

*Children of War Dead*

bill has the wholehearted support of all hon. members in the house. The criticism has been offered—and we usually hear this same criticism when other government bills are introduced—that the bill does not go far enough. It is true that the present act draws a line between secondary and what is called higher education, the criterion being whether the proposed higher education requires high school graduation or matriculation for admission. As we know, such would be the case with most university courses, with admission to recognized hospitals for graduation of registered nurses, technical schools, normal schools, and there may be others.

I am sure all of us in this house would like to deal as generously as possible with veterans and particularly with children of deceased veterans. I cannot think of any argument at all against the point that was stressed by the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) with regard to the value of vocational training and the lack of skilled tradesmen in Canada. It is true, however, that free tuition is being supplied by our secondary schools—commercial, technical and ordinary high schools—and that that education leads in most cases to admission to the majority of occupations. While those children are attending the secondary schools, they are being paid, if otherwise qualified, under the Pension Act, under schedule B, at orphan rates, provided of course that they are doing satisfactorily at school, until they reach the age of 21 years.

As hon. members know, the thinking behind this present act is that additional assistance was necessary if children of deceased veterans were to go on to higher education. The principle, of course, is that this higher education would have been available to the child if the veteran had lived. I think hon. members would agree that higher education, as compared with secondary education, is more expensive in that it is for a period of years, it costs more in terms of cost of living because the student is older and in addition, there are of course tuition fees to be paid.

The hon. member for Royal (Mr. Brooks) asked how many students are benefiting at the present time. The answer to that question is that, as of October 21, 225 applicants have been approved for assistance under the new act which was effective July 1, 1953. There are 118 boys and 107 girls.

**Mr. Brooks:** Could the parliamentary assistant break that figure down into the different courses?

**Mr. Bennett:** Yes, I could. Engineering, 38; nursing, 40; teaching, 33; science, 31; business administration, 16; law, 8; chartered accountancy, 7; theology, 8; medicine, 7; applied arts, 6; therapist, 4; social work, 4; journalism, 4; librarian, 3; pharmacy, 3; psychologist, 3; foreign service, 2; actuarial science, 2; forestry, 3; dentistry, 1; political economy, 1; chiropractics, 1. Science includes dietitian, geologist, chemist, laboratory technician and so on.

**Mr. Brooks:** That number is much smaller—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I am afraid we are entering on debate which is only in order at the committee stage.

**Mr. Bennett:** I might anticipate the hon. member's question. I think it was announced by the minister in the debate last April that it was the estimate of the department that a greater number will be graduating from the secondary schools between 1956 and 1962. That is when the peak of these 1,200 students which were estimated at the time of the passing of the act will be graduating from the secondary schools.

**Mr. Brooks:** It is a question of age.

**Mr. Bennett:** Yes; as to age. I think all the points that were raised today were answered in the debate last April. All I can say is that this act is, I think, recognized as providing for a great need in the veterans charter. It has been enthusiastically accepted all across Canada, and the present amendment is merely to cover the small group who were overlooked when the act was drafted last year.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Robinson (Simcoe East) in the chair.

On section 1—*Student defined.*

**Mr. Pearkes:** During the debate at the resolution stage I asked the parliamentary assistant whether the orphans of men of the merchant marine who had lost their lives would be included under this legislation. I think his answer was given rather off the cuff, and without the consideration that he intimated had been given to this question. His answer was that the amendment did not go that far. I think that the parliamentary assistant will find on further consideration that a child of a member of the merchant marine who lost his life at sea is in exactly the same position as the child of a deep-sea fisherman who lost his life at sea through enemy action. He would be included under schedule B, and as the children covered by