

## THE SCHUYLKILL GUN AND ITS INDIAN MOTTO.

BY HORATIO HALE.

The earliest inscription in the language of any Indian people north of Mexico is, I believe, that which appears on the remarkable piece of artillery belonging to "the State in Schuylkill." This is the rather peculiar name which has long been familiar to Philadelphians as the usual title of what they believe to be "the oldest social club in the world." That such a club should have its existence in a city dedicated, by its name and its origin, to fraternity, is not surprising. The chartered title of the club is "The Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State in Schuylkill." The history which explains this singular title, and records the still more singular fortunes of the gun connected with it, is told in a large and well printed and illustrated octavo volume, published in 1889. The volume is in part a reissue of an older history of the association, written by William Morris, Jr., and published in 1830. This history was revised, continued, and republished nearly sixty years later by a committee of the club, among whose most efficient members were "ex-Governor William Camac," and the accomplished secretary, "Citizen William Fisher Lewis."

From this authentic source we learn that the company was formed in 1732 by some of the original settlers of Philadelphia, several of whom had accompanied William Penn as emigrants from the old country, and all of whom, it is needless to say, were devoted disciples and followers of "the venerable and good Mr. Isaac Walton," as he is styled in the Introduction. The company was organized under the name of "The Colony in Schuylkill." Its first meetings for sport and social enjoyment were held on the bank of the Schuylkill River, which then flowed through a forest abounding in game. Here the first club building was erected, a wooden edifice of some architectural pretensions, with belfry and steeple, and known at different periods as the Colonial Hall, the Court House, and finally "the Castle." The company survived the troubles of the colonial period and the vicissitudes of the Revolution. The "Colony" then naturally became a "State;" and under the style of "The State in Schuylkill" the club has continued to flourish