

CHAPTER V.

Taken altogether, New Zealand presents a great variety of landscape, although, even where the scenery is most subdued, it partakes of a bold and irregular character, derived not more from the aspect of undisturbed Nature, which still obtrudes itself everywhere among the traces of commencing cultivation, than from the confusion of hill and valley which marks the face of the soil, and the precipitous eminences, with their sides covered by forests, and their summits barren of all vegetation, or terminating perhaps in a naked rock, that often rise close beside the most sheltered spots of fertility and verdure.

If this brokenness and inequality of surface oppose difficulties in the way of agricultural improvement, the variety and striking contrasts thereby produced must be often at least highly picturesque; and all, accordingly, who have visited New Zealand, agree in extolling the mingled beauty and grandeur which are profusely spread over the more favoured parts of the country, and are not altogether wanting even where the general look of the coast is most desolate and uninviting.