

Touching the Outer, Reaching the Inner

an unpublished book *by*
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(1942–2001)

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INTRODUCTION

“If anyone knew of the virtues of friction and exercise and could keep this knowledge secret, they might easily make a fortune.”

Thomas Sydenham

“But O For the touch of a vanish'd hand, and the sound of a voice that is still!”

Break, Break, Break Alfred Lord Tennyson

Touching the Outer, Reaching the Inner is a study of therapies that have been used on the outer to bring about healing on the inner. A cat licks its bruised paw, a child rubs a sore ankle and a mother kisses an “ouwie.” These are a few of the ways that humans and animals react to areas that need the healing touch.

Touch not only heals the body, it is an expression of language. We say “It was a touching experience,” or “Let’s keep in touch.” Walt Whitman wrote of the sacredness of expression by saying “I make holy whatever I touch or am touch’d from.”

The Chinese believed that “dragon ways,” or lines of natural energy, crossed the land. The placing of man-made buildings on the land was known as feng shui. The best energy currents of buildings and humans resulted in prosperity. The energy currents of yin and yang were identified with the Green Dragon of spring and the White Tiger of autumn. When they were in harmony health resulted.

Energy lines known as meridians determined our health and sickness. Acupuncture is a therapy that uses energy lines and needles to improve the body’s energy flow. Acupuncture has a place in healing, but that place needs to be defined more carefully.

Before acupuncture developed in China, native healers used sharp rocks. Eskimo healers used “poking” with rocks. The native women of the South Pacific used the vigorous massage known as “lomi lomi.” This rids the body of a hidden octopus that is causing the problem!

Acupuncture therapists stick needles into patients, but other healers pinched, thumped, stroked and poked. None of the old practices were subjected to scientific scrutiny, and much of their validity is doubtful. They have not been taught or publicized in medical schools

and even as history they are effectively forgotten.

Captain William Dampier (1652?–1715) wrote a series of highly valued books on his travels around the world. When he visited the Isthmus of Darien (Panama) his surgeon Lionel Walter wrote about the native medicine. The wife of the chief was sick. Lacenta was seated on a small rock in a river, and the medicine man shot small arrows into her back. The little arrows were made so they penetrated a short distance. When blood spurted out, the patient leaped and rejoiced.

In the western world the earliest external therapies were trampling and bonesetting. By 1825 doctors were beginning to study the relationship of the nerves to the organs and to the spinal vertebrae. A fuller understanding came about with the development of osteopathy, chiropractic, spondylotherapy and a variety of other practices. With the exception of chiropractic, most of these practices have been forgotten.

I find it interesting that so many irritant therapies have been used to bring about healing. We have every kind of analgesia and painkiller today, but we don't practice counter-irritation. People who had been ill for years, often found relief with this practice. Perhaps some of the healing resulting from surgery is due to counter-irritation. The surgeon damages the tissues, and the body reacts by healing.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century clinics existed in Russia and Eastern Europe specializing in urtification. This is the practice of beating the patient with stinging nettles. These people didn't have wheelchairs, and if someone suffered a stroke, they were bedridden at home. Patients survived the disagreeable treatment, because they knew that they would be able to walk or move their limbs in about two months.

Some common irritant therapies were blistering and moxibustion. Moxibustion, the burning of spots on the body, was practiced not only in the Eastern World, but also by the American Indians. This treatment caused burn spots that remained on the body.

Chiropractors and osteopaths survived in spite of powerful medical opposition. Many people were willing to stand and testify that they had help with their problems. The bonesetters didn't survive, because they didn't teach their trade or put it into books. Other

therapies like the Baunschedit treatment, hyperemic treatment and John Chapman's spinal ice-bags should have survived, but they had no medical support. These therapies offered real help for people with chronic problems. By writing about them, I hope to interest healers in using them.

I've never been to a chiropractor, an osteopath or had a real massage. I went through millions of pages of medical literature to find hidden references to herbal healing. During the search I ran across various other therapies that I felt should be shared. I have written about the information that offers real help for present day problems.

If some doctors were to come out with the healing stories connected with John Chapman's therapy, Bier's therapy or the Pyonex treatment, the New York Times would be putting them on the front page and the Nobel Committee would be giving them a call to come to Stockholm for the big prize. But such therapies exist, buried so deeply in the pages of medical literature, that even medical historians have ignored them. I was simply astonished by the stories of desperate people who got help by these simple methods.

