Edward Pace: 
Pioneer Psychologist, Philosopher, and Religious Educator

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In his book American Catholic Intellectuals During the Progressive Era, 1900-1920, Thomas Woods argues that many Catholic intellectuals at the beginning of the twentieth century strongly resisted the chief tenets of progressivism while adopting only minor elements of the progressive agenda. In his interpretation these intellectuals staunchly held out for absolute truths of Catholic faith against the pragmatism of the progressives. In philosophy, sociology, education, and economics the so-called progressive Catholic intellectuals maintained the purity of Catholic truths against the relativism and pluralism of the progressive spirit. They did, however, make use of those aspects of pragmatism and progressive thought that served their purposes of defending the true faith.

Prominent among the so-called Catholic progressives Woods names are Edward Pace and Thomas Shields, both educators at Catholic University. In Woods’s view, while in proposing changes in Catholic education these two men adapted some of the methods of the progressives in psychology and education, they simultaneously held out against the radical teachings of progressive educators such as John Dewey and William Kilpatrick that would be harmful to the teaching of the Catholic faith. (Other Catholic intellectuals treated in the book are the sociologist William J. Kerby and the economist John A. Ryan, both professors at Catholic University.)

Woods’s historical thesis is a clearly expressed present-day polemic. In holding up the Catholic progressives of the early part of the century he contrasts them rather unfavorably with the Catholic reformers at Vatican II. In his comparison Woods contends the latter largely
abandoned the absolutes of faith and philosophy for a relativism and pluralism that has led to widespread losses to the church and the disarray of American Catholicism. The heroes in his book are past and present-day Catholic intellectuals, together with Popes Pius IX and Pius X, who were stalwarts in defending the Catholic faith against dangerous teachings of modern culture such as liberalism, relativism, and pluralism.

While this is not the place to argue with Woods’s broader thesis and agenda, I would like to argue a contrary thesis about the early twentieth-century Catholic progressives, at least in the case of the Catholic educator, Edward Pace. He, along with his colleague Thomas Shields, began an American Catholic educational endeavor that eventually led to noteworthy changes in Catholic education and especially in Catholic religious education. Though there is little direct link between their work and the emergence of the catechetical movement in Roman Catholicism in the 1960s, they began the trend of taking secular developments in science, psychology, and education so seriously that future scholars, beginning at Catholic University and later extending to other universities, introduced considerable changes in the theory and practice of Catholic education. It is no accident that the department of Religious Education at Catholic University, under the leadership of Gerard Sloyan, Berard Marthaler, and Mary Charles Bryce and their many graduates, most especially Gabriel Moran and Michael Warren, were highly influential in the Catholic educational renaissance in the 1960s and 1970s. It is Bryce’s view that while European scholars in the 1950s on “gave the movement a vocabulary, new insights, a kind of cohesion and an element of fresh excitement, they were able to do so because of the foundations laid” (1978, S-57) by men like Pace, Shields, and others.

One needs to recall the situation in Catholicism around the turn of the century to put in perspective the world of Pace and other Catholic intellectuals. The Syllabus of Errors of Pius IX issued in 1864 condemned all elements of modern liberal and progressive thought. Furthermore, American Catholics in the papal condemnation of Americanism by Pius X in 1899 were charged with an exaggerated adaptation of the Catholic faith to American culture. Pius X’s 1907 encyclical against modernism led to some outstanding intellectuals leaving the church and the suppression of serious intellectual work by many Catholic scholars (McCool, 1989; Appleby, 2004).
It should be noted that in the early years of Catholic University a number of its professors were perceived by some Catholics as dangerous liberals and even materialists. Pace was almost barred from speaking in Green Bay, Wisconsin, by Bishop Sebastian Messmer. The bishop wrote to him that he would allow him to speak “only on the clear understanding that you will not treat or bring up any matter or questions in connection with your subject that might give rise to dispute and unpleasant objections. We cannot allow any opinion or theory on our platform of the C.C.S.S. [Columbia Catholic Summer School] which would not be in full harmony with the commonly accepted Catholic Science” (Messmer, 1896). Pace was also one of the three professors at Catholic University whom the Apostolic Delegate Cardinal Satolli was said to have recommended to be dismissed for their progressive and liberal views (McAvoy 1957, 143).

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the contribution made by Edward Pace to the development of Catholic education, especially as it relates to the teaching of religion in schools. It is my contention that he was in many ways a progressive educator and helped to pave the way for the catechetical renewal of the 1960s.

This chapter describes and evaluates Edward Pace’s contribution to religious education utilizing his many articles and talks found in such journals as the Catholic Educational Review, The Catholic World, and the Catholic University Bulletin. One of the main thrusts of Pace’s academic work was to bring the findings of psychology to the field of religious education. Pace was also a strong advocate for the inclusion of religion in the public school curriculum, which he made clear in an address to the National Council of the National Education Association in 1903. In this address he observed that “the child comes very quickly to look on the school as the place in which everything is taught that is worth knowing. The absence of religious instruction has for one of its effects ignorance of certain important truths” (Ryan 1932, 7).

