

Having remained with his uncle eight or nine months, he returned to Virginia, and commenced the practice of his profession. He soon found the ancient saying but too true in his case, that a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country; and so the poor artist was left to obtain, as best he could, a precarious support in Richmond, the capital of the Old Dominion. One friend, however, Mr. J. H. Strobria, patronized and encouraged him. But even at that day, Sully's proud spirit despised the canting term of patron as generally used, as much as he did the artist, who could descend to apply it to those who, after all, give him merely the value of his honest services.

The letters of his uncle, Thomas Sully, at this period were very encouraging, and strongly advised him to visit London as soon as possible. Naturally proud of his chosen profession, he cherished an ardent desire to comply with his uncle's wishes and advice, and improve his taste and skill by studying the works of the great English masters. To aid in this purpose, he visited several towns in North Carolina, where he met with encouraging success. He sailed for London on the first of August, 1824, where he arrived the 23d of the following month.

Now thrown into the vortex of art, it was some little time before he could sufficiently recover from the fascinating excitement produced by the change, to commence a regular course of study. Of the then living English artists, Sir Thomas Lawrence became his first idol, but after remaining sometime in London, and carefully studying the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, his admiration for the former somewhat abated. The portraits of Lawrence are said to be striking likenesses, and display a bold and free pencil; but they are, particularly his later ones, chargeable with mannerism, and are not considered to be successful in expressing the nicer shades of character, while his drawing evinced a want of accuracy and finish. Nothing so delighted Sully as the pictures of Reynolds, and no wonder, for they were masterpieces of art. Reynolds rejected the stiff, unvaried and unmeaning attitudes of