

FRANK JAMES LATEST.

He Will Appear as the Hero of a Play—The Noted Jim Courtright, Who Slew a Dozen People, Will Assist Him.

From the New York Sun.

FORT WORTH, Tex., July 6.—The presence of Frank James, of Missouri, in the city for several days has been a matter of profound interest to a great many residents of this town. The colonel has been here before, but never so publicly as on this occasion. He and Jim Courtright, ex-city marshal of Fort Worth, are old friends, and it was to see Jim that the Missourian came here. Walking together on the street they attract much attention, and whenever they stop a crowd soon gathers. Since the colonel arrived it has been suggested that he and Courtright were on the point of organizing a wild west show of some description, and such proves to be the fact. James's health is not so frail as it was when he was in jail at Independence, and as for Courtright he seems to be good for many years yet, notwithstanding his many desperate adventures.

The idea which prevailed at first that James and Courtright intended to organize a show after the style of Buffalo Bill's has been found to be incorrect. Neither of the ex-outlaws has had any experience with the bison, the mule, the savage, or the sweet prairie flower savages, and though Jim has done a little something in the stage coach line, he is not particularly fond of it. It is, therefore, out of the question for them to go on the road with a tent or an open air show of any kind. When it was suggested to them the other night that they might follow the example of Cody, they were deeply hurt, and gave the speaker to understand that they had no admiration of his character or achievements. Buffalo hunting, they said, was about as thrilling as hunting cows or chasing dray horses, and as for the Indians the white man who couldn't do up an Indian was of no account. Their first appearance in public would be in a drama written expressly for them and embodying several events in their own lives. The great difficulty of producing life like scenery representing express trains in full motion or national banks in a rush of

business was commented on, but it was thought that the obstacles could be overcome in one way or another.

Jim Courtright is the man who slew half a dozen people, not counting Mexicans, in New Mexico some years ago, and then with a big reward hanging over his head came to this city and secured a place as assistant city marshal. One of his first achievements here was the killing of a notorious desperado, and this so exalted him in the esteem of the citizens that he was made the marshal, in which office he gave great satisfaction. He was a terror to evil doers, and the principal men of the town paid him certain sums per month to look after their property and themselves particularly. Some time after the expiration of his term as marshal, when he had set himself up as a detective and special policeman, he was kidnapped here by three officers from New Mexico, who had a requisition for him. A great crowd of people, all friends of his, assembled at the hotel where he was in custody, and for a time it looked as though a forcible rescue would be made. The officers had betrayed his confidence, so the local prints said, and had got the drop on him when he least expected anything of the kind. That night a job was fixed up for Courtright's escape. His captors took him regularly to a restaurant for his meals, and the next evening, just before he was to be taken to the train, the New Mexicans escorted him to supper, a big crowd following. The four sat down to one table and began to eat. Presently a prominent citizen entered, and on some pretext induced one of the officers to step outside. Courtright dropped his napkin, stooped over to pick it up, and on rising presented a revolver in each hand at the heads of his guards. The weapons had been hung on nails under the table for his special benefit. Keeping the officers covered he backed out of the nearest door, mounted a horse that was in readiness and made off, the crowd surging around the officers so as to embarrass them in their movements. That was the last that was seen of Jim for some time, and the New Mexicans went home in despair. Some time ago Courtright reappeared here, and was received with much favor, but no further attempts have been made to get him into New Mexico. As an indication of the sentiment prevailing here, it may be said that Jim was compelled, in justice to the sheriff and marshal, to publish a card, in which he "exonerated" them from any complicity in the attempt of the New Mexican officials to capture him. According to the indictments in New Mexico, Courtright's crimes there were very cruel and bloodthirsty, several white men being his victims; but, as understood here, he did nothing more than kill a few greasers, who probably ought to have been killed anyway. So Jim has remained here undisturbed and warmly intrenched in the hearts of his fellow citizens unto this day, notwithstanding the fact that a reward of \$100 is on his head. In the drama which he and Colonel James expect to bring out, the thrilling escape of Courtright from the New Mexican officers will be faithfully depicted, as well as some other incidents in his very chequered career. It is expected, however, that events in the life of Frank James will furnish the basis of the play and all of the romance with which it will be invested. Frank's marriage with pretty Annie Ralston will in itself give the playwright a chance to throw himself, and various exciting episodes in his long battle with the detectives will help out the similar scenes from Courtright's experience.

The general drift of the play will be to the effect that Colonel Frank James, an outlaw, fondly in love with the lovely daughter of his worst enemy, a proud and rich brigadier, finally elopes with her, and is pursued by officers of the law and all the minions that the brigadier's money and influence can call to his aid. This will give him and Courtright an opportunity to introduce their various specialties, and it is confidently expected that the interest will be well sustained to the last act, in which the outlaw will surrender to the governor of the state, receive a full amnesty, and settle down with his bride to crown a youth of labor with an age of ease. In the case of Frank James and Annie Ralston it may be remembered that the colonel met the girl under an assumed name as she was visiting at a friend's. She played croquet with him and became so deeply interested in the stranger that he at length declared himself and was accepted. He then told her who he was, and in her girlish sympathy for him she loved him more passionately than ever. Her father would not permit the colonel to call on his daughter, but she managed to see him frequently, and finally on the pretense of visiting relatives in Nebraska she went away from home, and was not seen again for two years. At the end of that time the colonel presented himself at Ralston's place and asked permission to send Annie home for the summer, but the old man refused, whereupon James told him that he would not see his daughter again in ten years. He came very near keeping his promise. None of her friends saw her until eight years had elapsed, and then the colonel was a prisoner. All this, it is thought, will do to start the play, and give an adequate motive for the vast amount of indiscriminate killing which will take place in the third, fourth and fifth acts.

Courtright is quite pleased with the prospect, and in signing the contract he will make but one stipulation, and that is that he shall not appear in New Mexico. The colonel, with a lively recollection of the fate of his old associates, the Youngers, will also bar Minnesota, so that, with the exception of one territory and one state, the country may soon look for a very unique addition to its dramatic talent.