Biographical Sketch

Edward Pace was born in Starke, Florida, in 1861. He received his early education at public schools in Starke and nearby Jacksonville. After studying for the priesthood at St. Charles College, Elliot City, Maryland, and at the North American College in Rome, Pace was
ordained to the priesthood in 1885, receiving a doctorate in theology in 1886. For two years he served as a pastor in Florida and then returned to Europe at the request of Cardinal Gibbons and Bishop Keane, the rector of Catholic University of America (CUA), to take on a teaching position at the newly established institution in Washington, D.C. Pace studied biology and psychology at the University of Louvain, the Sorbonne in Paris, and the University of Leipzig, where in 1891 he received a Doctor of Philosophy degree in experimental psychology, studying under the renowned psychologist Wilhelm Wundt. Pace was the first Catholic priest and third American to study under this pioneer German psychologist. His competence in psychology is attested by the fact that in 1892 he was one of the first five men elected to membership by the charter members and founders of the American Psychological Association. Later, Pace was one of the founders of the American Philosophical Association (Braun 1969, 4-5).

Pace became professor of psychology at Catholic University in 1891 and remained there until his retirement in 1935. Among the first American priests on the faculty, he joined a distinguished group of European scholars (Neusse 1990, 92, 93). A professor of psychology from 1891 and of philosophy from 1893 until 1935, he held over the years many administrative positions at the University: dean of the School of Philosophy, director of studies, general secretary, and vice rector for eleven years. In his position as vice-rector, Pace was deeply involved in the academic administration of the university. As dean of philosophy, he argued for the expansion of the curriculum to include all branches of learning, including the natural sciences, pointing out that

The lack of instruction in Biology is a serious drawback to the investigation of fundamental problems in Philosophy, and without a department of History the efficiency both of the Divinity School and the School of Social Sciences is seriously impaired. (Pace 1896-97, 32)

Pace’s first three years at the university were dedicated to teaching courses in psychology and establishing a laboratory for psychological experiments (Murray 1979). Sexton’s (1980) study highlighted the significance of this laboratory:
This department became the model for most of the early departments of psychology at Catholic colleges and universities as well as the training center of many teachers who staffed the new departments at these Catholic colleges and universities. From Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, the experimental psychology of Wundt radiated to Catholic circles throughout the United States. (47)

While some of Pace's early articles are reports of experimental work in the laboratory, most of his articles from this period were a defense of experimental psychology as a discipline at a Catholic university. Many religious persons viewed experimental psychology as necessarily committed to a philosophy of materialism that rejected spiritual realities. Pace argued, however, that religious believers could employ the methods of experimental psychology without committing themselves to an atheistic or agnostic philosophy. Through membership in psychological associations, acting as editor of several psychological journals, and developing the department of psychology at Catholic University, Pace paved the way for establishing among Catholics throughout the world the legitimacy for the study of psychology (Gillespie 2001, 32-36).

An active scholar in many fields, Pace helped to establish several academic journals: the Catholic University Bulletin, the Catholic Educational Review, New Scholasticism, as well as Studies in Psychology and Psychological Monographs. He was president of the American Council of Education in 1924, where he was instrumental in establishing academic standards for schools and colleges, including Catholic schools (Gleason 1995, 70, 72). Pace also worked with the Catholic Education Association, later the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), and the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC). Furthermore, as the first president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association (ACPA), he addressed its initial meeting to welcome “a new era in the Catholic life of our country” (Gleason 1995, 136).

From the very beginning of his academic career Pace took an active interest in education. With Shields he was a co-founder of Trinity College and deeply involved in the Catholic Sisters College at Catholic University. In many of his activities he worked with Shields, professor
of psychology and education at the same university. Shields’s biographer described the differences between the two men: “Temperamentally, the two men were at opposite poles. Pace, though intelligent and thorough, was slow, ingrowing, plodding, as diffident in action, as hesitant in decision as Shields was rapid” (Ward 1947, 111). Pace was instrumental in bringing Shields to the university and in helping him establish a Department of Education (Ward, 120). With Shields he wrote religion textbooks for children, with Shields doing most of the work, according to Ward. Though their relationship became strained (Ward 1947, 136, 164, 165), they worked together in establishing the Sisters College at CUA, since both thought that Catholic school teachers should be taught in a Catholic Normal school (Ward 1947, 186-87).

Pace was a leader in the effort to educate teachers for Catholic schools. With Shields he lobbied the board of CUA for a department of education. Before this he helped in establishing the Institute for Pedagogy in New York City, which began in 1902 but ended in 1904 when Pace was not able to find in the city adequate instructors for the institute. In 1907 the board of CUA gave approval for a department of education, which was headed by Shields until his death in 1921 (Nuesse 1989, 130).

Pace’s corpus of writings comprises four areas: psychology, philosophy, theology, and education. Trained in experimental psychology, he published numerous articles in scientific journals. His philosophical contributions won him the reputation as one of the leading Thomistic philosophers of his time.

Pace made a significant contribution to the education of American Catholics by his work on the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. This was a major undertaking for the group of scholars of which Pace was a prominent leader. Fifteen hundred scholars were involved in this enterprise to present church teachings and history in a highly accessible manner. Articles were translated from languages other than English. Pace translated many articles on philosophy and theology. Pace’s articles were on a wide range of subjects. Besides the lengthy article on education, to be discussed later in this chapter, he wrote on Absolutism, Quietism, Spiritism, and Pantheism. He authored articles on many philosophical figures and was responsible for theological articles on Dulia, Beatific Vision, and Ex Cathedra (Ryan 1932, 3, 4).

After briefly reviewing his work in psychology and philosophy, this chapter will focus mainly the educational writings of Edward Pace. In
the view of a prominent scholar of his day, Pace was “a consistent and authoritative spokesman for Catholic education. He has spoken and written on such diverse aspects of our educational problems as: Religion and Education, The Seminary and the Educational Problem, The Present State of Education, The Place of the University in National Life, American Ideals and Catholic Education” (Ryan, 1932, 5).

