

Elizur Wright Dead.

Elizur Wright died last Sunday, Nov. 22d, at his home in Malden, Mass., of paralysis, aged eighty-one years.

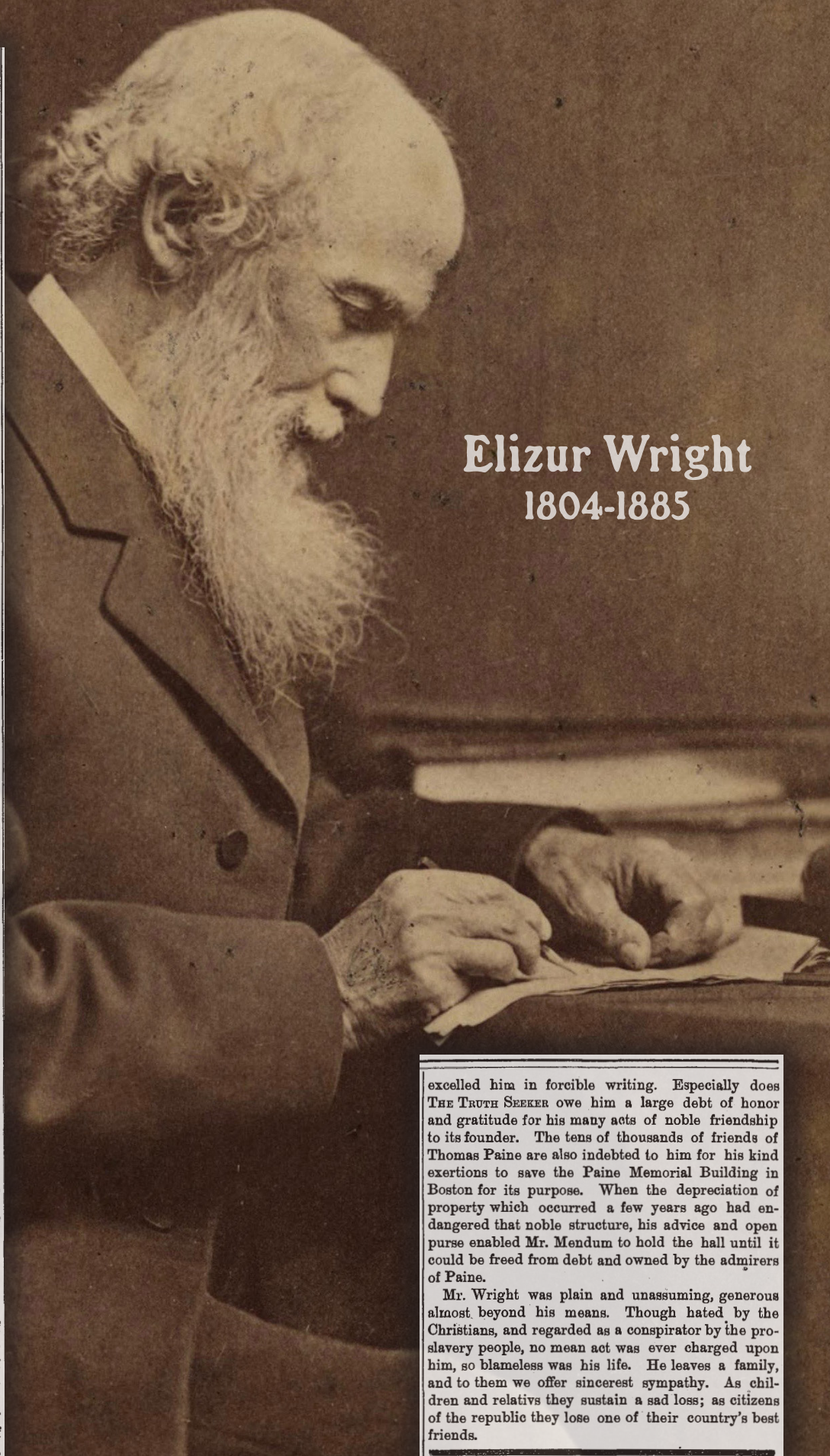
This sudden loss of him who was justly called the Nestor of American Liberalism will be learned with grief by the Freethinkers, not only of this country, but England as well, for he was widely known among the Secularists of the mother country. Only a little over two months ago he attended the New York State Freethinkers' Association Convention, and read a long essay upon Bible revision. He was then apparently in remarkably good health for a man of fourscore, and his hundreds of friends went away from that convention expecting to see him at the next.

