BROOKWOOD ASYLUM COSTUME BALL.

The Brookwood Costume Ball, each year apparently a greater success than the last, this year eclipsed all others in brilliancy, variety, and splendour, and Dr. Brushfield and the other popular officers of the institution may be said to have reaped the highest reward for their, as usual, untiring efforts to make the event one worthy of the occasion. The gay and dazzling scene last year afforded material for a striking illustration in the "Illustrated London News," and it would be almost easier in this way to convey some idea of the effect than by any pen-and-ink sketch. Of this we are sure, that no one who was present will ever forget the marvellous and peculiar sight. And it ought at once to be known that not a single farthing towards the expenses of the ball comes out of the ratepayers' pockets. The ball is popular, Dr. Brushfield is popular and esteemed, as well as admired for his versatile accomplishments, and there is therefore no difficulty in raising sufficient subscriptions to defray the whole of the expenses, thus adding immensely, for one evening at least, to the gratification of several hundreds of patients, and to the enjoyment, in a manner impossible elsewhere, of a large number of the *élite* of the county. For the third time then the Brookwood Fancy Ball has attracted a larger number of visitors than ever, the difficulty indeed being to meet applications from a number of unexpected quarters. About 230 visitors were present, and we have never seen the spacious recreation hall more handsomely adorned. Some idea of the extent of the decorations may be imagined from the fact that no fewer than 800 plants were brought into requisition, furnished from the asylum gardens, doing great credit to the horticultural ability of Mr. R. Lloyd, the head gardener. The attendants, and some of the inmates, under the supervision of the superior officers, undertook the work of decoration, and the skill and taste displayed were surprising. Festoons of evergreens and coloured papers depended from the rafters, and devices of various kinds appeared upon the walls, whilst between the windows were brackets of virgin cork, on which stood ferns and foliage plants, with a background of scarlet, edged with leaves. In front of the stage was arranged a bank of moss, in which rested variously foliaged plants, and on either side were tall and graceful palms and ferns, from the midst of which statuary looked out. The stage was mainly decorated under the supervision of Dr. Moody, who also admirably utilised some Japanese lanterns, each five feet high, which through him had been made in Japan expressly for the occasion, and had only arrived the previous day. These and a large number of Chinese lanterns greatly added to the appearance of the Hall.

The patients assembled to the number of nearly 400, at half-past seven, and promenaded round the room to the Royal Salute March, played by the excellent asylum band, which occupied the orchestra till the arrival of the visitors at nine o'clock, when its place was taken by the band of the 1st Battalion Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, which attended by kind permission of Colonel Hercy and the officers. The preliminary march was, perhaps, the prettiest sight of all, and wonderful ingenuity and skill were displayed in the various costumes of the patients. One or two original characters were noticeable, and some of the "makes-up" were most ludicrous. The Woking Water and Gas Company were personified in two or three cases, one person being cleverly got up in a black dress with the words on his breast "Woking Gas and Water," and a large square hat on his head, inscribed with the word "Anthracite." A young woman was attired in white, and bore a banner with the device "Woking Gas and Water." Another person was enclosed in a huge imitation tub, we suppose to represent the "drunkard's cloak," "Fine Old Tom" appearing on his breast, and "Best London Gin" on the back. A grotesque get-up was that of a patient who had his head covered with muslin, and carried a counterfeit cranium. It is not easy even

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to describe the many and varied costumes assumed on the occasion by the inmates, but it was a pleasing sight to see the way in which the poor demented creatures entered into the spirit of the affair. Some of them danced, too, in a manner which might put to shame many professed devotees of Terpsichore. Dr. Brushfield, in his character as David Garrick, personally superintended this part of the proceedings, assisted by his able coadjutors, Dr. Barton, as the Duke of Marlborough, and Dr. Moody, as Charles Surface, their efforts to amuse and make every one comfortable being ably seconded by Mr. W. Cappe, Clerk and Steward (who has occupied his present position since the opening of the asylum), and the numerous attendants, all of whom were becomingly dressed, Mr. Turner, the courteous head attendant, looking well as a Beefeater, whilst Miss Flint was admirable as the Queen of Hearts. At the hour of nine the visitors began to arrive in quick succession, and soon afterwards the military band named above struck up the La Berceuse valse. When the evening had advanced, and the ball was at its height, the scene was most brilliant and gorgeous, and one might well have fancied it was all a dream. To attempt to describe the costumes would be a task of considerable difficulty, but the list which we publish below will show that besides those characters invariably to be seen at fancy dress balls, some of the guests had hit upon novel ideas. Military uniforms also largely prevailed, and lent a great variety to the whole. As for the strictly fancy costumes, every century and country almost had been ransacked to supply materials. Historical personages mingled together in a strange medley, either in the giddy valse or stately promenade, and the assembly was quite a cosmopolitan one, representatives being present of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Mexico, Alsace, France, Corsica, Malta, Circassia, Germany, Spain, Sicily, Poland, The Tyrol, Persia, China, India, Norway, Arabia, Egypt, Flanders, and Italy. Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray had been searched, and opera was also brought into requisition, "Patience" furnishing one or two *rôles*, as well as the ever popular "Cloches de Corneville" and "Pinafore." The visitors freely mingled with the patients in the body of the hall, though the stage was specially prepared for their accommodation. Dancing to music so exquisitely played was no doubt immensely enjoyed by all who participated in it, but some at least of the guests as they moved about in their varied costumes were making mental notes of all they saw. Here could be noticed Mr. C. P. Phillips, a well-known Lunacy Commissioner, apparently delighted and amazed; there Dr. D. Hack Tuke, the President of the Medico-Psychological Association, evidently thinking he had lighted upon a wide field wherein to pursue his researches. In another group could be seen several magistrates of the county, and the chairman of one of our most important Boards of Guardians. Not far off was another gentleman, one of the best authorities in England on poor-law matters, who looked exceedingly interested in the scene around him. Besides there were present several superintendents of other asylums, and amongst them one who was for some years a faithful coadjutor of Dr. Brushfield's. Although the dancing never flagged, social chat also flowed on, and even the few non-dancers thoroughly enjoyed the pleasant sight, and we are sure experienced much gratification and pleasure.

