Preface

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Micropaleontology emerged as an independent branch of paleontology more than 100 years ago. In the 1920s and 1930s, the rapid development in this area coincided with the oil boom and, therefore, the necessity to study the material obtained from oil wells: drill cuttings and core. Even small amounts of this material may often yield myriads of well-preserved microscopic fossils. In the 1970s and 1980s, a new active stage in the development of micropaleontology was associated with deep-sea drilling in the oceans. The drilling supplied an enormous amount of factual material on microfossils of excellent preservation. In recent years, the interest in micropaleontology has increased due to the need to replenish the resource base of the Russian oil industry, using both shale oil and other sources.

Since 1954, 17 micropaleontological meetings have been held in the USSR and Russia: in Moscow (1954, 1956, 1963, 1966, 1990, 2005), Leningrad (1960, 1986), Novosibirsk (1973, 2008), Syktyvkar (1977), Baku (1980), Ukhta (1983), Tomsk (1997), Gelendzhik (2012), Kaliningrad (2015), and Kazan (2018). This confirms that in our country research in the field of micropaleontology remains as before extremely topical.

The 17th All-Russia Micropaleontological Meeting “Modern Micropaleontology—Problems and Prospects,” held on September 24–29, 2018 at Kazan Federal University was attended by over 100 leading researchers in micropaleontology both working in cities across Russia (from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok) and those from 11 foreign countries (United States, Canada, Germany, Israel, India, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Yemen, and Argentina). During the conference a total of 92 reports were presented both by Russian scientists, graduate students, and students (82) and by foreign researchers (10). The meeting covered a wide range of issues on the evolution and development of various groups of microorganisms starting with foraminiferans, radiolarians, ostracods, conodonts, organ-wall and calcareous dinocysts, nanoplankton and ending with microproblematics, as well as on diatom and spore-pollen analysis, the use of these data for biostratigraphic sub-

division, correlation, and reconstruction of paleoevents, assessment of climatic changes in the past, as well as monitoring and prediction of these changes. The scientists discussed current issues and exchanged information on their work methods and discoveries. Special attention was paid to the works of young scientists who presented 34 reports.

Selected papers presented at the meetings of the Kazan Conference are published in two issues of the *Paleontological Journal*: Part 1 (*Paleontological Journal*, 2019, vol. 53, no. 8) and Part 2 (*Paleontological Journal*, 2019, vol. 53, no. 9). The selection, reviewing, and editing of the papers were carried out by the leaders of the sessions on various microfossil groups and by the members of the Scientific Committee of the Meeting: A.S. Alekseev, M.S. Afanasieva, V.S. Vishnevskaya, and N.V. Goreva.

The 18th Micropaleontological Meeting “Morphology, Systematics of Microfossils and Modern Microorganisms and Their Role in Biostratigraphy and Paleogeography” is planned to be held in Sevastopol in 2021 at the L.O. Kovalevsky Institute of Marine Biological Research on the basis of the Sevastopol Biological Station, thus celebrating the 150th anniversary of its foundation.

The All-Russia micropaleontology meetings are important for the development of domestic fundamental science, since they open up broad opportunities for training young professionals, improving knowledge, exchanging experience and establishing scientific contacts with researchers with the same specialization, as well as for obtaining new information on scientific advances in micropaleontology.

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