North Americans are supposed to have the best medicine in the world, but nearly 25% of us have little or no medical coverage. Losing a job and having a medical emergency can strip away the earnings of a lifetime of hard work. In many cases, the medical problem could have been dealt with by alternative therapy for a fraction of the cost. Whether you find this book historical or practical, you will learn to have new respect for the ideas of the past.

One of the bigger issues of the year 2000 presidential elections was the government payment for drugs for the elderly. I had hoped that the candidates would embrace alternatives to costly medicines, but they ignored the idea. We are so used to the idea that only drug companies can take care of our needs, that common sense judgment went by the wayside.

I write about medical history, but I am not a doctor or a practitioner. Many of the therapies that I have written about are no longer practiced and I know no one who uses them. By shedding light on an obscure subject, I hope that some healers of the future will be interested in the wisdom of the past.

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1. THE ROYAL TOUCH

. . . Where they kneeling, ye King strokes their faces or cheekes with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplaine in his formalities says, “He put his hands upon them and he healed them.” This is said to everyone in particular. When they have been all touched, they come up again in the same order, and the other chaplaine kneeling, and having angel gold [coin] strung on white ribbon on his arm, delivers them one by one to his Majesty, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they passe, while the first chaplaine repeats: “That is ye true light who come into ye world.”

John Evelyn’s *diary* entry for July 6, 1660

Pope Clement the Eighth suffered from gout in both his hands and feet. Around Easter of 1595 the Pope had a severe attack and was confined to bed in severe pain. His close friend Father Philip Neri often visited him and they looked forward to these visits. During this attack Pope Clement was in so much pain that he didn’t want anyone to even touch his bed.

When Father Neri came, the Pope begged him not to get near. Neri said: “I am not sorry for the gout, Holy Father, that compels you to rest; but I am very sorry for the pain you suffer. Your Holiness need not fear, let me do as I please.” Then he slowly moved towards the bed and seized the Pope’s suffering hand and pressed it tightly with affection. The pain disappeared and Pope Clement cried out: “Go on touching me Father, it gives me the greatest relief!” The Pope later spoke of this as a miracle, and proof that Philip Neri was a saint.

In ancient times, it was believed that religious leaders and the king had received the power of God. Since they had this power, they could heal. The early Christians tried to revive the healing touch by combining it with anointing oil. Poor results were a “lack of faith,” and most Christians quickly returned to the regular healers.

Christian legends gave the power of healing to several monks. Protogenes, the priest of Edessa, cured his friends by prayer and touch. Monk John was able to cure gout and heal broken limbs. Monk Benjamin cured all diseases by touch and anointing with holy oil.

The Roman historian Tacitus (+55–120) told the story of how Emperor Vespasian put his foot on the hand of a man who lost its use. The lame man recovered the use of the hand from the emperor.

The *Cikitsatilaka* of India has this story of the healing touch. “King Jyasimha put his lotus hands on the forehead of Lothana. He touched the feet of the king who raised up the head of the prince. The touch of the hands on which were jewels and powerful herbs was cooling like the moon, and removed the hot pain from his mind and the misery from his body.”

Martin Luther wrote about touching in *Table Talk*: “There is something miraculous in seeing certain remedies —and I know what I am talking about— effective when applied through the hands of great princes or lords, though they have no effect when given by a doctor. It is the same in theology, where it is a question of spiritual counsel. One particular preacher has more grace in instruction or consolation of men’s consciences than another one.”

William Shakespeare dramatized the royal touch with a passage in *Macbeth*. Malcolm and Macduff flee from the Scottish tyrant and take refuge in the court of Edward the Confessor. Malcolm witnesses the king’s touch and reports it to Macduff. “How he solicits Heaven himself best knows; but strangely-visited people, all swollen and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye, the mere despair of surgery, he cures, hanging a golden stamp about their necks, put on with holy prayers; and ’tis spoken, to the succeeding royalty he leaves the healing benediction.”

The first king of the Christian era to touch for healing was the French King Clovis I (+466–511). He was supposed to have discovered his power of healing in +481, when he accidentally touched Lanicetus. A chronic painful swelling on his neck disappeared.

