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## Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals

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### Foreword

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## FOREWORD

All children of the western world have heard the word “liquid crystals.” After one century, the esoteric discoveries of Reinitzer and Lehmann, have suddenly reached the public. The display systems based on electric fluids acting on nematic fluids, have become omnipresent. This required a remarkable effort of chemical invention, starting in Germany, then expanded in England and France; also a vast work of clarification and classification, originating mainly from G. Friedel and from the school of Halle; also a brilliant technical imagination, illustrated by Hellmeier and Helfrich; and finally the patient, efficient Japanese effort leading to display systems which are efficient and stable over many years. The present book is of French origin, but somewhat Japanese in style. It represents many years of lucid, selective, compilation of thermodynamic data.

Our modern world is overloaded with data banks and computerized information: most of which is severely limited by the finite abilities of the original compilers. This book is a remarkable exception: among the authors we find some of the most inventive scientists of the field. As a result, the present tables are indeed relevant, and should be useful to many of us—working in statistical physics, optics, hydrodynamics, surface science, chemical engineering. . . . Let me then propose a symbolic toast (with birefringent whisky) in the honor of the “Sources.”

*P. G. de GENNES*