Pace was regarded as an outstanding classroom teacher and doctoral mentor. Many of his students went on to teach psychology or philosophy in Catholic colleges and universities. Leo Ward, a philosopher at Notre Dame University, recounted Pace’s influence on him. After finishing his studies at Catholic University, Ward had difficulty choosing a topic for his dissertation. He recalls that Pace told him to read through philosophical journals and make a list of ten top topics. Ward returned to report that the issue of values was at the top of the list. He speaks of Pace in this manner:

He [Pace] was generous with his time and talents and did me immeasurable good. . . . Dr. Pace, though worn out with the year’s work, said to come and we would look the dissertation over. Each hot, D.C. morning when I went to his study he had a chapter on his lap. “This chapter, I was going over it again last night. Exactly what did you mean to say in the first two pages?” I had to speak my piece. “Now let’s see if you said it. So far, but I was wondering here: is this exactly what you mean?” He rarely pushed me to say what he wanted said. (Ward n.d., 1)

Ward summarized the things that he learned from Pace: learn to say what you mean; get students to find out for themselves both the questions and the answers, so far as this can be done; let students enjoy a wide and ample freedom in philosophy; be patient. *Nova et vetera*: This was a favorite Dr. Pace aphorism, the old truth and the new full of life (Ward n.d., 2).

**Defense of Science: Experimental Psychology**

Pace began his work at Catholic University defending experimental science, which was greatly indebted to philosophical pragmatism. One of the chief tenets of progressivism and pragmatism was a commitment to the scientific and experimental method. The use
of this method in the natural sciences carried over into psychology and the social sciences. Many religious persons were threatened by this new approach to gaining knowledge. Darwin’s theory of evolution triggered a negative reaction by many theologians and church leaders who considered the findings of the theory in contradiction to long-held religious truths about the creation of the world and especially of humans. At the turn of the nineteenth century the new sciences of psychology and sociology engendered widespread distrust because of their perceived commitment to materialist and determinist worldviews.

At this time experimental psychology was especially suspect in the eyes of the Catholic Church. A number of adherents of the new psychology, notably the former priest Franz Brentano, had left the church. Experimental psychology seemed to go counter to the accepted rational psychology of Thomas Aquinas and his neo-scholastic followers. The new psychology also seemed to deny the existence of a spiritual soul. The implied materialism and acceptance of evolution by the new psychology appeared contrary to accepted teachings of the Catholic Church (Misiak and Staudt 1954; Ross, 1994). The suspicion about experimental psychology found expression in an article by the Jesuit historian Thomas Hughes, who argued that the soul could not be subjected to experimental testing:

If those authorities mean by their psychometry to measure physical motion or vibration in the nerves we wish them well. But, if they or any one else shall pretend to measure physiological functions, as though sensation consisted of motions running up to the brain and down again, we beg to submit that the notion is a philosophical absurdity. And if they really mean to subject psychological activity to laboratory investigation, as though the soul could in any way be measured or weighed, we do not scruple to call the whole enterprise a theological impiety. (1894, 790)

One of Pace’s first intellectual tasks upon returning to Catholic University after completing a doctorate in experimental science was to defend this new discipline from attacks by Catholic theologians and philosophers. In various articles he defended the new discipline, contending that there was no logical connection between experimental
psychology and materialism, even though some psychologists were in fact materialists. In his view experimental psychology was not committed to any system of philosophy but is neutral in its theoretical assumptions. Pace also justified the use of psychometrics to understand human behavior, contending that such phenomena as sensation and perception lend themselves to statistical examination.

Pace answered the main charge against the new psychology, that it entailed the denial of existence of a spiritual soul. He rejected this conclusion by arguing that the existence of the soul is a metaphysical and not an experimental or scientific issue. Pace, however, stressed the importance of introspection for gathering psychological data all the while maintaining that even this method of gaining knowledge did not lead directly to truths beyond the physical.

Pace recognized that in his time there was hostility between scientists and philosophers. As one trained in both disciplines he tried valiantly to combat the prejudices and to point out the value of each discipline for the other. It was his view that the data supplied by psychologists could be valuable for the philosopher and theologian. It provided findings about which both philosophers and theologians could speculate. According to Pace, psychology provided data for addressing major philosophical problems:

There are sizable philosophical problems concerning man; what precisely is his nature, what are the reasons for his acting in such a manner, how culpable is he for a particular action, and so forth. The discoveries of experimental psychology offer not only an aid to the solution of these problems but also provide indispensable knowledge for a better philosophical understanding of man. The more we know about the operations of man, the better we are prepared to speculate about his nature. (1906, 542)

Pace asserted that “no one today can pretend to an apprenticeship—to say nothing of a mastery—in philosophy, who has neglected his scientific training” (Pace 1898, 349). He also insisted that philosophy has much to offer science by providing indispensable ideas and concepts, including the important principle of causality. For him the findings of psychology cannot be in opposition to those of philosophy and theology. In fact,
psychology fostered a better understanding of human nature, especially human freedom and personality. For Pace, psychology supported the scholastic axiom that all knowledge begins in the senses. He included in his work this strong suggestion to his fellow Catholics:

Either get hold of this instrument and use it for proper purposes, or leave it to the materialists and after they have heaped up facts, established laws and forced their conclusions upon psychology, go about tardily to unravel, with clumsy fingers, this tangle of error. (1894, 535)

Though Pace was not a modernist in the theological sense of the word, his scientific training led him to wonder why for religious people being “modern” was considered synonymous with being “evil” (1895b, 8). Negative attitudes towards science in the academic world were not restricted to religious institutions but permeated many liberal arts faculties that viewed themselves as preservers of ancient traditions which they felt the new natural and social sciences threatened (Rudolph 1962, 411, 413).

