

THUJA OCCIDENTALIS

ELIZABETH WRIGHT HUBBARD, M.D.

Thuja, one of Hahnemann's favourite discoveries, is one of the most difficult remedies for the beginner to learn in all the homœopathic Materia Medica. Its symptoms are more mixed and scattered than most of the remedies, and its personality only emerges after long delving and experience.

The remedy, *Thuja*, is made from the arbor vitæ, the tree of life. Its common name is the white cedar and it belongs to the Coniferæ closely related to the Euphorbiacæ. The other members of its tribe which are used, up to date, in Homœopathy, are *Sabina Juniperus*, *Abies* of two varieties, *Pinus Sylvestris* and *Pix Liquida* and *Terebinthina*. *Taxus Baccata*, the yew, is a close ally.

You must all have seen the dark, conical silhouette of the arbor vitæ in swamps and along rocky banks, and through the stone pastures of New England. Some of you may have seen it in Italy, or elsewhere, surrounding pools and in formal gardens, like the Villa D'Este. It often looks into water narcissistically. The cypress (*Cupressus*), which is so closely allied to it, is connected in our minds with stately grief and might be called the Tree of the Dead. Such cosmic gamut from life to death is indeed within the range of this great evergreen.

Its form is conical, its buds are ovoid. Along its stem are resinous callosities which look like oozing warts, and when you need *Thuja* as a remedy the patient will be all curves. The grossly fat suggest its use, those with pendulous abdomens and heavy breasts, triple chins and piano legs. Those with low thyroid, lymphatic constitutions, given to troubles of the skin, hair and nails, and of all oval organs like the glands, ovaries, prostate, testicles, spleen, etc. It has sway over similar tumours, polyps, papillomata and spongy or fig warts (not the flat and smooth

warts of *Sepia* or *Dulcamara*). It is characterised, like the tree itself, by oozing and greenness and odours, and by an exuberance of proliferation. The one word characterizing *Thuja* is EXCESS, a surplus of life, badly organized and badly edited.

In order really to understand *Thuja* one must study Hahnemann's theory of chronic disease and his three, much maligned miasms. *Thuja*, as one of the greatest polychrests from the vegetable sphere, includes in its nature all three of the miasms. As *Mercury* is to the syphilitic or ulcerative trend, and as *Sulphur* is to the psoric or nervous-functional trend (commonly called scrofulous), so *Thuja* is to the sycotic or proliferative-inflammatory diathesis. With the sycotic nosode *Medorrhinum* it is called the Mother of Pus and Catarrh. It is essentially a left-sided remedy and hence a feminine one, although it is, of course, frequently indicated also in the male. It typifies the hydrogenoid constitution of von Grauvogl.

As you all know, the word sycosis comes from the Greek word for Fig. In Hahnemann's time more than now, the after-effects of suppressed gonorrhœa were characterized by fig warts, and *Thuja* is our great remedy for the effects of suppression of gonorrhœa whether in the individual or generations back. It has power to correct states of the system which obstruct the curative action of other remedies especially in conditions where warts are a concomitant symptom. It has power over the dissolution of fluids by perverted lymphatic secretions. In this lies the secret of its sphere in connection with vaccinosis, since the small-pox vaccine is prepared by using the calf and introducing calf lymph beneath the protective human skin. *Thuja* is not only similar to the effects of vaccination, but also to many cases of small-pox itself. It is, however, especially suitable when repeated vaccinations by the usual method have not taken, and for the bad results of vaccination appearing long afterward in the form of neuralgias, skin trouble, intestinal troubles and growths. It has a

special fitness where there is a history of animal poisonings of any kind, preferably if these are not recent. The *Thuja* patient, like all sycotics, tends to die suddenly, on the golf course or at work, or after "successful" operation. They do not linger like the psorics.

