search of recognition, status, power and often wealth' (72) never provoke the self-doubt or humor which might lead to a serious and self-conscious wrestling with the issues of intellectual vocation and progressive politics which Cornel West raises so eloquently.

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How does one write nearly 10,000 letters in a lifetime? Obviously one's correspondence would be involve a sizable commitment requiring discipline, organization and time. Perhaps one would have to spend whole mornings answering the mail. Henry writes, "This is the 9th letter I have written this a.m. (though is not a.m. but 4 in the afternoon & and I have been at my table since 9.30)" (2:56). Such stints were apparently not unusual for a few months latter he apologizes to William, "this is a wretched letter [about 800 words instead of the usual length of anywhere from 4000 to an occasional 10,000 word missive], dear William, to all your brilliancies, but this is the 11th letter (of letters and notes) I have written this morning" (2:65).

Before the publication of The Correspondence of William James only about ten percent of the known 10,000 letters of William had been published—mostly in his son Henry's The Letters of William James (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920) and Ralph Barton Perry's standard biography and source book, The Thought and Character of William James (Boston: Little Brown, 1935). The editors plan to release twelve volumes of letters. The first three volumes will contain 737 letters between the brothers. So far in the first two volumes 424 letters, (230 from William and 194 from Henry) have appeared.

The first volume (1861-1884) is of more use to scholars of Henry, not only are more of the letters (93 to 63) from Henry; his are longer and go into greater detail about his work and travels; William's are short and often only about family business—save a goodly number offering medical advice for Henry's chronic constipation. Several factors explain the Henry hegemony in Volume 1. Henry was in Europe much of the time and well into his career—he had by this time published nearly two dozen books not to mention a special fourteen volume collected edition of his works by MacMillian in 1883. William, by then, had published only articles, he was still an assistant professor of philosophy and his The Principles of Psychology was a half-dozen years off. The second volume of letters (1885-1896) reverses emphasis with
William making the greater contribution (161 to 101) as well as offering more epistolary detail and analysis.

After the third volume of correspondence between the brothers appears the editors will publish most of the remaining letters in nine volumes:

There are about 2,400 items of correspondence with other members of the family: parents, brothers, sister, cousins, aunts, children, and relations by marriage. The remaining 6,000 letters consist of business correspondence and correspondence with friends and professional acquaintances. Because publishing all these letters is not feasible and because not all of them are worth publishing, about 3,000 letters will be calendared. Thus every known letter will be either published in its entirety or listed with information about its provenance and a summary of its contents. (2:liii)

The editors' stamina and tenacity are a wonder to behold. Each volume contains a biographical register with brief comments on the significance, relationship to the James family and the writings of more than four hundred persons, the full textual apparatus to be expected in a critical edition and a detailed and well organized index. Every letter's date and place has been researched (and often corrected). For example, one letter from William to Henry in 1874 is dated ("Dresden Friday"). The editors have consulted naval records to find which ship left Bremen to Southampton to New York and have decided that James posted the letter on a Saturday when the ship left either 14 March or 28 February. The footnote is a gem, (see 1: 223-224). Every obscure or misleading name and comment has been given full explication, too.

The letters are a pleasure. They give a unique glimpse into an era, lifestyle, period and pace which perhaps could not be otherwise recaptured except by letters. As editor Skrupskelis puts it, "the letters once published will provide a record of over fifty years of American cultural history from the perspective of an observer who had a vast range of interests and who was in the midst of most of the great events and movements of his time" (1:liiv). Each volume has a long and detailed introduction by Gerard Myers (Vol. 1) and by David Fogel (Vol. 2). My comments would add little to the Myers-Fogel discussion of the events and themes of each volume. Perhaps more helpful would be a sketch of what I learned of the personalities and works of these two splendid siblings.

The whole extended James family loom large in the background. The James's were rich and their spending must have been good for the economy. They purchased or had built several houses (staffed by the family's longtime servants "Isabella, Ellen and Eliza" (1:72), they took repeated extensive European tours (always going First Class, see 1:84) where they lived for months at a time in hotels or in rented villas complete with butler,
coachmen and cooks. This sort of lifestyle continued with William's and Henry's young adulthood and, in time, William took whole his family to Europe for an extended--fifteen months tour. In 1893 upon his return to Boston William explains to Henry that he has been home for three weeks but than he has yet to really get back to work because they still have not put away the contents of the twenty-eight trunks and boxes which they brought back from Europe.