The French King Louis IV (+936–954) added the sign of the cross during the ceremony --a token of humility-- to show that the gift came from God. The King of France was supposed to fast for nine days and do penance, before he could use the healing gift. He generally gave every Frenchman touched 15 sous, and every foreigner 30 sous. This was a small coin equivalent to the English penny. In England the kings gave the sufferers a penny.

There was a strange ritual on Good Friday, in which the kings of England set up the “Cross of Gyneth,” which was part of the true cross. The king prostrated himself before the cross and then put gold and silver coins on the altar. Then he would redeem the coins with ordinary coins, and turn them into rings. These were given to sufferers, who were supposed to be healed by wearing them.

The English kings were the first to touch on a regular public basis. Edward the Confessor (+1042–1066) began the practice. A young woman with enlarged and ulcerated glands in her neck had a dream in which she was told to go to the palace and ask the king to lay his hand on her. When the king did so, the skin broke, and the swelling vanished and the patient was free of pain.

There was angry rivalry between the French and the English over the power of their kings to heal by touch. They each claimed that the real power of healing had come from the other country. Surely God was on their side, and not the side of the other country. In the twelfth century, Guibert de Nogent wrote *De pignoribus sanctorum*. He noted that God is the author of miracles and uses strange channels.

The English kings Henry I, Edward II, Edward III, Richard II, Henry IV and Henry VII continued to have mass touchings. When King Henry II died in +1189 a member of his court wrote: “I would have you know that to attend upon the king is something sacred, for the king himself is holy; he is the Anointed of the Lord. It is not in vain that he has received the sacrament of royal unction whose efficacy --if someone should hence be ignorant of it or doubt it-- would be amply proved by the disappearance of that plague affecting the groin and by the healing of scrofula.”

The English ceremony of touching has been preserved. It begins by a reading from the gospel of Mark in which Jesus appears to the disciples after his resurrection. With great emphasis chapter 16:18 is read: “They shall lay their hands on the sick and they shall recover.” As this is read, the king puts both hands on a line of diseased persons and begins to stroke them. Then the king hands them an “angel,” which is worth about 10 shillings.

A reading from the Gospel of John 1:9 ends the ceremony: “That light is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” There is a prayer and then this blessing. “The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.”

Henry VII added an interesting aspect to the ceremony in +1505. Each person who got the royal touch got a coin of gold known as a “touchpiece,” which became known as an “angel.” After that, so many people asked for the king’s touch, that medical examiners screened them to determine who was really sick or who were impostors seeking only the gold piece.

If you lost your touchpiece, the disease was supposed to come back to you. On the back of the “angel” was a figure of St. Michael with wings, engaged in killing a dragon. In +1660, 6005 persons were touched and received the coins. When the Stuart Kings were driven into exile, they continued to touch. As they became poorer, the touchpiece became silver, and then copper.

The touchpieces cost the king about 10,000 pounds a year. However, nobody could say that the king hadn’t helped them, because it was a lot of money during that time. They were supposed to be forbidden from selling the touchpiece during their lifetime. The touching ceremony was part of the Book of Common Prayer, but it was eliminated in +1719.

Many people truly believed in the power of the king to heal. Richard Wiseman wrote that the royal doctors carefully selected the patients for the king, choosing those who showed a tendency to recover. John Brown wrote: “I do humbly presume to assert that more souls have been healed by his Majesty’s sacred hand in one year than have ever been cured by all the physicians and surgeons of his three kingdoms even since his happy restoration.”

In +1535 Michael Servetus wrote: “The king [Francis I of France] himself by his touch cures those suffering from struma or scrofula, but I myself have seen the king touch many attacked by this ailment, but I have never seen any cured.” The French kings covered all bases

when they touched the sick by saying “The king touches you, God cures you.”

Most of the touching was done for scrofula. This is derived from the word “scrofa,” which is the old word for sow. If you have seen a fat pig, you will notice the fleshy protrusions alongside the head. Scrofula is enlargement of the neck glands produced by tuberculosis.

