

Rumbold, an old Cromwellian officer. The plot was, however, disclosed by one of the conspirators, and the Government, believing that it was mixed up with a more general conspiracy, arrested not only the would-be assassins, but also several of the leading Whigs, including **Lord Russell**, **Algernon Sidney**, **Essex** and **John Hampden**.

Charles, confident that the tide of public opinion had turned in his favour, was now determined to strike a heavy blow at the whole Whig faction. Shaftesbury had, fortunately for himself, already fled to Holland, where he died the following year. Lord Howard turned king's evidence. Russell, a man of blameless life and character, was tried for high treason. Although it was clearly proved that he had attended some of the seditious meetings of the Whigs, he had no share whatever in the Rye House Plot. The jury, however, found him guilty and he was sentenced to death and executed. He died expressing his unshaken belief in the existence of the Popish Plot, and upholding the doctrine that resistance to the King was in extreme cases legal and justifiable. Charles maintained that the man who held such opinions ought to be put to death. "If," said he, "I do not take his life he will soon take mine." His trial will ever be remembered in connection with the assistance rendered to him on that occasion by his devoted wife, who played the part of a private secretary, making notes of the evidence and refreshing his memory.

Algernon Sidney was the next victim. He had always stoutly maintained the republican principles of the "Rump," and now the unsubstantiated charge of conspiracy against the King was brought against him. His trial was conducted by the infamous **Judge Jeffreys** and was a mere mockery of justice. The want of a second witness against him was supplied by an unpublished treatise discovered among his papers, advocating the right of subjects to rise against and depose their sovereign. On this flimsy evidence, Sydney was condemned and executed, glorying that he suffered for "the good old cause." Against Hampden no condemnatory evidence whatever could be brought forward, and yet he was convicted of a misdemeanour, and sentenced to pay the enormous fine of £40,000. Essex perished by his own hand