

a knitted cap, very much like those worn, or rather carried, I should say, by the boys of the Blue Coat School, and in front of this cap was stuck on all occasions a twig of heath, fresh when it was in blossom, withered when the season was passed. Such was Tommy Hicks, the idiot of Brownswick, as he was usually called; and, as far as want of intellect to guide him aright was concerned, the appellation was correct. It is curious, however, to remark how Nature distinctly defines the difference between cunning and sense in such unfortunate beings as him of whom I speak. Very few of the wisest men in Brownswick could match Tommy Hicks in cunning; and it not unfrequently happened that when brought before the magistrates for some of his offences, he would pose the whole bench by his wild but shrewd replies. His mother had left a small property at her death to be employed in his maintenance, so that Tommy Hicks could always get clothes and food at the cottage of an old man and woman at the bottom of the moor. But very often he would be out for days, weeks, nay months, together; and in the course of his wanderings he had been the inmate of several workhouses and two jails; for he

did
stov
of
mea
T
add
the
dire
his
and
swa
stoo
poch
but
itsel
stret
and
The
a qu
trick
back
the e
Tom
him
on th
insta
with
foun
than
said,