(opening of the larynx). Again, in some cases, the spasm may affect the respiratory muscles, giving rise to a curious barking articulation, in consequence of spasm of the expiratory muscles, and in such cases the patient utters the first part of the sentence slowly, gradually accelerates the speed, and makes a rush towards the close. In the great majority of cases the spasm affects the muscles of articulation proper, that is, those of the pharynx, tongue, cheeks and lips.

A condition named *aphthongia* is particularly distressing. It totally prevents speech, and may, at intervals, come on when the person attempts to speak; but fortunately it is only of temporary duration, and is usually caused by exceptional nervous excitement. It is characterized by spasm of the muscles supplied by the hypoglossal nerve, including the sterno­hyoid, sterno-thyroid and thyro-hyoid muscles. In almost all cases of stuttering it is noticed that the defect is most apparent when the person is obliged to make a sudden transition from one class of sounds to another, and the patient soon discovers this for himself and chooses his words so as to avoid dangerous muscular combinations. When one considers the delicate nature of the adjustments necessary in articulate speech, this is what may be expected. It is well known that a quickly diffusible stimulant, such as alcohol, temporarily removes the difficulty in speech.

Stuttering may be successfully overcome in some cases by a careful process of education under a competent tutor. Not a few able public speakers were at first stutterers, but a prolonged course of vocal gymnastics has remedied the defect. The patient should be encouraged to read and speak slowly and deliberately, carefully pronouncing each syllable, and when he feels the tendency to stammer, he should be advised to pause for a short time, and then by a strong voluntary effort to attempt to pronounce the word. He should also be taught how to regulate respiration during speech, so that he may not fail from want of breath. In some cases aid may be obtained by raising the voice towards the close of the sentence. Sounds or combinations of sounds that present special difficulties should be made the subject of careful study, and the defect may be largely overcome by a series of graduated exercises in reading. The practice of intoning is useful in many cases; and many pcr­sons who habitually stutter in conversation show no sign of the defect when they come to sing. In ordinary conversation it is often important to have some one present who may by a look put the stammerer on his guard when he is observed to be talking too quickly or indistinctly. Thus by patience and determination many stammerers have so far overcome the defect that it can scarcely be noticed in conversation; but even in such cases mental excitement or slovenly inattention to the rules of speech suitable for the condition may cause a relapse. In very severe cases, where the spasmodic seizures affect other muscles than those of articulation, special medical treatment is necessary, as such are on the borderland of serious nervous disturbance. All measures tending to improve the general health, the removal of any affection of the mouth or gums that may aggravate habitual stammering, the avoidance of great emotional excite­ment, a steady determination to overcome the defect by volun­tary control, and a system of education such as has been sketched will do much in the great majority of cases to remedy stam­mering.

**STAMP** (from “ to stamp,” to strike or tread heavily, hence to impress, O. Eng. *stempen,* Du. *stampen,* Ger. *stampfen,* whence, **O.** Fr. *estamper,* mod. *étamper),* an instrument for crushing or pounding or for making impressions or marks on other bodies; thus, in mining, the stamp is that part of the machinery of a mill which crushes the ore to the fineness necessary for the separation of the valuable portions; in coining, &c., it is an engraved block or die by which the mark is impressed, hence in the most general sense of the word an impression or mark made with a “ stamp,” and particularly such a mark impressed on a document for purposes of certification, validity and the like, or as showing that certain duties or charges have been paid. For the first class, viz., stamps for purposes of taxation, see *Stamp Duties* below; For the second class, of which the most familiar are the small adhesive pieces of paper used as the sign that postal charges have been duly paid on letters, parcels, &c., transmitted by the postal service of a country, see Post and Postal Service and Philately.

*Stamp Duties,—*The stamp duty is a tax imposed upon a great variety of legal and other documents, and forms a branch of the national revenue. The stamp is a cheap and convenient mode of certifying that the revenue regulations have been com­plied with. Stamp duties appear to have been invented by the Dutch in 1624. They were first imposed in England by an act of 1694 as a temporary means of raising funds for carrying on the war with France. Stamp duties in the United Kingdom form part of the inland revenue, and are placed under the con­trol of the commissioner of inland revenue. The principal acts in force on the subject are the Stamp Act 1891 and the Stamp Duties Management Act 1891. Amendments of the law are also included in the Customs and Inland Revenue Act 1893, the Finance Acts of subsequent years, and the Revenue Act 1898. The death duties, the corporation duty, the duties on patent medicines and playing cards, and postage duties, are also technically "stamp duties ”; but in ordinary use the expression is limited to those imposed on the various classes of legal instruments, such as conveyances, leases, transfers, mortgages, bonds, &c., on bills of exchange, pro­missory notes, contract notes, bank notes and bankers’ drafts, receipts, insurance policies, bills of lading, and a few other documents. Stamps are either adhesive or impressed. The adhesive stamps, which can only be used for certain documents, can be obtained at inland revenue offices through­out the United Kingdom, and at all post offices which are money order offices. Stamps can only be impressed at the inland revenue offices in certain of the larger towns. For duties not exceeding 2s. 6d. the adhesive inland revenue or postage stamps may (in most cases) be used indiscriminately. This arrangement was first introduced in 1881, when it was applied to the penny stamp, and it has since been extended to other denominations. The commissioners of inland revenue are authorized to make allowance under certain conditions for stamps which have been inadvertently spoiled or rendered useless for their intended purposes. In order to obtain such allowance the parties must present the stamps within two years from the time when they became useless. The commissioners may be required by any person to express their opinion as to the amount of duty, if any, which is chargeable on any instrument; and such person, if dissatisfied with the assessment made, may appeal to the courts.

The stamp duty on the transfer of certain kinds of securities can be commuted by the payment of a lump sum or (in some cases) an annual composition, and the transfers then become exempt from duty.

Stamp duties are either fixed, such as the duty of one penny on every cheque irrespective of its amount, or *ad valorem,* as the duty on a conveyance, which varies according to the amount of the purchase money. The duty is denoted generally by an impressed, ess frequently by an adhesive, stamp, sometimes by either at the option of the person stamping. Thus an inland bill of exchange (unless payable on demand) must have an impressed stamp, a foreign bill of exchange an adhesive stamp, while an agreement or receipt stamp may be of either kind. It should be noticed that certain documents falling within a class which as a rule is subject to stamp duty are for reasons of public policy or encouragement of trade exempted from the duty by special legislation. Examples of such documents are Bank of England notes, agreements within § 17 (but not those within § 4) of the Statute of Frauds (see Fraud), agreements between a master of a ship and his crew, transfers of ships or shares in ships, indentures of apprenticeship for the sea service, petitions forwarded by post to the Crown or a House, of Parliament and most instruments relating to the business of building and friendly societies.

As a general rule a document must be stamped at the time of execution, or a penalty (remissible by the commissioners of inland revenue) is incurred. The penalty is in most cases £10, sometimes much more; in the case of policies of marine insurance it is £100. Some instruments cannot be stamped at all after execution, even with payment of the penalty. Such are bills of exchange and pro­missory notes (where an impressed stamp is necessary), bills of lading,