Our *Thuja* shares with other sycotic remedies the hurry and the worry so characteristic of *Medorrhinum*, *Argentum nitricum*, etc. It is, however, quiet and furtive although excessive. It desires to be alone and is averse to being touched or approached. It is slow in speech and confused in mind, the latter being relieved by sitting up, and it has a long thoughtfulness about trifles, which is reminiscent of *Zincum*. It also has, as so often in our remedies, extreme talkativeness with shifting from one thing to another like *Lachesis*. Mental embroidery and proliferation is ever the enemy of continuity. The *Thuja* patient has too much matter and too little form, the opposite of *Silica*. The *Thuja* patient is oversensitive, not to pain but he weeps from music, like *Natrum mur*. He is scrupulous about trifles, though grossly oblivious to larger things. He is discontented and dissatisfied, as are all those who have not order in their mentality. She may be ugly to her husband or her mother, especially during pelvic pain. She is quarrelsome and sulky and very jealous. *Thuja* is angry at jests. Salacity runs through the remedy, not with the exhibitionistic tendencies of *Hyoscyamus* but with a kind of impotent delight in the lascivious, such as we connect with the French mentality. Like all sycotic remedies, there is an element of deception, cheating, and lying in our *Thuja*. Many imbeciles, morons and sub-normal people of the fat, lax, slobbering type need *Thuja* (the violently insane and murderous run to the syphilitic remedies; the neuroses to the psoric; and the perversions and imbecilities to the sycotic). Our *Thuja*, even when not insane, has curious fixed ideas, such as that she is brittle; her limbs made of glass which would easily break, or that a leg or an arm are wooden, or that she is pregnant, when

she is not, or that something is alive and moving in her abdomen (like *Crocus*). She feels as though the soul and body were separated and this is relieved in the open air; as if she were under the influence of a superior power (compare *Lachesis* and *Anacardium*) or as if another were thinking for her. She has a sense of floating or levitation, as if she were not wholly in her body (indeed, the excess of etheric leaves little room or access for the ego). She is apprehensive for the future and dreams of the dead and dead bodies, of flying and falling and dying, and of amorous adventure.

In appearance the *Thuja* patient is fleshy, rounded, with lax musculature and large glands, dark predominantly but may be light-haired, and the hair is strong and dry (not wiry like *Medorrhinum*) and splits easily and falls from the head and brows uniformly (real baldness comes under the syphilitic remedies). There is an excess of hair on the face and body. This remedy is, in my opinion, the best for the removing of excess hair where it should not be. The nails are brittle or thick, deformed, tough. *Thuja* has the power to soften abnormally hard things. The *Thuja* patient is exhausted and soft, has a waxy, greasy, shiny face, cachectic look, a grayish complexion, dark under the eyes, spidery veins, pimples between the brows, freckles and blotches, a spotted, dirty appearance, depigmented or over-pigmented areas (chloasmata of pregnancy), hair on the skin of the face, dilated or contracted pupils, naevi, warts, epitheliomata, broad, fleshy noses (the psoric nose is long and pointed, the syphilitic retroussé or pug). There is a sensation of heat in the face without redness, sweat or thirst.

In general, *Thuja* suits patients who have never been well since they were vaccinated, who lose consciousness temporarily on sitting up, who are chilly but not cold, who have pulsations all over the body and a tendency to neuralgia, whose pains are wandering, tearing and tend to extend, whose pains radiate upward and backward, who

have frequent urination during pain, who tend to proud flesh, scars, livid red spots left over after injuries, whose pain is in the belly of the muscles and not in the tendons, who have lipomas and tumours, especially those that bleed when touched, whose discharges are green but thinner than *Pulsatilla*, who have a tendency to chronic catarrh after exanthems and whose discharges have odours like fish brine or herring brine, or garlic, or honey, or sweet and pungent, or smell like burnt horn, feathers or sponge.

The main modalities are: Aggravation 3 a.m. and 3 p.m., early morning, night, overheating, sun, light, closing the eyes, warmth, afternoon, narcotics, walking, extending the limbs, letting the limbs hang down, lying on the left side, touch, sometimes motion, damp, cold air, the waxing moon, the heat of the bed, warm rooms, uncovering, ascending, riding, coition, change of position, eating, excessive use of tea, after breakfast, sours, fats, tobacco, during menses and also before, onions, draught. Relief from being alone, open air, head backward or looking up, pressure, cold, rubbing and scratching, drawing the limbs up and sometimes motion, sometimes local heat.

Time forbids a complete review of the particular symptoms; some of the chief are as follows:

VERTIGO: worse closing the eyes (*Lachesis, Ther.*)

HEADACHE: as of a nail, in small spots (*Ign., Anac.*); as of tight hoop; worse left temple; tearing over left brow; from sex excess and overheating; better pressure, air, head back; worse warmth, one sided; from malar region back to occiput (opp. *Spig.*); numb head.

