

Alfred Vogel

The Nature

Doctor

Helpful health advice



ALFRED VOGEL - THE NATURE DOCTOR

*A Manual of Traditional &
Complementary Medicine*

Alfred Vogel
The Nature Doctor

Helpful health advice

VERLAG A.VOGEL

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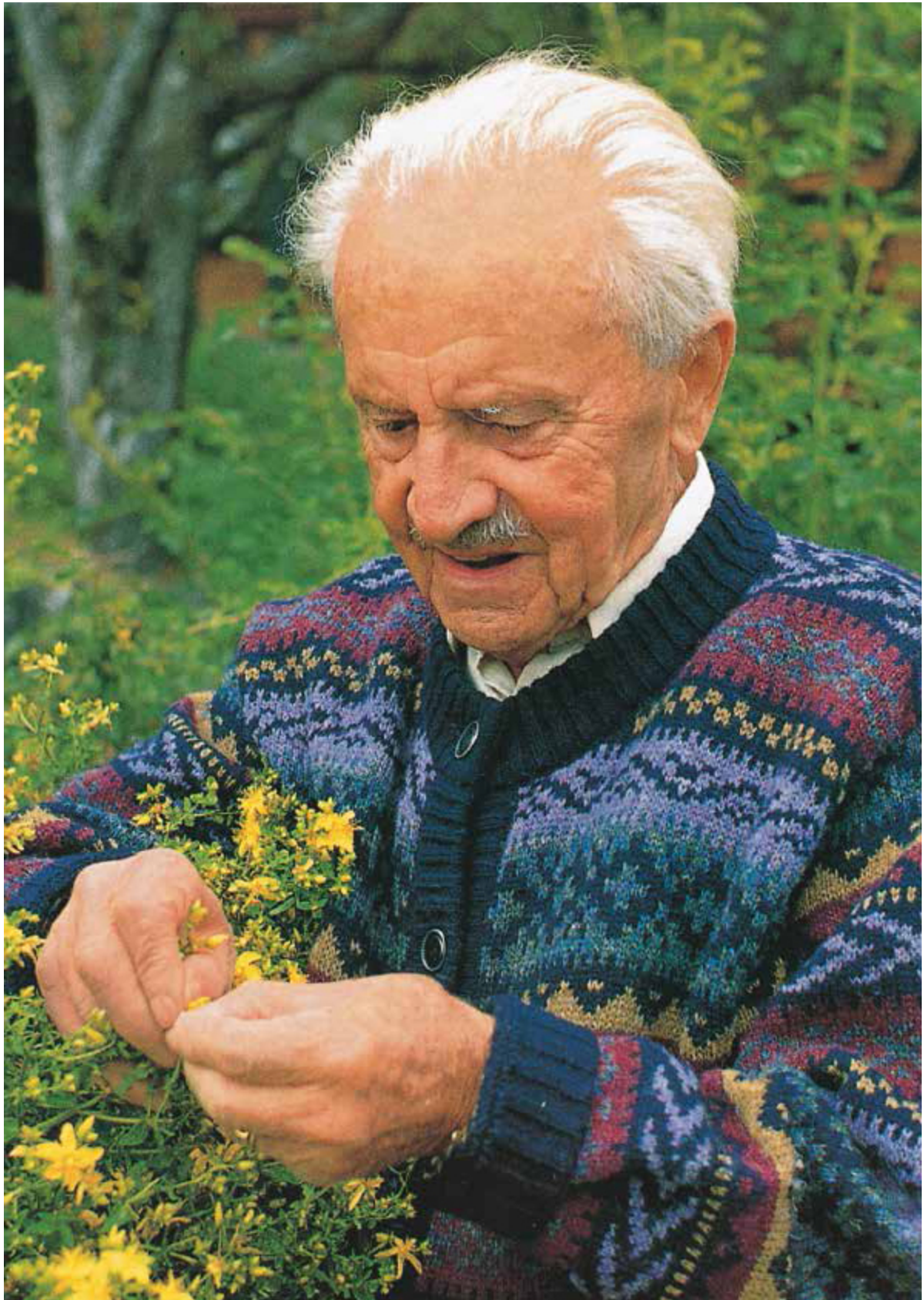
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Alfred Vogel studying St John's wort

Foreword

Alfred Vogel is no longer with us, but his life's work lives on in his books and is republished now in the slightly revised new edition of his quiet bestseller *The Nature Doctor*. The charisma of his personality shines through into the present, conveying a message that will provide valuable guidance to both the sick and the healthy, even in the new millennium.

