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Foreword

Whilst thinking of the new edition of *The Nature Doctor*, my mind went back to a very wintry, snowy morning on 2 January 1958. That day I had a business meeting with Alfred Vogel. I had met him the previous August in Amsterdam, where we both attended a lecture on homoeopathy. When I set out to meet him on that particular morning, I was quite nervous because I knew that my life was in for a very big change.

Not long after the meeting started, however, my nerves and anxieties vanished because I knew that, with this man, I would be completely on the same wavelength and that nothing could stop me from working with him. He had this great ability of putting people's minds at ease. The enormous energy that beamed out of him was so tangible that I was very grateful for the opportunity to begin working with him.

My first task was to introduce *The Nature Doctor* to the Dutch market and with the help of my colleagues this was successfully achieved. Everybody wanted a copy of *The Nature Doctor* in their homes. It was then not so well known but it soon increased in popularity, and it is now no surprise that over 2.5 million copies of this excellent book have been sold worldwide.

Alfred Vogel was, in my eyes, a genius. He had an enormous gift and, wherever he went, he always had an audience. Since the day we decided to work together I enjoyed the privilege of sharing our ideas. He was my most influential teacher.

We lectured together, we pioneered together and it is no surprise that audiences throughout the world were attracted to Vogel, as he was a fountain of knowledge. He was so widely read, and had such a wide knowledge about everything, that he could easily convince the critics and sceptics of the great work that he was doing.

It is a privilege to write the foreword for this book, as so many patients have told me that reading *The Nature Doctor* is like having Alfred Vogel

sitting beside them, talking. Students loved him – indeed almost worshipped him – for his great philosophies. I remember with fondness the last journey we ever made together, into the Jura Mountains in Switzerland in the company of Professor Geers from Finland and a number of students. We all particularly benefited from the value of his teachings on that trip.

Probably the best times in my life were when I was alone with him in the Alps. We often stayed overnight in the mountains and studied until late at night the signatures and characteristics of plants and herbs that were so dear to us, being part of nature. One of his best-known phrases is clearly illustrated in this book: *In Nature, everything is in harmony.*

I trust that this new edition, which is a testament to his life's work, will find a very welcome place in every household. It is still one of the best books ever written on herbal, homoeopathic and naturopathic medicine and it is with great respect to the author that I dedicate this foreword.

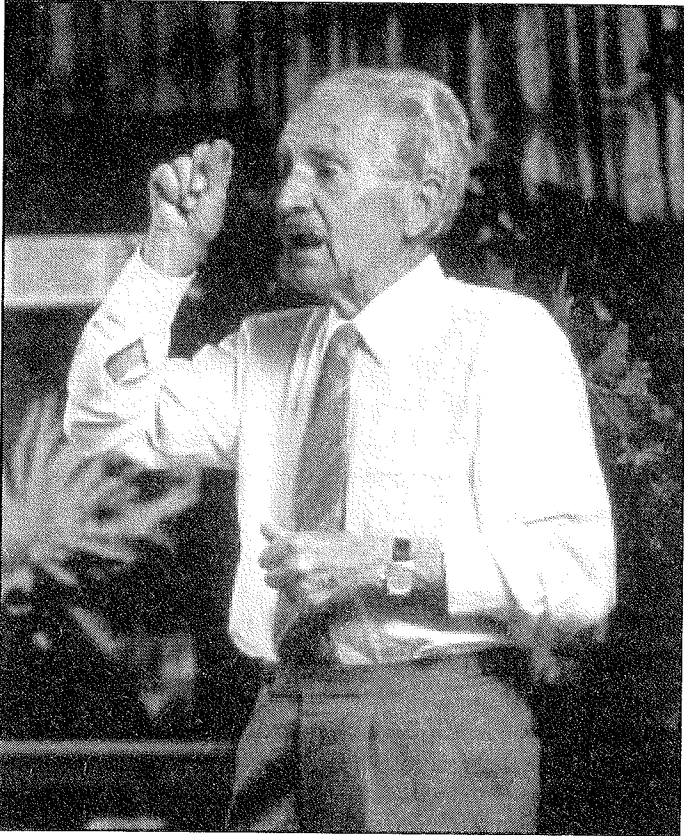
*Jan de Vries
Auchenkyle
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Alfred Vogel (1902–96)

Alfred Vogel became captivated by the infinite variety of plants and their medicinal properties when he was still a child. The fascination remained, becoming an integral part of his life, and it influenced everything he undertook. Alfred Vogel rediscovered the healing power of nature and using this age-old knowledge, he developed modern natural remedies for many complaints.

