The work of Turgenev, like any great art, remains highly significant in the spiritual life of society in every historical epoch. Stimulating the spirit of investigation, it is still the subject of fruitful scholarly discussions, and continues to offer new meaning. A hundred years ago the satirist M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, in one of Turgenev’s finest obituaries, wrote that Turgenev’s “chief and unappreciated virtue” lay in his high ideals of a humanism “for all mankind,” his “profound faith in the triumph of enlightenment, of goodness and moral beauty,” noting the “conscious perseverance” with which the author brought these ideals into Russian life. In this connection Saltykov-Shchedrin called Turgenev the “direct successor of Pushkin.”

Time has confirmed that his high assessment is well deserved: in our country the heritage of this great artist of the word is deeply honored, carefully preserved, intensively studied, and widely publicized.

The Turgenev scholarship that has appeared in the last few years is vast, diverse, and difficult to summarize. After the 1968 sesquicentennial celebration of Turgenev’s birth, observed in the Soviet Union, no less than a thousand works appeared in different scholarly publications. These include about 100 books, monographs, and collections devoted to questions of Turgenev’s biography and works, his extensive and varied ties with world literature, study of the Turgenev tradition in the works of subsequent generations of writers, interpretation of Turgenev’s complex relations with the Russian revolutionary movement, the acceptance of the writer’s heritage among the national cultures of our country, questions of the teaching of Turgenev in secondary schools and institutions of higher education, and descriptions of Turgenev landmarks in Orel, Spasskoe-Lutovinovo, Petersburg-Leningrad, and Moscow.
Two doctoral and over thirty candidate dissertations on the writer have been defended in various Soviet cities during the last decade. These studies vary in their problematics, and testify to the interest of both young scholars and specialists of the older generation in the continuing development of Turgenev scholarship.3