In earlier eras you had to believe in the king’s touch, or you were committing treason. There was a famous trial of the Presbyterian Minister Thomas Rosewell in +1684. A woman in the house was so horrified at what was said that she copied down his statements and went to the Recorder in London. The result was a trial for High treason. The witnesses for the king were helped and excuses made for them. The preacher insisted that he was speaking of the paralysis of the arm of Biblical King Jeroboam, in which the prophet prayed for him. The heavy pressure on the jury produced a guilty verdict. There was a public reaction, and the king deemed it unwise to sentence the preacher.

Several of the kings scoffed at their reputation for healing by touch. King William III laughed at the “silly superstition,” and didn’t want to do it. Tomas Macaulay wrote: “The parents of scrofulous children cried out against his cruelty; bigots lifted up their hands and eyes in horror at his impiety; Jacobites sarcastically praised him for not presuming to abrogate to himself a power which belonged only to legitimate sovereigns. Some Whigs even thought that he acted unwisely in treating with such marked contempt a superstition which had a strong hold on the vulgar mind.” When King William was persuaded to touch the sick he said: “God give you better health and more sense.”

In +1712, Queen Anne touched Samuel Johnson, the skeptic and author of the first English dictionary. Johnson was a Jacobite; meaning that he believed that King James II was the real English king. He didn’t believe in the power of the queen, but his mother, who brought him, was a fervent believer. It was unsuccessful at curing him, but the touchpiece which Ann hung around his neck, is now in the British Museum.

King Louis XV of France touched two thousand scrofula sufferers in 1722. This is the last record of touching in France. Touching continued in England until +1745. The last of the English Stuart kings, who lost the throne, continued to touch until the death of Queen Anne in 1714. The touchpieces of the exiled Stuarts were silver, for they didn't have enough money to use gold. There was ridicule of the practice by scientists, and the kings wisely neglected the practice. There was just too much diffusion of information, and it was quite apparent that the king didn't have any special healing powers. In 1825 the French King Charles X was pressured to touch a group of people. He merely said to them: "The King touches thee; may God heal thee."

A handful of ordinary people believed that God had given them the power to heal by touch. Valentine Greatrakes was born in +1628 and served in Oliver Cromwell's army in England. In 1662 he had a vision that God gave him the power to heal. His wife laughed at him, but he took it seriously. A few days after his vision William Maber brought in his sick son. Greatrakes told his wife that now they would know if the vision was real or not. He laid his hands on the child and three days later the child was well.

The next person to come was Margaret MacShane. She had sores all over the upper part of her body, and the doctors had given up on her. She had suffered for seven years, but Greatrakes touched the sores and prayed. Six weeks later she was completely healed. Then his fame really spread and a steady stream of people came to see him.

On Easter Sunday of +1665, a poor man bent over with violent pains and a black leg covered with ulcers came to him. After Greatrakes laid his hands on him, he was able to stand upright. The doctors had wanted to amputate the leg, but it turned red and the ulcers healed. The man was now able to walk normally, and went back to his trade of masonry.

On another occasion he touched a tumor in Dorothy Pocock's breast. He stroked it twice, and it softened and was lanced. Pus flowed out and the breast was cured. The woman was also healed of arthritic pains in her shoulder and arm.

Greatrakes went to Colonel Phaire's home at Cahirmony, Ireland. He suffered so badly from malaria, that he believed it would certainly kill him. Touching cured Phaire, and other people were healed on this trip. But Greatrakes couldn't always perform miracles. The famous astronomer Flamsteed suffered from chronic arthritis. He was stroked without results. Lady Conway suffered from severe headaches, and she failed to get relief. David Lloyd wrote *Wonders No Miracles*, which was a hostile rebuttal to the supposed healings.

Valentine Greatrakes wrote in reply: "Some will know of me why or how I do pursue some pain from place to place, and till I have chased them out of the body by laying my hands on the outside of the clothes only, and not all pains. I answer: I and others have by frequent experience been abundantly satisfied that it is so, though I am not able to give a reason why it should be so. I am apt to believe there are some pains, which afflict man after the manner of evil-spirits, which kind of pain cannot endure my hand . . ."

Greatrakes believed that he was battling the devil and the dark forces. By stroking people, the evil forces would leave and the persons would be healed. His healing career ended, perhaps because he lost his confidence. In +1666 he retired to Ireland and occasionally stroked people until his death in +1683.

