

THE PRECEPTOR.

("Homme chauve et noir.")

[XIX., May, 1839.]

A gruesome man, bald, clad in black,
Who kept us youthful drudges in the track,
Thinking it good for them to leave home care,
And for a while a harsher yoke to bear;
Surrender all the careless ease of home,
And be forbid from schoolyard bounds to roam;
For this with blandest smiles he softly asks
That they with him will prosecute their tasks;
Receives them in his solemn chilly lair,
The rigid lot of discipline to share.
At dingy desks they toil by day; at night
To gloomy chambers go uncheered by light,
Where pillars rudely grayed by rusty nail
Of heavy hours reveal the weary tale;
Where spiteful ushers grin, all pleased to make
Long scribbled lines the price of each mistake.
By four unpitying walls environed there
The homesick students pace the pavements bare.

E.E. FREWER