

regained all the possessions of his late father. Abdur Rahman and Azim were defeated in January 1869; Azim fled for refuge to Persia, where he soon afterwards died; Abdur Rahman, reserved for a higher destiny, escaped to Tashkend, and lived for ten years in that country a pensionary on Russian bounty.

Sher Ali, having re-established himself, proved his title by the only credentials that Afghans recognize, a stern and effective rule. The civil war with its extraordinary vicissitudes had rendered the position of the Indian government extremely difficult. Lawrence moved by a wise instinct—how wise only after-events could show—was determined at all hazards not to embroil himself in the dynastic wars of Afghan princes. This course he adopted not only from prudential motives and his own reasoned conviction, but also from gratitude to the memory of Dost Muhanmad, who in spite of many temptations had loyally refrained from embarrassing us in the Mutiny, and had once in conversation with Lawrence himself expressed an earnest wish that after his death his sons should be allowed to fight out the succession question for themselves. Lawrence's policy therefore was only to recognize the *de facto* ruler and has been described as 'assenting peaceably to the visible facts resultant from a neighbour's settlement of his own affairs after his own fashion';¹ but it was certainly disconcerting that the various candidates for the throne underwent such kaleidoscopic changes of fortune. In 1864 Lawrence recognized Sher Ali as Amir of Afghanistan. In 1866 Sher Ali was driven from Kabul and Afzal was recognized as ruler of that city, Sher Ali as lord of Kandahar and Herat. Soon afterwards Afzal captured Kandahar and the Indian government acknowledged the *fait accompli* and only gave its recognition to Sher Ali as master of Herat. Critics of the

¹ *Essays on the External Policy of India*, by J. W. S. Wyllie, ed. by (Sir) W. W. Hunter, London, 1875, p. 119.