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History of natural health cont.

Hahnemann discovered this theory during the study of the Cinchona tree, used for the treatment of Malaria to this day. He noted that if he used this plant on himself while healthy, he developed symptoms like those experienced in Malaria.

This brought him to the theory that a substance that induced symptoms in a healthy person would eliminate the symptoms in a person suffering from them. He researched this idea further and wrote two major works, "the Organon of Healing" and the "Materia Medica Pura", which are first instructions and collections of substances used for homoeopathic practices.

Indian Ayurveda is quite distinct from the Western idea of the human body and has been practiced for millennia. It uses elements such as foods, herbs, yoga, meditation and lifestyle in its health science.

The influence of the five elements ether, air, fire, water and earth on the body create the three doshas: Kapha, pitta, vata. Balance of these doshas is the key to health.

Records of herbs in **Chinese medicine** have been found to have been made around the same time as our Greek tradition. Some distinguishing features of Chinese medicine include the power of Qi, the energy flow and the channels it uses to energise the body, the assigning of elements and planets to different organs and the description of ailments as being the result of conditions such as damp, dry, hot, cold, or a combination of the four. Herbs and elements were combined and assigned to address these conditions.

The discovery of penicillium notatum - the mould bacterium used as an antibiotic - by Scottish biologist **Alexander Fleming** in 1928 marked the beginning of a sharp veering away from traditional medical practices. This discovery was put to the test during World War II. The fact that the lives of many injured soldiers could be saved with this "magic mould" meant a turning point in medicine. World War II is considered the beginning of medicine as we know it today. Less than a hundred years ago! What a fantastic tool in the care of mankind.

These are just a few milestones in the history of medicine. However, the crux of holistic medicine and the universal connection between the practitioner and the patient, and the intuitive power that drives the treatment, cannot be recorded. Neither can the gift that we receive from our elders and from nature when we listen, quietly, for its message.

In my opinion, medicine of today forgets that while medicines like antibiotics are indispensable tools in emergency measures, true health is best maintained by using plants, traditional medicines, good nutrition and a balanced lifestyle.

And never forget who governs us: NATURE.

I am happy to add that in a 2009 referendum, two thirds of the people of Switzerland voted in favour of making complementary therapies available as part of medical care.

By Trudi Fill-Weidmann

Sources: Wikipedia.

Swiss news: September 22 ballot - vote outcomes remain uncertain, except for army

Close results are expected later this month when voters decide on petrol station shops (liberalisation of night-time shopping at certain petrol stations) and vaccination campaigns. A proposal to scrap conscription however is heading for defeat according to the latest opinion polls.

Political scientist Claude Longchamp says one of the main findings of the survey by his GfS Bern research and polling institute is a comparatively low-key campaign ahead of the September 22 ballots.

Commissioned by the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, the poll was published on 11 September. "There is hardly any public debate or it has had no impact on citizens," he says.

...

An initiative by the pacifist "Switzerland without an Army" group is set to fail according to the pollsters.

Supporters of conscription are more than 30 percentage points ahead. Opponents hope to mobilise young voters in the run-up to polling day. However, political scientist Lukas Golder of GfS Bern points to a relatively bland campaign by the pacifists.

It is the third vote in more than 20 years on Switzerland's armed forces, which continue to enjoy widespread popular support as a factor of cohesion in society.

Critics, however, argue conscription for able-bodied male citizens should be scrapped and a professional army of volunteers, replacing the current militia system with its roughly 185,000 members, would be better suited and more efficient to respond to the needs of a modern society.

Extracted from www.swissinfo.ch (11 September 2013), article by Urs Geiser

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