What is the timeless appeal and fascination of his message? Alfred Vogel realised at an early age that Nature with its flora provides all the aids that, properly used, are suitable for the maintenance of health and the treatment of diseases. It is a legitimate question to ask whether the experiences that Alfred Vogel gained in his decades of treating patients and in collecting treatment methods practised in other countries continue to be relevant to the younger generation and for modern sciences. This question can only be answered with an unequivocal "Yes". It has long been common knowledge that not every disease requires treatment with a "bitter pill". Any reader of *The Nature Doctor* will notice that Alfred Vogel gives no licence for self-treatment, but considers carefully when it would be justified and sensible and when treatment has to be sought from a doctor. For minor ailments, such as functional disorders of the stomach and intestines, gallbladder and liver, joint disorders, predisposition to frequent infections, stress or simple skin disorders, it is often sufficient to start self-treatment with a herbal infusion or a relevant plant-based ready-made product available in pharmacies and health food shops. If treatment with chemical-based

medicines is inevitable in serious diseases, it can be supported with a natural remedy in order to boost the body's natural defence and self-healing powers.

And how do medical practitioners and researchers view Alfred Vogel's handbook today? Presumably, only a few of them are familiar with this book, which is not surprising, as only those interested in natural medicine will attach great importance to experiences gathered over centuries. The others have forgotten that most of our highly effective active pharmaceutical ingredients such as digitoxin, reserpine, or the anti-cancer drug vincristine are rooted in folk medicine's centuries-old treasure of experience and are still counted among our most effective medicinal products today. Admittedly, our antibiotics and beta-blockers are only to a very small extent based on experiences in natural medicine, but what about the preventive agents, once more highly praised and promoted, that Alfred Vogel considered so comprehensively in his book on the maintenance of health? Our own laboratory investigations have shown time and again that the analysis of our traditional folk medicinal plants with modern phytochemical methods not only largely confirms the experiences of earlier times, but can often be the starting point for the development of new, highly effective medicinal products. What Alfred Vogel gathered and recorded as a visionary intuition can still be an interesting stimulus today, a veritable mine of information for many plant researchers. It never ceases to amaze how many formulations Alfred Vogel had compiled that cannot be found in any other book or that have long slid into oblivion.

Anyone who has ever experienced this will no longer deride the many, sometimes at first glance fantastic observations of this natural healer, but bow in admiration to this man who dedicated his life to natural medicine and who with unparalleled enthusiasm and sense of mission has

provided suggestions and support that are of inestimable value to the people of the 21st century, too.

Prof. Dr. Hildebert Wagner
Institute of Pharmaceutical Biology
Ludwig Maximilians University Munich

Alfred Vogel (1902-96)

- 1902 Born and raised in Aesch in Basel region of Switzerland.
- 1920-32 Management of a health food store in Basel.
- 1929 First appearance of A. Vogel's monthly magazine, in those days under the title of *Das Neue Leben* [A Fresh Start]. From 1944, this developed into *A.Vogel Gesundheits Nachrichten* [Health News].
- 1937-56 Naturopath in Teufen. Research work, development and manufacture of the first natural remedies using fresh plants.
- 1950 Start of his global travels for research purposes.
- 1952 First publication of his standard work *The Nature Doctor* [Der kleine Doktor], now well known throughout the world and translated into twelve languages. Circulation to date: more than two million
- 1958-59 Extensive research expeditions through North, Central and South America.
- 1963 Establishment of Bioforce AG (now: A.Vogel AG) - now an international leader in the field of natural remedies.
- 1969 Study of indigenous peoples in Africa.

- 1979 Research expeditions through New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania.
- 1982 Awarded the Priessnitz Medal by the Deutsche Heilpraktikerschaft [German Naturopathic Society].
- 1984 Awarded honorary membership of the Swiss Society for Empirical Medicine [SAGEM].
- 1996 Passed away peacefully at the age of 94.

