

Question- In many ways, Lord Dalhousie was the founder of modern India. Elaborate.

Answer - Hardly was the period of any British officer in India was so colourful with overall reforms as we find in the period of Lord Dalhousie. That's why imperialist historiography projects him as the harbinger of modernisation in India, although its claim can't totally be denied, but its effects should be evaluated in terms of colonial relation between Britain and India.

Dalhousie introduced the railway engine and laid the foundation of the railway line in India. Not simply that he laid the foundation of the telegraph line between Agra and Calcutta and established a separate telegraph department also.

Furthermore, he founded a public works department that started to build roads and canals. He is given the credit for the foundation of a postal department also which made the correspondence of the letters between distant parts of India much easy.

All these developments sharply reduced the geographical distance between different and distant points of India. So it prepared the way for political integration. Not simply that even the internal market of India emerged to be more integrated. Apart from that introduction of the railway engine prepared the base for the modern factory system in India as well.

But we cannot deny the fact that modernization was the byproduct of colonization. Reforms were formulated to promote the interest of the metropolitan state (Britain) and the colony was supposed to work as the market for British Industry. Likewise under Dalhousie Thomsanian education system was introduced and its emphasis was on the promotion of Indigenous education but here also the real motive was to produce people with a workable knowledge of the quality of British products.

So, modernisation was the unintended impact of Dalhousie's reforms, the intended impact was efficient colonization and exploration.

While answering the questions one has to concentrate on the 'keywords' in question. It is the keyword which indicates that in which direction the question will move. Here the meanings of certain keywords are being mentioned.

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