

**LES ENFANTS: A BOOK  
OF VERSE IN FRENCH-  
CANADIAN DIALECT**

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Les Enfants: A Book of Verse in French-Canadian Dialect by Gertrude Litchfield

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**GERTRUDE LITCHFIELD**

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# LES ENFANTS

*A Book of Verse  
in  
French-Canadian Dialect*

GERTRUDE LITCHFIELD



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## PREFACE

**I** HAVE the hope that all who read these verses may feel somewhat acquainted with the little French-Canadian people with whom it has been my privilege and delight to associate as a teacher and a friend.

It is not of the French-Canadians in Canada that I write, but of the families of the French-Canadian immigrants in New England, who, through their astonishing increase in numbers, and their admirable traits of industry, frugality, domestic virtue, and good citizenship, have made themselves "a power to be felt and known" in many of our large manufacturing centres.

This population, amounting to nearly a million French-Canadians in our midst, seems wonderful and significant. Although they cluster in communities, although the adults speak little or no English, though they do not readily mingle with the Anglo-Saxon element of our towns, yet their children attend our public schools, soon command both languages, and finally fill high places of trust and honor in our merchantile and civic affairs.

These little children, during that most interest-

## PREFACE

ing period, when they are acquiring the English language, struggling with new words, putting aside their native speech for the time being, yet recurring to it often in moments of hesitancy, and with strange confusions in grammar, give us a unique and fascinating dialect. It is this dialect which I have tried to portray with such accuracy and sympathetic love that they will seem to my readers the real, warm-hearted, spontaneous, beauty-loving little beings which they are to me.

GERTRUDE LITCHFIELD.

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## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Spirit of Christmas</i> .....	7
<i>Leetle Winter Bird</i> .....	10
<i>George Washington</i> .....	12
<i>Gabrielle's Oriole</i> .....	14
<i>De Circus</i> .....	15
<i>Ma Yeelow Cat</i> .....	21
<i>The Broken Doll</i> .....	23
<i>The Rubber Ball</i> .....	24
<i>A Convalescent Boy on the Fourth of July</i> ..	25
<i>Lousie</i> .....	26
<i>De Bebe on My House</i> .....	28
<i>Letting de Ole Cat Die</i> .....	30
<i>Ma Leetle Doll Rosette</i> .....	31
<i>The Fire-fly</i> .....	32
<i>Mademoiselle's Hat</i> .....	33
<i>My Valentine</i> .....	35
<i>L'école dans la rue Mechanique</i> .....	36
<i>Hoppee Toad</i> .....	40
<i>Le Canadien-Americain</i> .....	42

## CONTENTS

### IL N'Y A PLUS D'ENFANTS

<i>The Courtship</i> .....	45
<i>Coaxed</i> .....	47
<i>De Piquique</i> .....	48
<i>De Railroad Train</i> .....	50
<i>Over the Telephone</i> .....	52
<i>De New Year</i> .....	54
<i>Lullaby</i> .....	56
<i>Dat Leetle Han'</i> .....	57
<i>De Storee Tam</i> .....	58

## SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

W'at you t'ink, Miss Fee,  
'Bout de Christmas tree—  
Santa Claus, he come?  
Dat geev some fonne.  
Hev he got a sleigh,  
Lak de journal say,  
An' eight reindeer  
He hev for steer?  
How he mak' heself go  
Right over de snow  
An' reach all de house  
So still lak a mouse?  
Mus' be some trick—  
He go so quick  
Down beeg chimnee,  
For you never see  
How he get t'roo  
Dat beeg flu-flu,  
Nor w'at he leave—  
But you jus' b'lieve  
He leave someting,  
Den bird on de wing  
He make' his pass  
To some noder place—  
Can't stop too long,  
So bells ding-dong,  
An' off he fly  
Right t'roo de sky.  
Will he come dis year?  
If I'm bad, I'm fear  
He don' lak me,  
But you know, Miss Fee,  
How hard I've try  
Not tell any lie;  
W'en Romeo swear  
I pulled his hair,