

which it is now a representative, it was employed as a weapon in its early history, and may have had an Oriental birth-place. Both found their prototypes in a more humble symbol of authority. The sculptures at Persepolis represent a Persian monarch carrying a wooden staff, nearly the height of a man, studded with gold nails. At the period of the date of the Sabines, kings, as an ensign of their dignity, bore a long staff—the *skeptron* of the Greeks. The Hebrew word *shevet* is variously translated as ‘rod,’ ‘staff,’ ‘sceptre.’ Homer tells how kings employed their sceptres in the infliction of punishment. The rod, or staff, used originally as a means of coercion and engine of power, was then borne as a token of superiority, and ultimately came to be regarded as an emblem of royalty. It was viewed with superstitious reverence, was sacred and holy in the eyes of the multitude, and none was so solemnly bound as he who touched it while taking an oath. Jove swore as frequently by his sceptre as by Heaven or the river Styx. Hebrew poetry abounds in allusions to ‘the strong rods,’ the sceptres of them that rule. To break or rule with a rod of iron was synonymous, in ancient times, with a rough exercise of earthly or heavenly power. The staff of Jacob, the rod of Moses, the divin- ing rods of the magicians, were but material representatives of more than ordinary control over men and things, and were viewed by mankind with a faith inspired by dread. The bishop’s crook of to-day is a surviving relic of the ancient rod, but has lost the potency of its predecessor. The baton of the marshal, of the musical conductor, of the fogleman, of the drum-major, of the policeman, of the village constable, are symbols, more or less humble, of authority, and as significant—in their way—of power, as the jewelled sceptre of the proudest monarch, the blackthorn shillelagh of Brian Boru, or the upraised umbrella of King Coffee himself. They had,

like the sceptre or the mace, their original in the Israelitish rod or its predecessor, and are as significant of that control which produces order, and tell of that power behind the throne which insists upon and is able to enforce obedience.

The mace (from *massue* or *masse*, a club) was a favourite weapon of the Middle Ages, assuming various forms, as the fancy of the workman or owner suggested. It is described by several writers as the successor of the *baston* of the eleventh century, which was an iron-tipped staff or simply a wooden bludgeon or knotted club, as depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry, and represented there as being carried by William, Duke of Normandy, and Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. Scandinavia, in its knotted clubs, may have furnished the model after which they were formed, and thus, the most valiant of the sons of Odin, with his huge hammer, may have been the first mace-bearer. That it was a favourite ecclesiastical weapon is undoubted, and, it is to be hoped, was used exclusively for defensive purposes, although Planché tells that it was employed by pugnacious prelates, who thereby evaded the denunciation which declares that ‘all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.’ The *baston* was speedily superseded by maces made of iron, bronze or lead, which, when of the latter material, were known as *plombées* or *plommés*, and were used for the purpose of breaking the armour of an opponent. In the valuable collection of Mr. John Notman, Queen’s Printer of Ontario, may be seen a well-preserved specimen of one of the varieties of the weapons favoured by our quarrelsome forefathers, although it is certainly of later date than the eleventh century, and belongs to the family of flails, morning stars or holy-water sprinklers, as they were quaintly termed, rather than to that of the mace proper. It is made entirely of iron, with a handle fashioned somewhat like a whip-stock, twenty inches