

Unilateral complex auditory hallucinations were considered by Bergman (1965) as a reliable indication of unilateral pathology, with lesion usually on the opposite side of the brain. Tanabe *et al* (1986) reported this lateralisation phenomenon in a patient who developed auditory hallucinations lateralised to the right ear with the lesion in the left superior temporal gyrus. They also reviewed previous reports (Hecaen & Ropert, 1957; Penfield & Perot, 1963; Foerster, 1936) and came to the conclusion that unilateral auditory hallucinations could be a significant clinical sign indicating a lesion in the temporal gyrus opposite the side of hallucinations. It is also held that significant numbers of patients with late onset schizophrenia (Kay & Roth, 1961) have a hearing impairment, and therefore isolation caused by deafness seems to contribute to the aetiology. In the majority of these patients deafness was found to be associated with persecutory delusions. In our patient, deafness was associated with auditory hallucinations and there was no evidence of focal brain pathology.

Here the unilateral auditory hallucinations appeared to be associated with ipsilateral deafness.

The hallucinations were stereotyped and repetitive in character and responded to a hearing aid.

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### A HUNDRED YEARS AGO Leavesden Imbecile Asylum

On Saturday last the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District paid their annual visit of inspection to the Leavesden Imbecile Asylum, one of the three institutions for the reception and treatment of chronic cases of harmless lunacy chargeable to the metropolis. This institution affords accommodation for 2,000 patients – 900 males and 1,100 females. The cost per head, including the purchase of land, was £90 14s 7d. The infirmaries, epileptic wards, and ordinary wards are well organised, while in the estate of eighty-five acres many of the unfortunate patients were enjoying the beautiful afternoon. The more sensible and able-bodied men and women are employed in more or less active duties, while an excellent farm with cattle and pigs, kitchen-garden and gas-works,

afforded opportunity for open-air work on the part of other patients, which was evidently enjoyed. In the course of the proceedings, Sir Edwin Galsworthy, addressing those present, defended the Metropolitan Asylums Board for the charges of extravagance, which, he said, were often made against it, and claimed that in such an excellent work as the visitors had seen carried on in the asylum that day, ample proof was given of wise and useful expenditure of public money, as well as an enormous amount of work on the part of the public's representatives for the benefit of London and the poor.

#### Reference

- The British Medical Journal*, 16 July, 1887, 140.