review (*LAR*, Feb. 1973) this is essentially a straightforward descriptive survey of the NLL, rather than an analytical probing of the management of change or a comparative study of the NLL and "the dinosaurs surrounding it." With that caveat, which is worth raising at the outset since that is where a reader meets the problem, the work emerges as an interesting and informative addition to the still rather sparse amount of generally available literature on the origin and functioning of the largest scientific library in Europe.

In seven tightly-organized chapters the author, who is senior lecturer in information work at Liverpool Polytechnic, covers the fascinating historical background to the NLL; its staffing, stock, and records; the operational service; and the ancillary activities (translations, courses, etc.) which constitute some of the best examples of the NLL's creative, flexible, and undogmatic approach to modern library service. A final chapter is devoted to a brief assessment. The treatment is factual and terse, often so sectionalized as to resemble lecture notes. One wishes the author had allowed himself to reflect, and to expand upon the many points he fires out in staccato sequence ("The results from the survey were used in making the following decisions: (i) . . . (ii) . . . (iii) . . . (iv) . . . (v) . . ." etc.). Being opinionated about the NLL has, after all, ample precedent in Dr. Urquhart's writings and elsewhere, and is still very necessary as this great experiment grows to maturity as part of the British Library.

NLL buffs will recognize most of the standard NLL publicity photographs, as well as the documentary sources Mr. Houghton relies on, although those currently involved in the discussions about creating a similar national lending service in the U.S. may find the work of less value than they had anticipated. The crucial question of the replicability, or otherwise, of NLL techniques is not part of the author's design. Here we return to Urquhart's dinosaur conceit, which goads librarians for not adopting NLL methods *in their own environments*. In fact, it is obvious that to do so would be impossible and that library users here, and in a score of other countries, would be better served by further "standalone" NLL's, comparable to the original

in terms of world-wide holdings, minimal recording, and a fast response. Planners might even take seriously the idea of a disused military installation on cheap land near the communications fulcrum of the country. And this time, let us see the lead come from the library community.—*Peter G. Watson, University of California, Los Angeles.*

Ralph E. Ellsworth. *Academic Library Buildings, A Guide to Architectural Issues and Solutions.* Boulder, Colo.: The Colorado Associated University Press, 1973. 530 p.

Academic Library Buildings is a unique compilation of 1,500 annotated photographs of 130 academic library buildings built primarily during the past five years. The author's intent is described in the subtitle and in his statement in the preface "to present representative examples of successful architectural solutions to the important problems librarians and architects face in planning new college and university library buildings or in remodeling and enlarging existing structures."

In theory, the idea of this book is intriguing, but the end result is somewhat disappointing. The culprit is the photograph. Although an old proverb says something about a picture being worth a thousand words, a poor photograph can be a barrier to seeing, a misrepresentation of what exists, a meaningless gray mass.

This is most unfortunate, especially since the knowledgeable Ellsworth has a great quantity of wisdom to impart to us. He has done an excellent job of encapsulating the basic truths of library planning in the written portions of his book such as the chapters on "Trends and Dilemmas" and "Conclusions about Planning" and the written portion which begins each chapter. The listing of architectural problems to be resolved under the heading "Architectural Intent" which precedes various groups of photos is especially helpful as a checklist for the library planner.

However, the greater portion of the book consists of photographs. Ellsworth covered himself in his preface by noting that the photographs are not the work of a professional photographer but are "librarians' working photographs," but that does not

justify the use of badly distorted photographs, illegible photographs, and photographs in which the image does not make the point the author intended and merely succeed in being dull. If it is worth putting these photos in book form for publication, it is worth doing it well.

The reference to distorted pictures is associated with photographs like those of the exteriors of Cornell and Northwestern's libraries, page 25, in which the buildings appear to be in danger of toppling. Illegibility is evident in pictures similar to those on pages 76 and 145, the former notes "ten-cent store light fixtures," the latter "storage for earphones." These and other such notes lead to great frustration because they cannot be easily deciphered in the subject photos; and once they are deciphered, one often discovers unimaginative solutions which are not worth the trouble of interpretation.

There is a photo of some bookstacks in Beloit College on page 78, not very interesting and like many other bookstacks shown in the book. It is not until one reads the annotation that one discovers the point of the picture: "The president wanted books to be in evidence. From front door, circulation desk is on left, books in center, reference on right, reading areas in rear." The bookstacks are obvious, the other elements are lacking or indistinguishable. The pictorial emphasis on the bookstacks rendered the photograph totally meaningless in the author's context.

"Meaningless" leads to another question about the use of photos in this book—their grouping by function rather than by building. Intellectually, organizationally, it seems like a good idea, but a building and its successful and unsuccessful solutions cannot be understood, and often not even visually interpreted, in bits and pieces grouped with strangers. It is like taking a series of faces, dissecting the various parts and regrouping into noses, lips, etc. A particular nose may not look very good by itself; and, in comparison with others, it may actually look misshapen, but in the context of its own face it works beautifully and looks great.

The context required to interpret successful architectural solutions consists of a floor plan, a few well-done photographs, and perhaps, a written text. In this way each building can be understood, its solutions interpreted, and the book becomes a meaningful tool for architects and librarians.—*Gloria J. Novak, University of California, Berkeley.*

Przebienda, Edward, ed. United States Government Publications Monthly Catalog. Decennial and Quinquennial Cumulative Personal Author Index, 1941–1950; 1951–1960; 1961–1965 and 1966–1970. 4 vols. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Pierian Press, 1970–71. Set price $98.00

The 1970s have produced another lifesaver to rescue harried librarians concerned with the identification and location of Federal government publications. For the first time since the demise of the *Documents Catalog* it is possible to use personal names for location of documents indexed in the *Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications.* The recently published *Decennial* [and Quinquennial] *Cumulative Personal Author Indexes* for the years 1941 through 1970 now provide an index to primary authors and also to other individuals (such as editors, researchers, and translators) associated with each publication.

Historically speaking, government reports have been considered the product of a government agency rather than the work of an individual, except for the authors of monumental works, and therefore have been cataloged under the corporate author. However, patrons unfamiliar with library practices cite publications by personal author, going to considerable lengths to identify some individual to whom the book can be attributed, and the resulting citation by personal author is difficult to track down in the subject-oriented index to the *Monthly Catalog.*

To a limited extent it is possible to find personal names in the *Monthly Catalog* prior to September 1947, when the reorganized *Catalog* ceased to index authors or other names associated with a specific publication. In 1963 the *Monthly Catalog* resumed the practice of indexing personal authors but limits its coverage to the first author of a joint authorship and omits entire categories of individuals such as the translators and authors of titles listed under Joint Publications Research Service. The two G.P.O. ten year cumulations thus far