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Instrument of Thy Peace, by Alan Paton. Seabury Press, New York, N.Y. 1968. Cloth, 124 pages, \$3.50.

Devotional Books, Devotional Books! What do you think of them? This reviewer must confess that he has avoided the numerous devotional books like the plague because he has found so many to be evasive and unrealistic. It is hard to know just what to call *Instrument of Thy Peace*. It is not a book of doctrine, history, or sermons. It deals with great and small concerns; it is realistic. It is devotional in nature but not strictly a book of devotions in the common sense. Perhaps it might best be thought of as a book of lessons in Christian living.

The book is written on the petitions of the prayer of Francis of Assisi, "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace", and the prayer is of course the source of Paton's title. It isn't so

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strange to find an Anglican using a prayer from a founder of a Roman Catholic order; on the other hand some of us Lutherans may feel uncomfortable. It seems to this reviewer that as we live out our lives in this "secular age" we must take encouragement from the whole Christian community.

Paton's method is to take each petition of Francis, compare it to biblical sources, the thoughts of men of faith such as Dag Hammarskjold, John Wesley, Reinhold Niebuhr, and finally to make his own observations and prayer.

Writing about the church, Paton relates the story of Lord Orlando who was admitted to the Rule of the Third Order. "Lord Orlando continued to administer his estates as before, but with new hope and aim. Rich merchants eschewed luxury. The Third Order was the answer to many who needed guidance as to how to live in the world without conforming to the accepted pattern of things." While Paton does not state the following it is this reviewer's interpretation that he is suggesting that we as Christians need more than ever to know how to live in our secular world if we love others and want them to be instruments of God's peace. It is also my opinion that that is just what many in the church are trying to do today and with good results.

Paton says he wrote this book "for sinners, and for those who with all their hearts wish to be better, purer, less selfish; for those who do not wish to be cold in love, and who know that being cold in love is perhaps the worst sin of them all. . . ."

It is also a book for those who avoid the typical devotional book.

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