Mr. Wright was born in South Canaan, Conn., on Feb. 12, 1804. He was graduated at Yale College in 1826, and for two years was a teacher in Groton, Mass. From 1829 to 1833 he was professor of mathematics and natural philosophy in Western Reserve College, Hudson, Ohio. In 1833 he came to New York, and was for five years secretary of the American Antislavery Society, editing, in 1834-5, a paper called *Human Rights*, and in 1834-8 the *Quarterly Antislavery Magazine*. He went to Boston in 1838, and in April, 1839, became editor of the *Massachusetts Abolitionist*. In 1846 he established the *Chronotype*, which he conducted until it was merged in the *Commonwealth* in 1850, of which he was also for a time the editor. From 1858 to 1866 he was insurance commissioner of Massachusetts, and has since been prominently connected with insurance interests. Mr. Wright published, in 1841, a translation in verse of La Fontaine's "Fables," a work entitled "A Curiosity of Law," in 1866, and many pamphlets and reports. The part taken by Mr. Wright in the anti-slavery contest was conspicuously heroic, and the black race of America owes to but few men more than to him. After the abrogation of slavery, Mr. Wright devoted himself largely to the discussion of Free thought, and was one of the chief supporters of the *Boston Index* until the course of Mr. Abbot toward the founder of *THE TRUTH SEEKER* alienated him from that journal. In the discussion over the Comstock law, during the three years following D. M. Bennett's persecution by the notorious Comstock in the interest of the Christian church, Mr. Wright's clear thinking led him to espouse the side of the so-called repeal party; and during the years he was president of the National Liberal League he never ceased to talk and write for the repeal of the unconstitutional law under which so much injustice has been perpetrated. And since he resigned the presidency of the League he has been actively opposed to the doings of the clerical spy engaged by Samuel Colgate's society. Three weeks ago he was chosen president of the National Defense Association, a society whose object is the rescuing from the clutches of Comstock such innocent people as that individual may entrap for his own glory.

Mr. Wright was also one of the foremost members of the American Forestry Commission, and last year traveled over several states in the interests of that society. He led the local movement for the preservation for public uses of the rocky wooded tract of land between Malden and Stoneham, known as the Middlesex Falls. In his business as actuary he stood at the head of the profession, being recognized as an authority in all life insurance matters.

Through the glorious years of that party, Mr. Wright was an ardent Republican, having been, as editor of the *Chronotype*, almost its founder. He advocated the abolition of slavery by political means, disagreeing with Garrison and his friends. The four years' civil war showed the wisdom of his views.

The Freethinkers of America owe much to Elizur Wright for his bold, clear, and logical advocacy of their views. Though not a brilliant orator, no man



Elizur Wright
1804-1885

excelled him in forcible writing. Especially does *THE TRUTH SEEKER* owe him a large debt of honor and gratitude for his many acts of noble friendship to its founder. The tens of thousands of friends of Thomas Paine are also indebted to him for his kind exertions to save the Paine Memorial Building in Boston for its purpose. When the depreciation of property which occurred a few years ago had endangered that noble structure, his advice and open purse enabled Mr. Mendum to hold the hall until it could be freed from debt and owned by the admirers of Paine.

Mr. Wright was plain and unassuming, generous almost beyond his means. Though hated by the Christians, and regarded as a conspirator by the pro-slavery people, no mean act was ever charged upon him, so blameless was his life. He leaves a family, and to them we offer sincerest sympathy. As children and relatives they sustain a sad loss; as citizens of the republic they lose one of their country's best friends.