Despite this wealth, and perhaps because spending it, both brothers are preoccupied with money, royalties, rents, wills and salaries. Both, but William more so, inherited, made and spent big bucks. In 1894 William writes, "I have just made both ends meet this year, the first time since the 1st year of my marriage--all due to the revenue of the psychology" (2:324). That is, for the first time in sixteen years, James did not overspend his Harvard salary and book royalties. The next September he again comments on his financial solvency: "I hope you have enough to live on and save. I am saving now, and you can't tell the difference it make in one's inner peace" (2:377). All of this when he was approaching the top rung of Harvard salaries, which he cheerfully reports were being driven up by the head hunters from the new, well endowed universities of Johns Hopkins, Clark University and especially the University of Chicago. William comments on an offer his departmental colleague George Herbert Palmer had received from that "new University which one of the Rockefellers of the Standard Oil Company has founded at Chicago on a handsome and very modern scale" (2:217). Very handsome, it seems. "Meanwhile in Chicago, there is a fair prospect of a million being raised for the philosophical department alone!!!" (2:219)

Actually there is quite a lot of money talk in these letters. Business partnerships, estates, taxes, the whole range of financial dealings which brothers might share. Henry complains of his paltry royalties and his need to be frugal--all the while William urges his to write with a larger, more popular audience in mind. For his part, William is worried that he is still, at age 31, dependent on his parents. Not too worried, however, to enjoy at his parents' expense a nice vacation on a resort off the coast of Maine. Writing from the Isle of Shoals, he explains:

I shall let July & August shape my decision and bear whatever come with as equal a mind as I can. What weighs on me perhaps a much as anything now is the ignominy of my parasitic life on the family in view of the sweating existence of Bob & Wilky and their need of money as married men. (1:215)

One more glimpse of money talk. No wonder William would later find it natural to speak of the cash value of idea. Money is a vivid, clear and American way of explaining things. Speaking of a family friend Henry Mason, William writes:

Henry, 72 years old, with all the plasticity of nature of a box tortoise, so deaf that you must now write to
him half the time, with his irreproachable correctness and essential goodness, his dense obstinacy and dislike to obey suggestions from others ('Now that's telling, that rolls me, that gives me a shock, a cotch') his five-cent ideas, and his $40000 dollar income, and quarter of a million of disposable capital, is of course the nucleus of the situation. (2:84)

But ideas, more than cash, are what these letters are about. Wonderful exchanges about travel, museums, dinner conversations, weather, culture, family, friends and fame. Henry explains his letters as thinking out loud, a shared diary of impressions and memories:

You mustn't let my letters bore you. Don't read them if you don't feel like it—but keep them nevertheless. They will serve me in the future as a series of notes or observations—the only ones I shall have written... I feel as if I should like to make a note of certain impressions before they quite fade out of my mind. (1:63, 68)

There is genuine affection and some rivalry in this correspondence. Admiration and criticism of each other works—not as much as I would have expected but enough here to be of use to scholars of each of the brothers.

Wonderful contrasts of style and modes of being are evident. Henry complains of the thinness (and loneliness) of his life; William worries that his family and Harvard duties distract him from his real work. Henry is invigorated by London society and trips to the major cities on the Continent; William is energized by hikes in the White Mountains, his summer home at Chococura Lake, New Hampshire and his trip West with a memorable stop over in Colorado and a side trip to the Rockies:

It is a new kind of nature altogether, not a familiar plant or effect on the earth, and the sky always of rare beauty. Five thousand feet above the sea, & the illimitable prairie diversified by low bluffs, and shaded with the most exquisite tints of blue green and gray reaching to the eastward horizon, whilst on the west of the Rocky mountains, only a couple of miles off, rise abruptly up, as if breathed on a canvass scene in their exquisite pink delicacy of modulation, and form a magnificent background. It is now the rainy season, and everything is green. But the storms keep in the mountains, which every afternoon fill themselves with the most glorious rain and cloud and lightning-effects. Altogether it is a glorious country for man to get tuned up to, and makes eastern things seem huddled and confused. (2:372)

What can not be gained except by reading these two volumes is the art (now lost, or at least endangered) of letter writing and the
incomparable styles of these two intense, literate, well-read, preternaturally sensitive and curious gentlemen.

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