

FUTURE

Suddenly I had a lump in my throat. My eyes began to water and an emotional feeling seized my stomach. Waves ran up and down my spine. An intense feeling that is hard to describe, a mixture of joy, dread, hope and anticipation seemed to take over my body.

I looked around; no one in particular seemed to be noticing me. I looked into the faces of scores of young men and young women all intent on the speaker on the stage. Scattered amongst them were adults, and it was easy to see in some cases that they were relatives, likely mother and fathers. The speaker on the stage stopped and immediately the sound of bagpipes skirled through the building. A Drum Major appeared on the floor beneath the balcony marching towards the stage followed by the piper, a snare drummer, and a small brass band, a group of young people in highland dance costumes and a team of cheerleaders in white athletic dress. They made their way up on the stage and began a program of athletics, Scottish dancing and modern tunes played by the brass band.

I was standing against the wall on the balcony in Grant Hall on Queen's University campus. I looked to my right where my oldest grandson stood against the wall beside Valerie both of whom were intent on the goings-on on the stage.

We were, on what to me anyhow, was one of the most important days in the life of my grandson. He was about to make a decision that would affect the rest of his life. My daughter and her husband with the other two grandsons had gone to Myrtle Beach for the March Break, but Zach, the oldest, stayed home to visit three universities to which he had applied to commence this fall.

Visits were planned to Western, McMaster and Queens. The first two were done and in fact he had already been accepted at McMaster but he felt really positive about Queens and thus our attendance with him at the open house for engineering and bio-chemistry, the two areas he is interested in.

We spent an intense three hours trudging through the campus led by two very attractive young ladies who were third year students and who were able to speak to the group very knowledgeably.

It seemed that Zach had submitted all the required docu-

ments except one that dealt with his interests and activities outside of school. The deadline was 6.00 p.m. the next day.

"I sent the document to you by email but when I looked it hadn't attached" he said to me.

"So if we can go home to Milford now I'll mail it again from my computer to your and can then send it in". The ins and outs of how to do this is beyond me suffice it to say he did and had the previous day fixed a problem on our computer that I was planning to have repaired at the dealers.

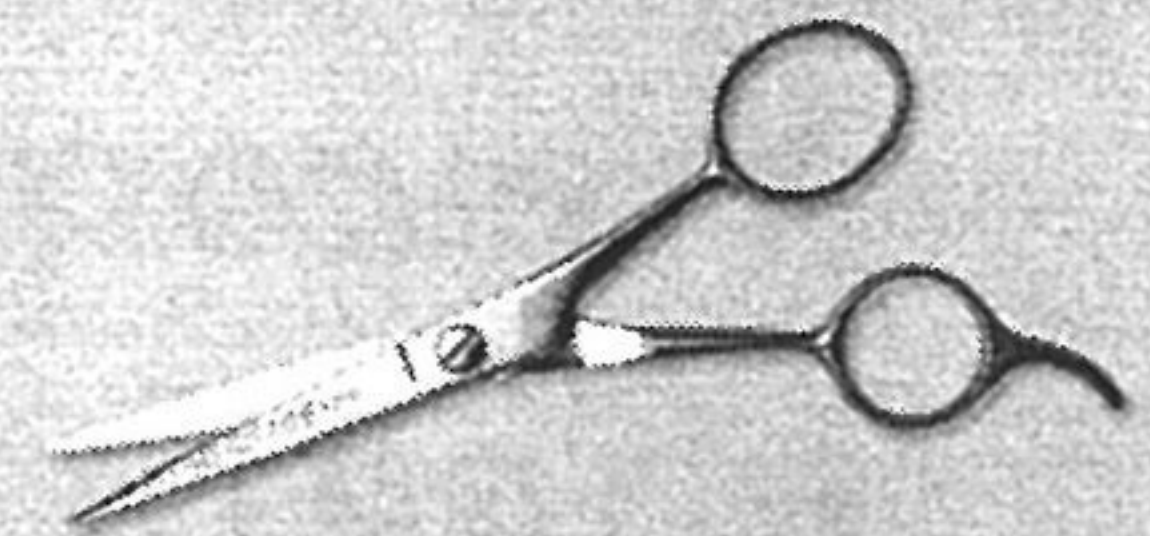
The whole question of education and schooling is perhaps the most important decision one had to make and it determines in a large way the future of an individual. Many people question whether the public schools and high schools prepare the student for the climate of university education and point to the drop out rate after the first year. Some people feel that parents do not let children fend for themselves enough and raise them in an over protective way that ill prepares them for the 'you're on your own and personally responsible environment of university'. Who is to say whether they are right or wrong?

My son, Zach's Uncle took a year after grade 13 to travel Europe before going and graduating from Western. Was that a good idea? – It worked for him. I attended Wilfred Laurier on nights and weekend while working and raising a family. Both my children attended my graduation so it worked for me.

I was chatting with a young lady who is completing fourth year at Queens about my hope to be able to 'help' Zach, not in an interfering way or pushing my thoughts about what he should do but in a more understanding and support-

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