Pace’s defense of the scientific method as a legitimate but limited method of attaining knowledge stressed the inductive methods of science in contrast to the deductive methods of the philosophies and theologies of his time. He made clear that the realm of ethical, moral, and religious values lies beyond the reach of the scientific method. Science deals with what can be observed, measured, and quantified and “leaves untouched those deeper problems which can be approached only by metaphysical reasoning” (Pace 1895a, 148). Throughout his scientific work Pace always recognized the important role that philosophy held with regard to the new field of psychology (Gillespie 2001, 35). Additionally, he recognized the value of psychology and its potential for growth:

Further results will doubtless prove that the experimental study of mind may be turned, indirectly, at least to the profit of all the sciences, and that whatever psychology allows them may, in time, be amply repaid. In rendering this practical service, based upon exact and painstaking research, the new
psychology not only helps us to know the mind but also helps the mind to know. In both respects it has progressed, in neither can it be blamed for being modern. (Pace 1894, 544)

While Pace made important contributions to the acceptance of psychology among Catholics, he did not remain in the field of psychology. In 1894 he was named professor and dean of the school of philosophy, which at first included psychology until the latter was given its own department. Pace, however, continued to foster the field of psychology through his doctoral students, mainly Father Thomas Verner Moore, who led the department for twenty-five years and contributed a number of important books to the field of psychology. As an administrator Pace made sure that psychology remained an important part of the curriculum. His interest in psychology continued to the last decade of his life, when he edited Studies in Psychology and Psychiatry and the Psychological Monographs of the Catholic University (Hart, 1932, 3).

Pace the Scholastic Philosopher

Pace started to teach philosophy in 1894 and continued to do so until his retirement. Publishing extensively in this field of study he was considered one of the leading figures in the neo-scholastic movement in the United States. He was judged by his colleagues as “having done more than any living exponent of Thomism to bring before the American university world the strong points of medieval Scholasticism” (Ryan 1932, 2). As a student in Rome he had shone in a disputation in the presence of Leo XIII, who led the Thomistic revival. In 1925 he was elected the first president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. Pace’s work has been characterized as the principal impetus to an open and progressive form of Neo-Scholasticism at the Catholic University which contended “that Thomism could meet modern problems only if it was in touch with the findings of natural science” (Gleason 1995, 110-11). In Gleason’s view, Pace was both progressive and liberal, not a usual alignment among Catholic philosophers at this time (111).

In his work on the undergraduate curriculum, Pace directed students to study all branches of philosophy as well as take courses in the sciences. Philosophy for him meant dealing with “the principal problems of the day, such as: the idea of God, the meaning of life, the building of character, evolution, agnosticism, and so on (Pace, n.d., 1-12).
For Pace as for other Catholic educators of his time, philosophy was the main unifying discipline in undergraduate education, since it dealt with the basic principles of reality that were studied through other disciplines, including the natural and psychological sciences. Philosophy provided the tools by which students were able to think critically about what they learned in other disciplines. In his view, scholastic philosophy could determine the true or false assumptions found in other disciplines. It also could counter the agnosticism that might be engendered by the sciences. Scientist that he was, Pace insisted that science be taught properly, especially when it came to evolution, concerning which he thought science could safeguard the distinctive nature of the human and human freedom as well as avoid the pitfalls of materialistic determinism. An additional advantage of philosophy was that it could aid students to understand divine revelation and thus “obtain a deeper insight into the divine teaching” (Pace 1911c, 590).

Pace judged philosophy to be an extremely important subject in the college curriculum, since it provided students with the wisdom of the past as well as developed their ability to think and criticize. He pondered whether logic should come first or after other subjects to which logic might be applied. For him a major value of philosophy was its ability to provide students with a perspective in which they “shall see the relations that bind in one whole the facts of science, of history, of economic and social life, along with the products of literature and art–and see them from the viewpoint of philosophic principle” (Pace 1913b, 111). As expected, Pace gave attention to the method of instruction, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of lecture, recitation, disputations, single textbook or series of readings. For him teachers of philosophy should have knowledge of history and the physical sciences as well as the science and art of education.

Pace’s contribution to scholastic philosophy was highlighted in a festschrift presented in his honor on the occasion of his seventieth birthday (Hart 1932). Written by colleagues and former students, the collection was a testament to his status as one of the outstanding interpreters of Thomistic philosophy in his day. In many articles he addressed such issues as teleology, order, arguments for immortality, application of Thomas to modern thought, and the soul. Paced related Thomistic philosophy to the issues raised by philosophers who wrote
after Thomas as well as to issues raised by contemporary philosophers. Of course issues in philosophy of religion such as the nature and actions of God received extensive attention from him (Pace 1899; 1900; 1928).

