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## PREFACE

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This book is dedicated to all who have contributed to the acquisition of knowledge concerning the chemistry of fluorine and its compounds. It is published to commemorate the centenary of the first isolation of elemental fluorine by Henri Moissan in 1886. His notable achievement provides the justification for the book, but over the years many chemists, ranging from famous to obscure, have worked in the rather special and exciting field of fluorine chemistry. All have contributed something to the vast body of information now available, and the scope of this book is a tribute to their collective endeavours.

The book is in two parts. The first addresses the history of the development of fluorine chemistry from the 18th century to the key period centered after World War II; this includes Moissan's own accomplishments. The second comprises reviews by acknowledged experts of the major branches of the field; these update the earlier accounts and show how the subject has developed, from difficult, experimental beginnings, into a coherent sub-discipline of chemistry. This overview of the status of fluorine chemistry in 1986 covers not only fundamental knowledge but also technological applications; thus it reveals how the subject has come to touch all our lives — and will do so increasingly as time progresses.

We are extremely grateful to the large number of people who have contributed in one way or another to the production of this book. Particular thanks go to our numerous co-authors for their unstinting efforts and to the staff of Elsevier Sequoia for their patience and friendly assistance.

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