agreed to recognise a general media in gold and silver. This is done by common consent, and not from the intrinsic value of the metal. "The exchange," says McCulloch, "of a quarter of corn for an ounce of pure unfashioned gold bullion is undeniably as much a barter as if the corn was exchanged for an ox or a barrel of beer; but supposing the metal to be formed into a coin, that is impressed with a stamp indicating its weight and fineness, that circumstance would evidently make no change in the terms of the barter. Coins, instead of being in the same light as bullion or other commodities, have been regarded as something mysterious; they are said to be both signs and measures of value. Gold and silver do not measure the value of commodities more than the latter do gold and silver. The quality of serving as a measure of value is therefore inherent in every commodity; but the slow degree by which the metals change their value render them peculiarly well fitted for forming a standard by which to compare other and more variable articles. The desire of uniting the different qualities of invariability of value, divisibility, durability, facility of transportation and perfect sameness, doubtless formed the irresistible reasons which have induced all civilized communities to employ gold and silver as money."

Again, the price of gold is £3 17s 10½d per ounce—at least so the Mint and the law will have it. But commerce, the need of the times and its contingencies, are sometimes stronger than even the legislature and the mints. This strength on the part of the market is only apparent when some fortuitous circumstance, as war or the like, causes a sudden and large demand, and then gold exceeds the Mint price, which it did at several periods anterior to 1815, and during the long war. Gold, however, as we have seen, has to be considered in two aspects, as a commodity and as a measure of value. As a commodity its market is not comparatively extensive. The arts requiring only a limited quantity, and the demand appears to be fully supplied without the artizan coming into the market as a competitor with the Mint. The natural inference is that the Mint is the larger customer, and by having a fixed price at which it will buy all gold brought to it keeps up an artificial price. The large influx from California, Australia and other places have made no change in the price of gold, as a corresponding increase in the production of any other commodity certainly would have done. "The commercial man," says Mr. Galbraith, in his clever pamphlet on the *Monetary Theory*, "sensitively awake to the changes continually going on in the markets, caused by a deficiency or excess of supply in any of the commodities, is perfectly confounded by the anamalous