One example of Pace’s effort to apply scholastic philosophy to modern philosophical issues were his arguments for human freedom, which he directed against the behaviorist school of psychology, a dominant theory in his time. In an article in *New Scholasticism* (1936), Pace argued against the view that behavior is determined, doing so by pointing out the weaknesses in the behaviorist position: their failure to account for ethical values in society and people’s consciousness of the possession of human freedom. One of his chief arguments against behaviorism was the sense of responsibility that people possess. He contended that,

> A moment’s reflection will lead those of us who have learned the lesson to acknowledge or rather to emphasize that life, so far as it has meaning or value, means responsibility and is of worth according to the measure in which that responsibility is realized, borne and discharged. For him who would live, there is no option in this matter. Society is there where he comes upon the scene; and to be a member of society in any worthy sense is to be responsible. (1927, 515)

**Pace the Educator**

When it comes to educational writings, there appears to be two Paces. There is the dogmatic Pace, the author of the article on “Education” for *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, published in 1903. There is also the rather progressive or liberal Pace who wrote on education in 1915 for the ecumenical Christian publication, *The Constructive Quarterly* and other periodicals. The Pace of the *Catholic Encyclopedia* takes the stance of the expositor of church teachings. The latter Pace enunciates many of the tenets of progressive education that dealt with issues relating to the teaching and administration of schools. This section will treat his theory of education, teaching religion in Catholic schools, and teaching religion in public schools.

In the *Catholic Encyclopedia* article, Pace gave an outline of the Catholic position on education at the end of what is a rather
comprehensive statement on the history of education among the ancients and the history Christian education. Pace defined education in the general sense as “that form of social activity whereby, under the direction of mature minds and by the use of adequate means, the physical, intellectual, and moral powers of the immature human being are so developed as to prepare him for the accomplishment of his lifework here and for the attainment of his eternal destiny” (1913a, 1-2). The constants in education include human nature and destiny as well as relationship to God. The variables are all the changes in the theory and conduct of education thorough various agencies including the home, school, and churches.

In Pace’s perspective, the education that took place in the East among the Greeks, Romans, and Jews prepared the way for the high point in education that was realized in Christianity. In turn, Christianity offered new knowledge and principles of action as well as effective means for realizing these. Jesus was the teacher *par excellence* both in what he taught and in how he taught. His teachings have universal and perpetual significance, hold out the highest ideals of human personality and perfection, raise the dignity of women, and present truths through a revelation not available to reason alone (Pace 1913a, 11-14).

Almost half of the article on education is devoted to the educational mission of the Catholic Church, the organization to which Jesus committed the task of carrying on his work through the teaching of doctrine and training persons how to live. This mission was initiated through preparation of persons for baptism and the defense of the church. The church advanced its educational mission through the celebrations of the liturgical year and the establishment of schools attached to monasteries and eventually in universities, seminaries, and parish schools. The style of Pace’s writing is standard for the time in which the article was written. The efforts of other Christian churches receive a negative assessment for their efforts in carrying out the work of Christ in the modern period. Pace does mention the recognition that non-Catholics gave to the need for moral and religious education in the establishment of the Religious Education Association in 1903.

Pace boldly outlined what he considered to be the Catholic position on education. First, intellectual education should be connected with moral and religious education. Attention to the
intellectual without attention to moral and religious is dangerous for the individual and society. Second, religion should be an essential part of education, the center around which all subjects are taught. The failure to do this leads to an incomplete education in school and lessens the importance of religion in the mind of students. Third, sound moral instruction must be connected with religious education. Religion provides the best motives for good conduct, being not merely doctrinal instruction but also practical training of the will through religious practices. Fourth, such an integrated education strengthens the home and family and prepares students for civic duties. Thus, the welfare of the state benefits in having members who respect its laws through the practice of virtue. Fifth, advances in educational method increase the need for such an education. The church welcomes advances in the sciences that make the work of the school more efficient. Sixth, Catholic parents are obligated to provide for the education of children either at home or in schools. They should do this through their example and through direct instruction (Pace 1913a, 20-23).

On the other hand, Pace’s many articles on education in educational journals present a less dogmatic view of education. He had a number of overriding purposes in his enormous output of articles on education. Always the teacher, he wanted to find ways to help students learn. He did this by appealing largely to the psychological theories and research he knew so well. Furthermore, as an administrator, he advocated flexibility in the curriculum, including openness to new advances in knowledge, which were considerable in his time. As a philosopher and theologian, Pace was concerned with combating what he perceived to be erroneous views emanating from the philosophical systems of naturalism, pragmatism, and positivism—that were in his day influencing educational theory and practice. In many articles he opposed their rejection of a transcendent God and ultimate values as well as exclusive dependence on the empirical method as the only sure way to arrive at truth (Baum 1969, 90).

Theory of Education

As one would expect, Pace’s theory of education is based on his Thomistic philosophical orientation. As early as 1902 he was critical of the materialistic and highly mechanical view of education that had gripped some educationists who depended on many aspects of the new
psychology. He stressed that education is fundamentally a spiritualistic enterprise whose essence is self-activity and freedom. Drawing on Thomas Aquinas’ *De Magistro* (1256-58), he proposed a theory of education that was a *via media* between education as the implanting of knowledge from external sources and education as dependent upon innate knowledge in the mind. This approach balanced “internal activity, whether physical and moral, and changes that are brought about by environment” (Pace 1902, 293). From an initial endowment of “qualities, active and passive, from which production and action originate,” individuals learn from experiencing the environment through the direction of teachers. Education is compared to the development and growth of seeds which contain in a potential manner particular items of knowledge. Reminiscent of Augustine’s theory of *rationes seminales*, Pace explains how these seeds develop through self activity directed by God and the human teacher.

Pace followed Thomas Aquinas in giving both human experience and the teacher important roles in education. Teachers are significant because they possess the instructional knowledge in an explicit and perfect manner. The teacher’s task is to lead students along well-marked paths. What students possess innately has to be drawn out or activated by a teacher. He utilizes the Thomist comparison between teacher and physician by pointing out that both do their work by helping and serving. The teacher

supplies the mind with assistance it needs and the means it requires for its orderly and healthy action. Mere instruction avails about as much as the dose, however powerful, which is given to a depleted system. In neither case is there any vital response. (1902, 297)

For Pace, the role of teachers is to lead students through the same stages of reasoning and learning that they themselves passed through, with the result that that student’s learning would be similar to that which the teacher possesses, to be acquired however with the student taking the principal role in the process.