As a young child, nature with all its diversity of plants and animals impressed and inspired me and my thirst for knowledge led me through field, wood and meadow. My father informed me, with grandmother's wisdom, of the many beautiful things in the entire universe which is so varied and mysterious. I discovered very early on that plants have healing properties. I would never have dreamt at the time that my experiences as a youngster with medicinal plants would have such consequences and prove their worth in my later, professional life.

His thirst for knowledge took him to numerous countries throughout the world where he absorbed traditional knowledge from the people he encountered. He felt a particular bond with primitive tribes. The way they used natural resources presented Alfred Vogel with a new challenge – to study the connection between nutrition, lifestyle, constitution and illness. Discoveries in Africa, Asia, North, South and Central America and among peoples of the prairies and tropical forests showed the tireless traveller that the skilful management and support of nature can do more than the alleged skills of human beings. Alfred Vogel steeped himself in the healing



Alfred Vogel

methods of various primitive races and discovered a whole host of medicinal plants.

The plants were always my faithful companions and are counted among my best friends for they have never disappointed me nor let me down, even in life-threatening situations. On more than one occasion and especially in tropical countries, plants have saved my life. How glad I was then that their wonderful healing properties were known to me.

By the late 1930s he had begun to use this knowledge both to help the sick and the healthy at his clinic in Teufen in the Swiss region of Appenzell. Here he grew medicinal plants for his patients using the organic principles he knew so well. Herbs were processed immediately after harvesting on the simple logic that this was the best way of capturing the energy and essence of the plants, making them more effective. Today, science has shown us that fresh herb tinctures contain higher levels of active ingredients and are more stable than equivalent preparations made from dried herbs.

To give credit where credit's due, I must strongly emphasise that we have the Creator to thank for all these wonderful healing powers. And to all those who have taken the love of his plants into their hearts, he also gave the strength and perseverance to discover these healing powers and to put them to good use in helping our fellow men. Anyone who has made or makes medicinal discoveries with plants and produces herbal remedies should thank the Creator for these delightful gifts which, when used correctly, can work wonders.

True to his principles, he made his knowledge public in countless lectures worldwide, he related his experiences and discoveries in a monthly magazine, *A. Vogel's Gesundheits Nachrichten*, and he wrote a number of books, the best-known of which is *The Nature Doctor* which was published for the first time in 1952 and has been translated into twelve languages worldwide.

The love of nature and plants, animals, human beings and above all the respect and love of the Creator have led me to do more than I really could be responsible for. The secret of my often indefatigable powers was the love which I recognised as the greatest force of the universe.

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 (New Life)*. From 1944, this became *A. Vogel's Gesundheits Nachrichten (Health News)*.

1937–56

Nature doctor in Teufen. Research work, development and manufacture of the first natural remedy using fresh plants.

1950

Beginning of worldwide travels carrying out research work.

1952

First appearance of the book, *The Nature Doctor (Der kleine Doktor)* which is today well known throughout the world and has been translated into twelve languages.

1958–59

Extensive journeys of discovery through North, Central and South America.

1963

Established Bioforce AG in Roggwil – today one of the largest natural remedies companies in Switzerland.

1969

Study of primitive tribes in Africa.

1979

Journeys of discovery through New Zealand, Australia and Tasmania.

1982

Received Priessnitz Medal from the German Naturopathic Society.

1984

Made honorary member of the Swiss Society for Empirical Medicine.

1996

October: Passed away peacefully at the age of 94.

Editor's Note

2002 was the centenary of Alfred Vogel, the Swiss naturopath and author of *The Nature Doctor*. The book itself first appeared in German in 1952, coincidentally the year that I first saw the light of day, and the main thing that struck me as I read it during that centenary summer were the many reminders within its pages of my own childhood, spent not in the foothills of the Alps but in the Southern Uplands of my native Scotland.