In 1528 the Spanish expedition of Pánfilo de Narváez reached Florida. They landed at Bahia de la Cruz, which we now know as Tampa Bay. They wandered through the swamps and woods of Florida and then returned. The five ships were gone, so they constructed four small boats and set out for Mexico where they could meet their Spanish countrymen.

The boat commanded by Cabeza de Vaca (1490–1557) met with a storm off the Texas coast and they were stranded on an island off of Galveston, Texas. The Indians brought them food and asked them to help cure their problems by blowing on the sick or laying hands on them. The Spanish laughed at them, but they became so desperate for food that they did. The natives cut the area with pain and then sucked around it. They burned it with fire and then blew on the painful spot for healing.

The Indians carried the few remaining Spaniards in canoes to the mainland where they lived by eating prickly pear cactus. They spent the winter with the Avavares Indians. A band of Susolas Indians begged Cabeza de Vaca to treat a sick man. He blessed the body and breathed upon it many times and to his surprise the man got up and ate. As they wandered through the state of Texas they were looked on as heavenly visitors possessing the ability to heal the sick. Hundreds of natives lined up to be touched by the Spanish visitors. After being touched, they declared that they were well.

Jean-Martin Charcot was a famous French neurologist whose studies in hypnotism and hysteria attracted worldwide attention. He found that suggestions under hypnosis would produce real sores and burns. If imagination would do that, then it could help heal real physical problems. He believed that this was the explanation for many healings from the king's touch.

2. A TOUCH OF COURAGE

“My treatment is a form of massage which affects the vital nerve centers. By pressure applied in the right place I can cause nerves which have ceased to function, to resume their normal functioning. I have had great success in curing in wide variety of complaints; pains occurring during the menopause, neuralgia, migraine, fatigue, rheumatism, nervous stomach and heart trouble and impotence. An examination of the patient immediately tells me whether I can or cannot be of help. I do not accept a patient until I have made sure of this.”

Felix Kersten

There are many stories about the resistance to Nazi tyranny during World War II. The story which became the movie *Schindler's List* became a hit movie, but the story of Dr. Felix Kersten goes far beyond that. If a novelist spun a far-flung story of a man who may have saved a million lives by his humanitarian convictions and the power of his healing hands, we wouldn't buy the book, as it is just too incredible. This profile in courage goes far beyond fiction.

After the second world war was over, British intelligence was engaged in hunting down the Nazi criminals who engaged in mass murder of Jews, Gypsies and other classes deemed to be inferior. When they were questioning Walter Schellenberg, he remarked that the feared Heinrich Himmler had once disparagingly remarked: “With every one of his massages, Doctor Kersten deprives me of a life.” The true story slowly began to unfold after this.

The story of Felix Kersten's life began when his father Frederic Kersten met the daughter of the local postmaster and married Olga Stubing in Dorpat, Estonia. His new wife was noted for feeding the poor of the town. She had a reputation for being able to cure arthritis, neuralgia and stomach ache by massage. She believed that she inherited this talent from her mother. In 1898 they named their newborn son Felix.

In 1919 Felix Kersten joined the Finnish army as a volunteer and fought for the liberation of Finland in the war against Russia. This resulted in a commission in the Finnish army and Finnish citizenship. Then he had an attack of rheumatic fever and was sent to the army

hospital at Helsingfors. During his recovery, a friendly doctor noted that he had a special gift for massage. With this encouragement he began attending medical school at the University of Helsingfors and specialized in massage.

In 1922 he moved to Berlin, Germany to complete his medical studies at the University of Berlin. While he was there Professor August Bier took note of his interest in massage. Bier had a great deal of interest in unorthodox treatments, and his work will be discussed later. One night he invited Kersten to dinner and introduced him to Doctor Ko. The mysterious Dr. Ko told him the story of how he was born in China, but he grew up in a remote monastery in northeastern Tibet. There he was taught the secret arts of healing by physical manipulation. After studying there for twenty years, he was given a sum of money and sent to Europe to study with western experts. Dr. Ko got an English medical degree and practiced in London afterwards.

August Bier invited Dr. Ko to Berlin to practice and teach his art. On that night he invited Kersten to practice his Finnish massage on him. After the massage was over he said: "My young friend, you know nothing, absolutely nothing. But you are the one I have been waiting for, for thirty years. According to my horoscope, fixed in Tibet when I was still a novice, I was to meet this very year a young man who would know nothing, and to whom I would teach everything. I would like to take you for my pupil."

