

But today she looked long and wondered
 what the people upon that hill were doing
 Did the girls wear trim hats and gowns
 and did they have to rake hay?

"The sweet song died and a vague unrest
 and a maddening longings filled her breast."

She had not mused long before she felt
 that beyond all she had ever known there
 were possibilities in her for a higher, for
 a fuller enjoyment. Just as she bethought
 herself and turned again to take up her
 rake, her eyes fell upon the approaching
 figure of the judge smoothing his trousers
 chivalrous manner. And when he checked
 his rein in the shade of the apple tree and
 asked her for a drink she quickly stooped
 and filled her cup; but blushed as she
 gave it looking down on her fat so
 bare and lathered gown. Strange mood Maud
 was in today, she had never thought to think

for these reasons before. O gallant and facetious
 judge were you aware of brightening the tinge
 by the very adroit compliment to the draught
 and the hand that gave it. Little we appre-
 ciate the might of what is done in an
 idle moment. Soon chatted the judge of
 grass, flowers and ~~trav~~ of singing birds
 and humming bees, when talked of the
 laying and wondered whether the clouds
 in the west would bring foul weather.
 But pleased Maud forgot not only her hair
 iron gown; but all about the probabilities of
 the rain's falling on the unshaved hog. And
 listened, while a pleased surprise looked from
 her long-lashed hazel eyes. A glimpse at what might
 have been and the judge rode away to take up
 his thread of his accustomed life and left Maud leaning
 on her rake to build castles in Spain. And as
 she declined continued drawing lessons from each
 change of line and cloud with emphasizing that for us
 all some sweet hope lies deeply buried from
 human eyes and in the beneficent angels may
 roll the stone from its grave away.