SOME day we may write a book. At present our inclination is to boast of the distinction (becoming quite rare) that we have never written a book. But as we advance in years we may weaken. If we do, our collapse will be made apparent by a tone on the oddities of editing. One chapter at least will be devoted to coincidences. Scarcely an issue of MacLean’s appears without there being some sort of a coincidence somewhere. Just take this issue as an example.

A few weeks ago we had a visit from a widely travelled Westerner who is a keen student of international trade. Wheat prices were tumbling that day, which led him to remark that in his opinion the day of high-priced wheat was over and that this, in the long run, might not be a bad thing inasmuch as cheaper wheat would encourage buying by Oriental countries, which he thought would be Canada’s biggest market in years to come. Moreover, he expressed the view that the Orient offers opportunity for all kinds of Canadian business activity, and urged us to have somebody investigate the situation.

Ten minutes after this Westerner had departed for China, John Armitage to enquire whether MacLean’s would be interested in an article describing China as a monotonous market for Canadian goods and produce. Having demonstrated his authority to write such an article, Mr. Armitage went off to do it. And, lo and behold, there it is on page three.

An Australian by birth, Mr. Armitage lived for many years in China. For two years he was night editor of the Hongkong Daily Press, and he also travelled extensively in both China and Japan revising a directory of trade and social conditions.

During the war, Frederick B. Watt served in the Silent Force. Now he thinks that naval men were garrulous compared with airmen, an opinion formed after much time spent in slowly extracting from the subject the story of “Wop” May which appears on page five.

Would you mind moving over a little so that we can lay the red carpet and welcome S. A. White, who, with “Faith of Fire and Roof,” makes his first entry to MacLean? Mr. White lives at Snelgrove, Ontario. Dudley Gloyn Sumners, in illustrating the tale, became so saturated in its atmosphere that he was seized with chills and has had to go to Bermuda to recover. We never thought of that when we read the story; we’re very good at catching cold.

As for the forecast of an election in July, made on page sixteen, full responsibility for this startling hint is taken by “A Politician with a Notebook,” who swears that he knows whereabouts of the writer. As he points out, the Prime Minister may change his mind. Mr. King can do this in half a second, whereas it takes between four and five weeks to get this issue in your hands. We merely mention this so that should there be a definite announcement of an election date between the day on which this is written and the day you read it, you will know exactly how things are.

In a frolicsome moment recently we suggested that after reading one of MacLean’s articles an order of half a loaf might be made something of an adventure were one to sit the waiter to bring a slice of hippoglossus vulgaris. Now witness this report from Elysias Hudkins Walker, of Windsor, Nova Scotia:

It is a well-known fact that nothing dispirits a waiter or waitsress in a fashionable restaurant so much as to be obliged to acknowledge that the wording of a customer’s order is unintelligible to them. Having posed to Halifax in a merry mood and having read your latest issue of MacLean’s, I remarked casually to a waitsress at the corner that I should like some hippoglossus vulgaris. Luckily this fish was listed on the bill. Not a muscle twitched, nor did her color alter in the least. Nothing intelligently, she swept into the kitchen and emerged a few moments later with this savory dish.

Not a little nonplussed at this brilliant triumph, I observed that the too, must have been scanning the pages of MacLean’s.

“No, indeed, sir,” she said. “I exclude my reading to ‘Cupid’s Diary.’”

“Then you must know Latin,” I protested.

She laughed. “If it is the hippoglossus vulgaris you are something about, I can easily explain it for you. We have found it a common trick of helpful customers to employ absurd words for common catchers, and with this in mind, we have had a dictionary installed on the kitchen shelf for reference in such emergencies.”

Oh, well, what’s the use!