For three years Kersten studied under Dr. Ko. His art was diagnosis of the physical problem with the tips of the fingers, and then to correct problems by manipulating the nerves lying under the skin. In the fall of 1925 Ko announced that he would be leaving for his monastery, and that Kersten should take over his practice in Berlin. He took a train to La Havre, France and then sailed to Singapore, where he was never heard from again.

In 1928 Queen Wilhelmina of Holland summoned Kersten to examine her husband Prince Hendrik. Many doctors had treated him, but none were able to help him. The unusual form of massage restored the prince to health quickly. Kersten loved Holland and maintained a second home there, but he also resided in Berlin where he continued to treat patients.

In 1934 he was given a large sum of money for a healing treatment, so he bought a large farm about fifty miles from Berlin. In 1939 he received a call asking him if he would treat a very important man. The man turned out to be Heinrich Himmler, the number two man of Nazi Germany, and the head of the dreaded SS. After the treatment Himmler was completely relieved of pain and expressed his thanks.

A few months later Kersten received a visit from the industrialist who had given him the money to buy his farm. He had a foreman in his factory who he greatly respected. Himmler's secret police had imprisoned the man because he was a Social Democrat. "Would you be willing to ask for his freedom?" Several weeks later Kersten was summoned to give Himmler a treatment for his pain. Himmler wanted to pay him, but Kersten told him that he could not take money, for he only charged by the completed cure. Himmler insisted that he take something and Kersten asked for the freedom of the foreman. This was granted, though Himmler was not a person with compassion for anyone.

A few days later Himmler called Kersten into his headquarters and demanded that he give up his house in Holland. Kersten refused. Then Himmler demanded that he stop treating Jews. Kersten replied: "How am I supposed to know my patient's religion?" That provoked an angry tirade, but Kersten reminded him that he was from Finland and there was no Jewish problem there. Himmler's anger resulted in another attack of painful stomach cramps and Kersten's hands quickly relieved his pain.

World War II began and Kersten was ordered to act as Heinrich Himmler's personal doctor, although he did have some freedom to travel and treat patients. Others in the Nazi hierarchy wanted him killed, but he was protected and had access to the inner circle of Himmler's advisers.

Kersten began to have frank discussions with Rudolf Brandt, who was Himmler's aide. He proved to be a decent man among criminals, and he was ashamed of his part in the Nazi command. At this time, the German army was occupying Holland and France. There was great resistance to the German army occupation in Holland. Hitler

and Himmler were outraged that the Dutch, who were supposed to be of pure German blood, had turned against their “liberators.” The Dutch resistance killed a number of Gestapo officers. Now it was time to punish these terrible traitors.

Brandt showed Kersten a secret document in which Adolf Hitler authorized Himmler to deport all eight million Dutch people to the Lubin Province of Poland. Three million men were to march there on foot, while their wives, children and old people would be shipped from the port city of Königsberg and then sent by rail to Lublin. The 46-page report detailed the entire plan to relocate Holland to “Greater Germany.” The plan was to begin on April 20th, 1941. This was Adolf Hitler’s birthday, and the deportation of the entire country of Holland was to be his birthday present!

A week or so later Heinrich Himmler was suffering terrible stomach pains again and Kersten was summoned to treat him. As he began to work he said: “This deportation is the greatest mistake of your career.” Then he began to talk about how his health was failing and the great duties that he had been assigned. “I must warn you that I am incapable of giving you sufficient strength to carry out these two missions at once. In the name of your health, postpone the deportation until the victory. What difference will that make? Have you not assured me yourself that you will have won the war in six months?”

It was certain that the harsh Polish winters and the lack of housing would likely result in more than a million deaths. Himmler remarked: “Hitler is reckoning on the probability that the weaklings and the self-indulged will perish.” Kersten reminded him of the terrible chaos that followed the German occupation of France and how the army couldn’t move its supplies. He urged him to wait until victory was in hand.

Heinrich Himmler took this idea to Hitler, who agreed that the war came first. As soon as the war was won, the Dutch would all be shipped to eastern Poland. Then pure German citizens would colonize Holland and see that it became a respectable country again.

With the fall of France, Himmler sent his agents to buy food for the German war effort using looted francs from the French treasury. This resulted in the poorer people of France being near starvation.

