served and extended by the Arabs and ultimately the knowledge was transferred to western Europe. Seitz traces the flowering of science during the 17th century and then describes its development in the United States. As might be expected, he devotes considerable attention to the early role of the National Academy of Sciences.

From observations of the way in which science developed in various regions, the author lists the principal factors required if science is to move ahead. In brief these are: the existence of a leisure class, freedom to ponder, logistical support, an institutional environment, communication among investigators, pressure for valid conclusions, experimentation, and proper indigenous culture.

One of the puzzles Seitz addresses is the failure of the very gifted Chinese to invent science. Two thousand years ago, they made many technological advances. Seitz concludes that the culture was not conducive to science. In addition, he was told by a Chinese scholar that an individual who discovered a scientific law would have been inclined to keep it a family secret.

Essays in the second half of the book deal with such present-day topics as "Science, technology and the environment," "Fraud, piracy and priority in science," "Big science-small science," and "The future of science." As to the future, Seitz is slightly optimistic but cautious. Factors favorable to science include the innate curiosity of humans, practical needs, national pride and global problems such as pandemics. Unfavorable factors include costs of equipment, decline of interest among gifted individuals, and anti-science movements. The future of public opinion is not predictable. In the past, charismatic leaders have been able to sway the public in directions that have seemed irrational and turned out to be highly destructive.

The book can be read with interest by all natural scientists, engineers, and physicians. It would provide knowledge and perspective to undergraduates, and it would be informative to intelligent lay persons.

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