

tive laws or penalties, and especially when the object of them is not a crime in itself? If gold be a commodity, as the merchant says it is, why not sell it for the utmost price like any other property? But, in a particular form, it ceases to be a commodity, and then you must not dispose of it to the best bidder. Why not? Because it would be a positive offence; for, as to any moral difference between melting a guinea and an ingot, I do not see how it can be proved. Either of them is just as much my property as the other. But what is property without the power of using or disposing of it as I think fit? The reader, I trust, will not suspect me of providing a shelter for any practice of my own. I really did never melt a guinea in a crucible, though many of them have melted in my hands. Against clipping or sweating the current coin, there is or may be an effectual remedy. A general resolution to take light guineas only by their weight, would soon put an end to the crime in that form; for crime it is, and they who practise it are thieves. After all, this is but an empty argument, *de non apparentibus*; and one of the