Pace’s description of human learning, based on St. Thomas, is similar to that espoused by John Dewey and later by Jean Piaget. It is in opposition to the behaviorist theory that explains human learning as
responses to external stimuli as well as to the innate learning theories of romantic educational philosophers like Jean Jacques Rousseau who describe education as simply drawing out what already exists potentially in the learner. Pace drew attention to such psychological functions as sense, imagination, memory, and attention. Following Thomas again, he stressed that in a very real sense the teacher cooperates with God in the educational process. Teaching is no less than cooperation in a divine work (1902, 302-03).

The Teaching of Religion

Ever interested in the teaching of religion in the schools, Pace began to carve out his own distinctive approach at the 1907 meeting of the Catholic Educational Association in Milwaukee. In his summary of a number of talks given by members, he emphasized that their attention should be given not only to the content of teaching or the personality of the teacher but also to the method by which teachers taught. Method for him meant the accommodation of teaching to the growing mind of the child. He urged the members of the association to devote more attention to methods of instruction. At a meeting of the association the following year in Cincinnati, Pace defended the religion series which he and Thomas Shields, his colleague at Catholic University, wrote by pointing out that the texts made use of the teaching methods of Jesus and the Church in its liturgy. Some members of the association objected to the fact that the books did not stress memorization of answers from the catechism (Ward 1947, 137, 143, 144).

In the first issue of the Catholic Educational Review (1911a), which he edited with Thomas Shields, Pace contributed an essay on the papacy and education in which he neither mentioned a particular pope nor quoted a papal document. Rather he described the Church under papal leadership as a teaching and educational institution whose task is to teach a definite body of religious truths designed to achieve practical effects. He also explained how the church has always followed the best principles of applied psychology. In reality, the teaching of religion makes use of the same methods that are employed in other subjects. Pace rejected the opinion held by some:
That religion must be kept apart from the teaching of other subjects on the ground that its methods are incompatible with those that are employed in the “regular” work of the school; and it is worth while inquiring whether the Church in her long experience has not made use of methods that are free from any such objection. (3)

For Pace, education was a process of adjusting the mind to objective truth or reality, which is actually the scholastic explanation of knowledge. He stressed that religion is not merely a subjective attitude, since the full life of faith demands works and the spirit of obedience to laws. It was Pace's view that the Catholic school aims at the training of the will no less than cultivating the intelligence. Pace, however, rejected the idea that religion is all of life and consists only in doing: “Religion accordingly includes more than an attitude or a creed or a group of feelings; it means the observance of law” (5). In his view while belief in a body of truths is essential, religion also needs the concreteness that the liturgy and ritual gives it. One sound psychological principle that the church advocates is the need for imitation “which should be emphasized rather than reduced to a mere recital of deeds” (8). The highest ideal is to follow the moral teachings of Jesus.

In the first volume of Catholic Educational Review Pace also contributed two articles on the educational value of the liturgy. It was his contention that “the Church has shown a profound insight into the needs of human beings and anticipated in her practice the formulation of some important psychological laws which are now generally accepted” (1911b, 239). These principles include an appeal to the senses and imagination, adaptation to the developing mind, and the value of imitation. In these articles Pace anticipated some of the insights of later psychologists about children’s development from a concrete stage to a critical and abstract stage as well as how the teaching of religion can be adjusted to these changes. He also recommended what has come to be called the spiral curriculum, according to which in educating the child “at each stage of development a new presentation of the same truths should enable him to find that meaning ever richer and deeper” (1911b, 243). In adapting teaching about the liturgy to the developing mind, Pace warned against two extremes: not to give “the complete explanation of liturgical practice . . . at the outset, nor
should that explanation be reserved until the pupil is able to seize its full historical and theological import” (242). He recommended that teachers should give children some idea of what the liturgy is about and then increase their knowledge as children develop.

In an address to the Catholic Educational Association (1911d), Pace criticized the reformulation of religion as a general subject area in the curriculum. He seemed to be countering the liberal Protestant view of religion and the ideas of the prominent educator William T. Harris, whom he does not name. Pace contended that “education must be religious and religion must be educational” (770). In this article religion clearly refers to the Catholic Religion, the religion of revelation. Pace also criticized the view of natural morality and proposed the morality prescribed in divine revelation. He stressed the relationship with God as the basis of all religion and morality. He also contended that if religion is understood in the general sense, then he “does not stand for that kind of religious education nor any alliance between the school and religion or between the Church and the school” (776). This is a position which he softened in a later article.

In a noteworthy article in the Constructive Quarterly, Pace made the case, which few Catholics of his time were doing, for the teaching of religion in the public schools. For Pace, the construction of a better society entails extensive attention to the teaching of religion in the schools. Education is valuable for making Christian unity permanent and also for the transmission of the spiritual inheritance of Christianity. Pace takes it for granted that there will be courses in religion at colleges and universities. But he also calls for “a primer of religion” to be prepared “in strictly scientific form and adopted as the final enrichment of the curriculum. It would do no more harm, certainly, than Aesop or Homer” (Pace 1915, 588). Pace also gives a reason for including psychology in the curriculum, arguing that for religion to exert any influence on conduct it must be correlated with other subjects, lifted up into the mental structure, and properly assimilated.

