

Table Manners For Little Folks

In silence I must take my seat,
And give God thanks before I eat;
Must for my food in patience wait
Till I am asked to hand my plate;
I must not scold, nor whine, nor pout,
Nor move my chair, nor plate about;
With knife, or fork, or napkin ring,
I must not play nor must I sing;
I must not speak a useless word -
For children must be seen - not heard -
I must not talk about my food,
Nor fret, if I don't think it good,
My mouth with food I must not crowd
Nor while I'm eating speak aloud;
Must turn my head to cough, or sneeze,
And when I ask, say "If you please";
The table cloth I must not spoil,
Nor with my food my fingers soil;
Must keep my seat when I have done,
Nor round the table sport, or run;
When told to rise, then I must put
My chair away with noiseless foot -
And lift my heart to God above -
In praise for all his wondrous love.

[copied from an anonymous manuscript book, dated about 1870]