

\*\*\* INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE, Alan Paton, Seabury, 1968. 124 pages, \$3.50.

One might not expect a devotional book from the author of Cry, the Beloved Country, but here it is. Alan Paton has taken the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, "Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace," and around it has fashioned twenty-one brief meditations that are always interesting and often moving.

Woven into the book are a number of incidents—real or legendary—from the life of St. Francis. The author also reveals some of his own life and experiences and beliefs.

Paton shows himself to be quite liberal in theology but reveals a warmhearted commitment to Christ. Long a crusader for human rights in racist South Africa, Paton has little to say about race relations in this book. The major exception is one meditation written during the riots in America in the summer of 1967. Prefacing the meditation with press reports of the riots, Paton gives a moving appeal for racial reconciliation. This chapter was reprinted recently in The Christian Century magazine.

Paton is concerned in this book primarily with the individual—that individual Christians may be able to overcome fear,

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learn to love, he made instruments of God's peace. Christianity must move forward both on the individual front and on the social front, he believes. "Some Christians," he writes, "argue that if we would only change men, then society would change of itself. That there is some truth in this, none of us doubts. But the full truth is that we must try both to change man and to change society, and that there are some changes in man that cannot be achieved without some changes in society. The front is wider than that of pure evangelism."

I highly recommend this book as a thought-starter for pastors and mature laymen.  
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