Pace recognized that the religion to be taught in public schools must be more than merely knowing the things that are to be believed or holding fast to articles of faith. His description of religion in this article approximates what liberal Protestant religious educators were proposing in the pages of Religious Education:
Religion is a life, not merely an assent to set forms of belief; but it is a human life and it therefore involves man’s entire being. It needs the guidance of the intellect and the effort of the will. It does not spend itself in feelings nor does it seek to strangle the emotions, but to purify them and make them allies of the reasoning powers. Its center is within the soul, but it radiates through word and work, through the outward forms of worship and the fulfillment of the duties that are owed to God, the fellowman, society and country. (1915, 590)

After this description of religion, Pace goes on to describe religious education as

The imparting of religious truth, but it is something more: it is a training of sense and feeling and will to such purpose that action in conformity with the Divine Law will result. Of necessity it is at once intellectual and moral, ideal and practical. Its truths are sacred and for them it demands reverence; but their sanctity permeates all other knowledge and their value is great in proportion as they quicken everyday thought and deed, the commonplace of existence. (590-91)

Pace does not think that the weekly instruction in Sunday school is enough to provide the kind of religious education children need, though it is “an indispensable adjunct of the church and a necessary supplement to the instruction given in the everyday school” (591). Not all Catholic educators were as positive about the Sunday school movement. Perhaps it was his own public school education in Florida that influenced his thinking on this matter. Pace’s problem with the Sunday school was its isolation from the rest of schooling. He was insistent that religion be taught in conjunction or in correlation with other school subjects.

Pace identified method as the central question when it comes to the teaching of religion. Teachers of religion should have the same degree of preparation as teachers of other subjects. He decried the fact that improvements in methods of teaching had not sufficiently influenced the teaching of religion. Pace identified a vicious circle:
“Religion is kept away from general education; it is not taught by proper methods; it fails of its promise to form upright men and women; therefore, it is a superfluous sort of knowledge for which the school has neither time nor place” (593). The proper methods for teaching religion and other subjects come from a psychological study of the mind and its development.

Like Thomas Shields, whose work is treated in the next chapter, Pace contended that the principles of method of modern education are essentially the teaching methods that Jesus employed and that are used in the liturgy of the churches. Jesus was a great teacher not only because of what he taught but also because of how he taught. He drew from the common experiences of his listeners. His use of parables manifested profound psychological and educational principles, for example “the law of association, which serves both to get the doctrine assimilated and to secure its recall whenever the scene of the parable and its homely items recur in later experiences” (596).

The value of method in education was a recurring theme in his educational writings. In an early article (1910), Pace connected method in education with the truths of psychology and philosophy. Taking issue with the philosophy of materialism, which Pace often did in his educational articles, he stressed that education progresses by developing the mental capacities of the mind and soul. Teachers need to know about the mental life and the processes through which teachers can come to grasp the ends and means of education. Proper training enables a teacher to know not only that a method is good but also why it is good. A principle of method that he recommended was apperception—connecting what is now being learned with what is already known, which can best be accomplished through the process of self-activity. Pace was insistent that proper method entailed that education be adapted to each of the stages of development through which learners pass, a knowledge of which is essential for the educator. Pace concluded this article by pointing out the importance of the teacher’s philosophy of education:

The teacher is not called on to philosophize at every step, or to have a dictionary of philosophical terms constantly open on his desk. None the less, education is the working out in practice of some one’s ideals, and therefore of some one’s philosophy. It lies within the teacher to decide whether he shall serve as an
instrument for the application of principles which, perhaps, he could not accept—or, by shifting the true from the false, become the master of his method and the owner of himself. (1910, 825)

Pace offered an illustration of the progressive principle of learning-by-doing in liturgical rituals where participants are influenced more by actions and things than words. Jesus and his followers stressed that doing the word was equally as important as preaching and teaching the word. The liturgy also appeals to the dramatic and imitative instinct which is a feature of children.

Pace also focused on moral education, recognizing the growing call for some sort of moral training in the public schools. While he contended that moral training is best done on a religious basis, in contrast to many Catholic educators, he accepted the value of a broad moral education not connected to religion. For him religion has a place not only in individual conduct but also in the life of society.

For Pace, the mission of the school was “to shape the development of the individual with a view both to his personal growth in virtue and to the discharge of his social obligation . . . to retain what is of value in individualism and yet avoid its narrowness by emphasizing the social element” (1915, 601). In words reminiscent of John Dewey, Pace contended that the progressives’ stress on the social importance of the school was a hopeful symptom and a guide for constructive effort in society. He ended this essay on the optimistic note that

Education is returning to the deepest of all the questions that concern human life and destiny; and it only remains to be seen whether with our advance in knowledge and our psychological research we have gained a deeper insight into man’s spiritual needs or a more thorough understanding of his social relations than was shown by Christ and the Church which he founded. (1915, 602)

University Education

Pace spent his entire career at Catholic University, which was during those years the only Catholic University in the country, modeled after the Catholic University in Louvain, Belgium. The
university had its origins in the initiative of Pope Leo XIII, who made it a pontifical university, under the authority of the Vatican. On a number of occasions He addressed the unique role that Catholic University was expected to play in the work of Catholic education in the United States. As the only graduate school under Catholic auspices, the university was designed “to be the center and source of vitality for all our institutions” (Pace 1912b, 107). Pace viewed the structure of Catholic education as a pyramid, with Catholic University at the top, coordinating and completing all the other educational institutions established in parishes and dioceses.

