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This beautifully illustrated book reviews the development of science in Antarctica from its early beginnings, in the age of Captain Cook, to the present complexity of the 1980s when research teams from many nations work side by side. Three major areas, biological science, the earth sciences and atmospheric science are examined individually, highlighting the principal achievements of the past 25 years, and providing an up-to-date account of our present understanding of this frozen continent. Concern over the future of the Antarctic Treaty and the probable main directions of future research, provide an indication of the importance of Antarctica to all scientific disciplines. This unique natural laboratory for science is now being investigated by eighteen countries. International interest in Antarctica grows apace and, whatever its future use by mankind, its sensible management will require a good, scientific basis.