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The movement "To the people!" had changed in character. After the emancipation of the serfs, thousands of young men and women from the richer classes had asked themselves how they could be most useful to "the masses", and decided that the only way was to go and settle among the poor, and live as they did. Prince Kropotkin says:

"Young men went into the villages as doctors, doctors' helpers, teachers, village scribes, even as agricultural laborers, blacksmiths, wood-cutters, and so on, and tried to live there in close contact with the peasants. Girls passed teachers' examinations, learned midwifery or nursing, and went by the hundred into the villages, devoting themselves entirely to the poorest part of the population.

"These people went without any ideal of social reconstruction in their minds, or any thought of revolution. They simply wanted to teach the mass of the peasants to read, to interest them in other things, to give them medical help, and in any way to aid in raising them from their darkness and misery; and at the same time to learn what were their popular ideals of a better social life."

This movement was entirely legal, and was carried