For Pace, the task of Catholic education in the broad sense was the “union of culture with religion and moral training.” Students would pass from parochial school through high school and college to the university. The same doctrines were to be taught at every level, beginning with simple statements and then moving to language increasingly more technical and complex (Pace 1912b, 108). The importance of the university in this vision is that it develops the knowledge that will find its way into the colleges and schools. Thus all other Catholic educational institutions were to be affiliated with Catholic University, which was viewed as the center and source of vitality for all Catholic educational institutions.

Pace had a special interest in the university’s work in preparing teachers for Catholic schools. For him, real progress in Catholic schools would take place only if teachers were properly prepared, preferably in a Catholic institution. Pace outlined what the Catholic University was to do in this regard in an article on “The University: Its Growth and its Needs” (Pace 1912c, 352-58). He deplored the situation where many received graduate degrees without “even an elementary course in the principles and methods of educationûas though the possession of knowledge in any department gave assurance that the possessor could impart it to good effect” (357).

**Seminary Education**

Given that so many priests were in his classes at Catholic University and that priests were increasingly important in the sphere of Catholic education, Pace gave special attention to seminary education. In an article “The Seminary and the Educational Problem” (1911c),
Pace presented a rather full exposition of his views on education. He argued that seminaries should take account of modern education, which includes new theories, methods, and ideas. Continued vitality in seminary education entailed adjustment to new developments. Pace pointed out that much could be learned from modern education about how to improve education. Education for him was the “development of intellectual and volitional power or the training of the mind or the imparting and acquiring of culture” (580). For Pace, those persons are educated who have acquired a certain amount of knowledge, the ability to think, and the power to express thought through at least the essential means, such as the languages to pursue studies of a higher sort. While he exhibited some dissatisfaction with the current vocational educational movement, Pace noted some value in the elective system in colleges.

Pace described modern education as a certain way of looking at things, perceiving their relationships, connecting new ideas with old, stimulating and sustaining interest, translating thought into action, and consolidating action into habit. Education was a particular way of working or functioning that characterizes the mind’s development and makes other modes of thinking either difficult or impossible. It was not so much a content that has been acquired as a form into which all later acquisition is cast. Education entailed not primarily a settled and definite store of information but rather a power to grasp and put to use such knowledge as later experience may offer. Though Pace was not totally convinced by this rather Deweyan view on education, he advised seminary educators to be aware that students in schools, including Catholic schools, were being taught in this way. Thus in teaching religion, educators should adapt to these modes of thought by shaping their message to the needs of students. He described Jesus’ teaching method as one of adaptation to the needs and modes of people. He believed that teaching religion demands using the same methods that are used in other subjects.

Pace offered the view that those priests being trained to be superintendents of schools should know all about modern education for the sake of the schools and in order to take part in public discussions with educators. In what was originally a talk given to the seminary department of the Catholic Educational Association, he advised that a course on education should be given in all seminaries.
In another article, “The Seminary and Education,” Pace (1912a) cautioned against materialistic evolution. He stressed the value of education in philosophy. While he saw some value in self-activity as a method of education, Pace placed scholastic rational psychology before experimental psychology. Pace assigned value to laws of mental development, adjustment, or adaptation as long as they are not interpreted in a materialistic or determinist sense. In this vein, he criticized recent books in philosophy of education “in which the definition of education is drawn after a study of its various aspects, the biological, physiological and sociological aspects being presented before the psychological and the philosophical” (74). This example of putting the cart before the horse illustrates where he saw the dangers of materialistic evolution. For him the human mind was not simply a later development of the brute’s consciousness. In this article, as in all his work, he adhered to the traditional faculty psychology of rational psychology. It was the task of philosophy to decide on the value of the findings of experimental psychology. However, he gives few examples or illustrations.

Conclusion

We return to the Woods thesis, presented at the beginning of this chapter, that Pace and his colleague were not true progressives in that they staunchly defended the truths of the Catholic faith while merely adopting some of the methods of the progressives in their educational program, including the teaching of religion.

It is true that Pace was no modernist who attempted to formulate a progressive or liberal approach to Catholicism. He was thus not a religious educator in the mode of the liberal Protestant educators Clayton Brower, Sophia Fahs, and George Coe. While he knew of the Religious Education movement and its association, he did not participate in it. In his article on “Education” in the Catholic Encyclopedia, he applauded the association’s advocacy of moral education in the public schools. His colleague at Catholic University, Thomas Shahan, did address the Religious Education Association at an early convention. But what Pace advocated in stating the aims and methods of religious education was truly progressive and liberal. Negative reactions to his work and that of Shields were indicative of
this as well as the judgment of historians like Mary Charles Bryce and Philip Gleason, cited in this essay.

What made him progressive was his emphasis on the fostering of critical thinking and self-activity and his advocacy of methods that fostered questioning on the part of students. He was opposed to purely rote catechetical training. In his view, teaching religion would logically and practically foster a more questioning attitude towards religious doctrines and dogmas. While his opponents seemed to sense this, he himself does not appear to have done so. His commitment to the scientific method from his studies in experimental psychology and his attempt to reconcile scholasticism with modern science implied an approach to knowledge, learning, and education that questioned the rigidity of established dogmas. The time would come in the 1960s when Catholic religious educators, following the lead of theologians and philosophers, would develop a truly progressive and liberal form of religious education, which has been at the center of controversy for the past few decades. For conservative writers like Woods, Pace and his colleagues at Catholic University represent bulwarks against the secularization of Catholic education. For many religious educators, they should be recognized as adventurous pioneers who laid the foundation for a more enlightened approach to Catholic religious education.