Alfred Vogel

Alfred Vogel was born in Aesch near Basel in Switzerland in 1902. From his earliest childhood, he became familiar with herbal medicine. His parents and siblings already knew of the healing powers of many herbs and passed their knowledge to the young Alfred. He later went on to deepen his childhood experiences. In the following years, he compiled and expanded the traditional trove of European folk medicine and explored new avenues. His quest for knowledge ultimately took him to numerous countries across the world. He felt particularly drawn to indigenous peoples. Their way of dealing with natural resources challenged Alfred Vogel to study the links between nutrition, way of life, constitution and illness. Times spent in Africa, Asia, North, Central and South America, with indigenous peoples of grassland and jungle showed the tireless traveller that, with skilful guidance and support, nature can do much more than the supposed human achievement. Alfred Vogel familiarised himself with the healing methods of various indigenous peoples and discovered a number of new medicinal plants.



Alfred Vogel giving one of his many talks





Harvesting the cultivated medicinal plants in Roggwil, Switzerland

This work in the service of the sick and the healthy had its beginnings in Teufen in the Swiss Canton of Appenzell, where Alfred Vogel ran a naturopathic clinic, gathered medicinal plants in the Alpine uplands and developed his first fresh plant extracts. He discovered that these had a better and more comprehensive effect than tinctures made from dried plants. True to his motto of “love being the greatest force in the universe”, he made his knowledge public in countless lectures across all continents. In addition, he cultivated contacts with many royal houses, politicians, captains of industry - always inspired by his love for God and the healing powers of nature. Most of all, though, he felt himself drawn to the “man in the street”, whose language - the “language of the heart” - was always also his own. This is where Alfred Vogel found his most

ardent admirers. The greatest worry for the organisers of any of Alfred Vogel's talks generally was to find a venue that was large enough.

Alfred Vogel, an enthusiastic writer, reported his experiences as a natural healer, as a researcher of nutrition and medicinal plants and as a discoverer of the natural remedies of indigenous peoples in his journal *Gesundheits-Nachrichten* [Health News] that appeared monthly, beginning in 1929. Even though, as a self-taught man, Alfred Vogel was not always taken seriously by the scientific establishment, he was awarded the Priessnitz Medal at the 1982 annual congress of the Deutsche Heilpraktikerschaft, the highest award in the field of naturopathy. In 1984, Alfred Vogel was made an honorary member of the Swiss Society for Empirical Medicine (SAGEM).

At the age of 23 years, Alfred Vogel wrote his first slim volume entitled *How to reform your life* [Kleiner Wegweiser für die Lebensreform]. 1935 saw the publication of his book *Nature as a Healing Factor* [Die Nahrung als Heilfaktor] with a main focus on the impact of nutrition on health. In 1952, *The Nature Doctor* [Der kleine Doktor] was published, the bestseller that made Alfred Vogel a household name for an international readership. *The Nature Doctor* has long since become a recognised reference work for physicians and scientists, too. See for yourself!

Foreword and retrospective on a busy life, by A. Vogel

By October 1992, my heart will have beaten ceaselessly for nine decades, day and night, in restful and in challenging times. Both in physical and in spiritual terms, I owe a lot to this heart. In everything that I have been privileged to establish, develop and do, it has played an active part. When I look back to my life now, it feels as if the years and decades have just flown past.

As a small child, I became captivated by the infinite variety of plants and animals, and my thirst for knowledge led me through fields, woods and meadows. My father informed me, with grandmother's wisdom, of the many beautiful things in Creation with its infinite variety and mystery. Ants, beetles, frogs, lizards, and salamanders baffled me, until I got to know their ways of life better. I learned very early on that plants have healing properties. Whenever, walking barefoot, I hurt myself on a shard of glass or a rusty nail, wood sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*) from the forest and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*) from behind the woodshed, squashed and applied, would soon remedy the damage. I would never have dreamt at the time that my youthful experiences with medicinal plants would have such consequences and prove their worth in my later professional life.

On my many journeys across all continents of the world, I have met my friends, the plants, again and again, and often these encounters have made me happier than those with humans, when one could never be sure whether good or bad experiences would need to be undergone. Plants have