I little realised as a small child the firm foundations on which my life was being built – eating my mother's wonderful vegetable soup or the honey from the beehives my father tended at the bottom of the garden, running across the flower meadows in the good fresh air, staining my mouth black with the juice of brambles (blackberries) gathered from hedges, collecting eggs from under hens nestled in their barns and using dock leaves to alleviate the sting of nettles I carelessly brushed against whilst trying to catch a glimpse of a deer or a squirrel.

We lived in harmony with Nature without realising that we were doing anything unusual. But then in the 1950s in a Scottish village it was not unusual – it is only now, looking back, that it seems so different from the life that I see today's children leading.

Today too few people see Nature as healer and provider: rather as something to use and abuse. In 1984 another naturopath, looking at the havoc a machine had wrecked on my right arm, told me that what it took a machine half a minute to destroy, Mother Nature might take five years to repair, but repair it she would. And so it proved. Over the intervening years his holistic care of me as a person, coupled with acupuncture and herbal remedies, have turned a completely paralysed and agonising limb into a living, useable arm. Neither my naturopath, Jan de Vries, nor his friend and mentor Alfred Vogel, are miracle workers but their holistic

approach is well worth considering and embracing. It is really not as hard as it initially seems and the benefits are myriad.

Alfred Vogel wrote *The Nature Doctor* over many years, based on traditional wisdom from all over the world and his wide experience treating people, many of whom had tried other forms of treatment in vain. During his lifetime, he revised and updated the content as he felt appropriate but the basic principles on which his life, remedies and treatments were based and his belief that the Creator had provided all the tools that the naturopath needed, remained paramount.

This new edition, which is aimed at an audience worldwide, continues his work of revising and updating in line with modern thinking, while maintaining those ideals and beliefs that made him the man he was. So while some of the treatment suggestions may appear old fashioned to the twenty-first century reader and some of his remedies are no longer as readily available as they were a few decades ago, it can in no way detract from the wisdom and underlying truth within its pages.

Catherine Lang
January 2003

A Doctor in Your House

What is the purpose of having a copy of *The Nature Doctor* in your house? Well, its simple but important task is to make you aware of the many natural remedies that are readily available in your home and immediate surroundings. When a sudden emergency arises or if you suffer from some persistent ailment, simply pick up *The Nature Doctor*, locate the appropriate entry and see what help is at your disposal to alleviate the pain or overcome the problem.

Of course, I don't know whether you live in a pretty little village or a small town. I have no idea whether you have to be content with living in the built-up area of a large city or whether you have chosen to live on a farm close to nature in the quiet countryside far away from other houses, villages or towns. You may have chosen to settle in a country where distance means nothing. You may even be a forester whose home may be a solitary house among the trees, or live high up in the mountains.

Whoever you are, and no matter where you live, it will be to your advantage to consult *The Nature Doctor* in your hour of need, at least until you can call your family doctor who may be able to give you further assistance. Often, however, in an emergency the immediate help offered by *The Nature Doctor* may be sufficient to overcome your problem, because the right remedy given at the right time usually has successful results.

Perhaps you think that you and your family are assured of enjoying good health and that no misfortune could ever befall you. It often happens that day after day you go about your business and various tasks without anything happening to disturb the rhythm of your life. But suddenly something goes wrong – an accident occurs, be it ever so slight, an illness strikes, a cold or a bout of flu – and the daily routine is upset. At such times you will be glad of the immediate help provided by *The Nature Doctor*.

So what do you have in your house or nearby that will give you quick and reliable help? The size of your figurative medicine chest will depend largely on where you live and what can be found in and near your home. It may be that some of the remedies you need can be found in the kitchen, the larder or the cellar. You may even have some things stored in the attic that could be most useful to you. And if you have a garden, there are many plants that can come to your assistance. Better still, if you live in the country you will find an even more abundant supply of help in the fields, woods and meadows. If, however, you live in a town, you will simply have to keep your eyes open when out walking, because you can still find many plants that will be useful in times of need.

Should you run out of the usual remedies you keep in your house, our many little plant friends can act as preventative measures as well as remedies for less serious complaints. The number of medicinal plants found hidden in the woods, sprouting in fields and meadows, growing along riverbanks and streams is so great that *The Nature Doctor* would be more than twice its present size if it attempted to describe all the wonderful help nature's garden has to offer.