Himmler's plan was to starve the French into submission. During one of his treatments Kersten discussed this: "If you continue to starve the French, the resistance will gain more members." Himmler agreed, so the plan to starve the French into submission was dropped.

In 1942 Kersten was short of farm hands on his farm at Harzwalde, Germany. He asked Heinrich Himmler to release a group of Jehovah's Witnesses that he had heard about in the concentration camps. It was through them that he learned the true story of the terrible brutality of the concentration camps. Kersten began to approach the men around Himmler in private. He found that most of them knew, and they were ashamed of their part in mass murder. But everyone said: "We must obey, otherwise we ourselves will be killed."

Himmler had a large library of religious books. Kersten asked him why there were so many books on religion. He replied that Hitler had ordered him to prepare the Bible of the new Nazi religion. After the victory of the Third Reich, the Fuhrer planned to abolish Christianity and establish a new Germanic faith. His spare time was too limited to begin preparing the new "Bible."

In 1943 Kersten found out about a plan to send all of the art treasures and rare objects in Holland to Germany. Once again, during a massage, Kersten confronted Himmler and told him that this was a sign of weakness. He reminded Himmler that instead of judging him a great man, history would regard him as a greedy art robber. The plan to steal all the valuables in Holland was dropped.

Felix Kersten was able to see a highly secret report on Adolf Hitler. During his youth he was infected with syphilis. He was apparently cured, but in 1937 the symptoms returned. Now he was suffering from progressive syphilitic paralysis. Himmler was hoping that Kersten would treat Hitler. Kersten told Himmler that he could do nothing for Hitler, and declined to treat him. Although most of the orders were issued verbally to destroy the Jews of Europe, Kersten saw a signed order asking Himmler to eliminate all Jews.

Kersten had contact with the Dutch resistance and was able to prevail on Himmler to release some of the captured men. After returning from Holland on one of his trips he told Himmler that he had many affairs with women and needed to keep in contact. Could

he have his letters delivered to Himmler's mailbox? It was the only mailbox in Europe that was safe from Himmler's dreaded SS men. The Dutch resistance began sending messages to Kersten through Himmler's mailbox. He was able to get some captured men freed by knowing that the Gestapo had captured them.

Ernst Kaltenbrunner became the chief of the Gestapo. He was a violent man who was eager to torture and kill everyone who crossed his path. He was aware that Felix Kersten was using his power of healing to prevail on Himmler to be more humanitarian. He set up an ambush at Oranienburg, Germany to kill Kersten, but word was leaked and the chauffeur took a detour. When Himmler heard about it he called in Ernst Kaltenbrunner and remarked over lunch that he would be tortured and killed if anything happened to Felix Kersten.

With the approach of the allied armies to the Netherlands, Hitler issued an order to kill every man in the city of The Hague. Brandt told Kersten about the diabolical order and Kersten prevailed on Himmler: "The great Germans of the past would not have acted like that, and you are the greatest German leader today." The strategy worked and Himmler said: "You are right about The Hague. It is, after all, a German city. I'll spare it."

When it became clear that the war was lost at the end of 1944 Kersten prevailed on Himmler to release the Scandinavian students that had been held in Germany. Himmler was under pressure from Martin Bormann to massacre all prisoners. Kersten also was able to gain immediate freedom for several thousand Jews. He made Himmler promise not to dynamite the death camps as the allied armies approached.

After the war ended Himmler shaved off his mustache and obtained an eye patch for disguise. British guards captured him at a checkpoint. He escaped the war criminal trials by crushing a hidden vial of poison between his teeth. In spite of the efforts of Felix Kersten, Rudolf Brandt was hung after the Nuremberg trials. He had simply followed the orders of Himmler in putting together the documents knowing that he would be killed if he didn't.

In 1960 Felix Kersten passed on. He wasn't well known in Europe, but his healing hands and courageous ethics had spared the lives

of two million people. His story is one of the greatest profiles in courage of World War II.

There is one last mystery to this story. Who was the mysterious Dr. Ko, who was sent to reach one man, to influence the destiny of millions of people? For a time I thought that I had unraveled the mystery, but a better translation showed me that I was wrong. I had hoped that he had left his secrets, but perhaps they could only be passed down from master to student.

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