EYES: myopia; lid tumours; styes; objects tremble; black spots floating or green stripes; as if cold air blowing through eye; tearing pain in left eye better by heat; sclerotitis.

NOSE: warts; eruptions on wings; green, bloody coryza.

EARS: Hum in left ear and brain; cramping pain in the ear; polyps.

FACE: Boring in left zygoma, better touch.

MOUTH: Twitching left upper lip; visible papillæ on tongue; warts on tongue; ranula; varicosities of the throat; tartar; sensitive teeth; teeth break at the gum; black mark at the gum line; caries of sides, not roots or crowns.

G.I.: Desires cold drink before eating; thirsty in afternoon; big spleen; sore, red, pouting navel; stool recedes; torpid constipation; hard black balls or large stool habitually; several loose stools a day (*Puls.*). Diarrhœa from vaccination, coffee or onions; gurgling like water from bung of barrel; grass green stools; ileus; knotty, lumpy protruding abdomens; watery diarrhœa after breakfast; left hernia; piles worse sitting; fissured anus; condylomata; pain in rectum during stool.

G. U.: Urinary tantrums; G. C. prostatitis; chancroid; retracted testicle; knotty prostate; thin, green, scalding discharge during urination; gleet (last drop); hydrocele; orchitis with squeezing in the left testicle; left kidney pain extending to bladder; retention of urine with painful urge with sensation as if the urine passed; trickling and dribbling; sensitive vagina; inner thighs red and excoriated; bloody, watery or green gonorrhœa, better by motion; tearing pain left ovary extending to the thighs, worse during menses; burning, bursting in the ovary; menses early, short, scanty; feet too active; nipples retracted.

CHEST: Asthmas in sycotic children (*Med., Nat. sulph.*); bronchitis chronic, or after acute disease, with oppression of the chest, loose cough, copious green or white morning sputum; persistent, dry hacking cough from throat irritation (cleans up more chronic bronchitis than any remedy I know); breast lumps after vaccination.

BACK: Stiff from the left nape to the ear.

EXTREMITIES: post G. C. rheumatism relieved by cold and motion; cracking of joints; restless knees; painful soles; myositis ossificans; elephantiasis; finger tips cold as if dead; flesh as if beaten from bones; tingling of the left

middle finger; sciatica; left paralysis; brown mottling of the dorsa of the hands; hang nails; offensive foot sweat.

SLEEP: Insomnia, worse after 3 a.m.; takes long time to wake up.

CHILL: fever and sweat: Chilly in the morning; chill starts in thigh; chill with yawning; shuddering on uncovering; copious sweat on falling asleep; sweat on undressing; sweat of all but the head (opp. *Sil.*); sweat only on uncovered parts; sweat during sleep; sweat stains yellow; one-sided sweat; thirst before sweat stage.

SKIN: Eruptions on covered parts only; livid spots remain after eruptions; absorbs proud flesh and scars; blisters worse uncovering; zona worse labia or prepuce; cephalomata; cauliflower or coxcomb excrescences; pale polypi; lipomas; annular, scaly blotches. *Thuja* prevents pitting in acne or small-pox. Warts fig, seed, jagged, pedunculated, divided into parts with broad base, burning, spongy, soft, bleeding, strawberry marks, birth marks, angiomas.

RELATIONSHIPS: Complementary to *Ars.*, *Med.*, *Nat. mur.*, *Nat. sulph.*, *Sab.*, *Sil.* Goes in series *Puls.*, *Sil.*, *Fluor. ac.*, *Thuja* or *Ars.*, *Thuja*, *Tarant.*

Related to *Nit. ac.*, *Puls.*, *Staph.*, *Agar.*, and, according to Boger, also *Merc.* Compare with *Castor*—the beaver who lives on the bark of resinous trees. Follows *Cann. sat.* and *Staph.* (Note *Ars.* is syphilitic and psoric, but not sycotic.)

Teste groups *Thuja* with *Plat.*, *Bism.*, *Castor* and *Squill.*

Such is a glimpse of the *Arbor Vitæ* which is supposed to have specific antibacterial action. It is not used nearly enough in its spheres not directly related to genito-urinary troubles. It is to be thought of with the nosodes for frequent and fundamental cure.

—*The Homœopathic Recorder*, April, 1948.