To begin with, *The Nature Doctor* will acquaint you with some of the remedies to be found among your everyday supplies. You will be astonished to learn that many food items can have a medicinal use, for instance flour, sugar, water, oil, salt, eggs, soft white cheese ('quark'), potatoes, carrots, cabbage, radishes, onions, garlic, horseradish and parsley – to name but a few.

Welcome *The Nature Doctor* into your home and read it carefully. It will reveal many of the remedies that have been in your home all the time without your knowing it.

At first glance, the volume and diversity of suggestions and advice may appear confusing, but a careful examination of the comprehensive index at the back of the book will help you to quickly find the information you are seeking.

The simple examples found in Part One of the book will no doubt whet your appetite and encourage you to consult the more detailed sections that follow.

Part One

Treatments to Try Out

‘Can I really trust your simple natural remedies?’ you may ask at first. ‘Will they encourage me to consult you whenever I am in need?’

‘Of course,’ the ‘Nature Doctor’ replies, ‘try them and see for yourself!’

Burns and Scalds

Burns from flame or fire and scalds from boiling liquids call for quick action. Immerse the affected part of the body immediately in cold water. Where this cannot easily be done, apply a cold compress. Cover the burn with gauze, or with a clean cloth if a large area is affected, until medical help can be obtained. To avoid infection, do not puncture any blisters. In cases of third-degree burns, immediate medical attention should be sought if complications are to be prevented. *St John’s Wort Oil* has also proved to be an effective remedy for burns and scalds.

Cuts, Scratches and Grazes

Superficial scratches and small wounds which prove difficult to heal can be dealt with quite simply. Use *concentrated whey (Molkosan)*, which is one of nature’s best cleansing agents. Then dust the wound with *natural biological calcium powder* (for example *Urticalcin*) and, for two nights running, apply *soft white cheese* (quark). Should these items not be available, soak some *wheat grain* (which needs to be minced afterwards) or *bran* in fresh milk. Then cover the wound with the resulting mash and you will find that this also acts as a thorough cleanser. Once again dust the wound with natural biological calcium powder and after two days of treatment apply pulped *cabbage leaves*, preferably using Savoy cabbage for the best results. Cabbage leaf poultices have proved more effective than many modern remedies. If the wound is stubborn, causing swelling or

discoloration, and if everything else seems to have failed, you must not lose patience but continue the treatment with cabbage leaf poultices for weeks or even months. Alleviation will be experienced even in serious cases and a complete cure is often possible.

Inflammation of the Eyes

Lengthy exposure to the reflection of the sun on water or snow can make the eyes sore. Do you know what to do when you or someone in your family is affected in this way and perhaps the eyes begin to burn during the night? The remedy is quite simple. All you need to do is take the white of an egg, beat it lightly, spread it on a cloth, and bandage the eyes with it. The burning sensation will subside and the patient will be able to sleep. It is more than probable that the inflammation will have diminished, if not disappeared, by the morning. If no egg is available, *soft white cheese* (quark) or even a piece of *raw meat* (veal, beef or chicken) will achieve similar results. These well-proven remedies can be used whenever you need them, including cases of snow blindness caused by the intense reflection of sunlight from snow and ice.

Colds

A 'streaming cold' is best treated with *onions* (*Allium cepa*). Dip a slice of freshly cut onion into a glass of hot water. Remove the onion after only one or two seconds, allow the water to cool and sip this throughout the day. This is also an excellent remedy for spring colds. If, in addition, you place half an onion on your bedside table, you will inhale its odour while sleeping, thus reducing the tendency to catarrh and so alleviating your cold. An *onion poultice* applied to the neck during the night is equally effective. Another way to help rid yourself of a cold is by sniffing up *salt water*, *lemon juice*, or a natural *calcium powder* (for example *Urticalcin*).

Catarrh

Perhaps you are prone to frequent colds and suffer from catarrh. If you have a *pine*, *larch* or any other pinaceous tree in your garden, take some of the *buds* which can always be found in various stages of growth on these trees. By chewing these buds slowly and thoroughly throughout the day, replacing them with fresh ones from time to time, the catarrh will be eliminated within a few days. So, when you go skiing or out for a walk, watch out for pine trees and take the opportunity to avail yourself of this simple but effective remedy. Before retiring at night, dampen a cloth with