

FIRST TALK

Providing for Family

The *direct* purpose of the Fourth Commandment is to lay down the duties of children to their parents. But *indirectly* we must understand from it that parents have duties to their children. These duties are divided into two classes. The first class has to do with the bodily and civil education of the child, to fit it for its position in the present life; the second class has to do with the moral and religious education of the child, to fit it for its position in the life to come.

The duty of providing for offspring until they are able to provide for themselves is dictated by nature itself, and even the brutes fulfil it. Yet there are in the world fathers so unnatural that they think only of themselves. They deny nothing to themselves; they satisfy all their desires; and they leave their children hungry and half-naked. Such a horrible state of affairs does not often exist in a community like ours. Nevertheless, it may be that there are fathers in these provinces who spend in folly or in sin the money that should be used to buy what is necessary for their children. And there are children staying away from school, from catechism, from Mass on Sunday, because they haven't clothes or shoes which squandered earnings would provide them.

Many a head of a family is saying to-day that he does his best, but that he cannot keep his children clad or shod. Before he was