Our recollection carries us back to now nearly seventeen years ago, when the Brookwood Asylum was opened, and Dr. Brushfield came there as the medical superintendent. We have noted as the years rolled by how, under his skilful management, improvement after improvement has been effected. Lunacy in the county of Surrey has unfortunately in these years greatly increased, and as a consequence accommodation is now found here for over a thousand patients. But Brookwood, with its many acres, has also been converted from a waste common into one of the most profitable and most beautiful estates in the county. Besides a farm supplying many wants of the asylum, and thus lessening the cost per head of the inmates to the ratepayers, there are beautiful gardens and avenues filled with fruit trees, and valuable

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shrubs and timber. Again, in the asylum itself there are all manner of workshops, where a large number of the inmates are usefully employed. While no one would sooner acknowledge than Dr. Brushfield himself that to bring about all this, he had been ably assisted by the officers under him, and in a special degree during the last eight years by Dr. Barton, yet his has been the directing mind, and it is with unfeigned regret that we have heard, and that the county will hear, that he considers that the time has now come when he must hand his great work over to others to carry on. Although we are not aware that Dr. Brushfield has formally sent in his resignation, yet we believe we are not betraying confidence when we say that he will probably not be the ruling spirit at another Fancy Ball. This, at all events, we do know, that Dr. Brushfield will not only leave his mark as one of the highest authorities on lunacy matters, but as one possessed of the highest administrative talent, and as having made Brookwood Asylum the model of what such an institution ought to be. He has also made troops of friends, who will, while they will miss him much, entertain many pleasant reminiscences of visits to Brookwood, either to Fancy Balls or other enjoyable entertainments. —*The Surrey Advertiser*, Jan. 14, 1882.

DR. BRUSHFIELD'S RETIREMENT.

Dr. Brushfield resigned his post January 20th. We believe that he will, on leaving, have completed a term of 16 years at the Brookwood Asylum. As he had been previously nearly 14 years at the Cheshire Asylum, he has had 30 years' hard work and anxious responsibility, and has certainly earned a repose which, we trust, he may long enjoy. We remember the time when he attended the clinical lectures, delivered at Hanwell, by Dr. Conolly. He has proved an apt pupil, for, we believe, he has never ordered or sanctioned the employment of restraint in either asylum. But Dr. Brushfield is not a man of one idea, and he has proved himself an admirable superintendent in all ways. Nor is he a mental physician only. His pursuits are far-reaching enough to prevent his being in danger of suffering from ennui in his retirement. Archæology and philology, to which he has already contributed, will, we doubt not, be gainers by his leisure. We would, however, put in a claim ourselves, and hope that the pages of this Journal will, from time to time, be enriched by notes of the results of his varied experience. We are glad to know that the Committee has shown its appreciation of his services by recommending the next Court of Quarter Sessions to allow him a pension of £700 per annum.

INSANITY AS A CAUSE FOR DIVORCE.

In the Divorce Court on Friday, Dec. 16th, a very important case was settled in reference to insanity. The case was Hunter *v.* Edney. In this case a woman was married, but refused on the wedding night to allow the marriage to be consummated. The husband sent for the mother of the woman, who took her home after she had been seen by Dr. Miskin, a general practitioner in the neighbourhood. Dr. Miskin was of opinion that then she was insane. Some few weeks later Dr. Savage, of Bethlem, saw the case, and decided that the woman was suffering from melancholia, and not fit to enter into a contract, and that in his opinion she had so suffered for some time. The whole case took but a short part of one day, and there was really no opposition, for though the wife was in court, and elected to go into the witness-box, she did not deny any of the statements made, but said that she had no knowledge of some of the things which were proved to have taken place

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