

The End of all Things

of art and things of interest gathered from my travels abroad, and, above all, through the dainty fingers of my wife, the place has grown gay and well-adorned, so that were any of its masters of old time to revisit it they would scarce know it for theirs.

But the work which throughout these years has lain most near to my heart has been the studies which I have already spoken of. The fruit of them, to be sure, is less than the labour, but still I have not been idle. I have already in this tale told of my exposition of the philosophy of the Frenchman Descartes, with my own additions, and my writings on the philosophy of the Greeks, and especially of the Neo-Platonists—both of which I trust to give to the world at an early time. As this story of my life will never be published, it is no breach of modesty here to counsel all, and especially those of my own family, who may see it, to give their attention to my philosophical treatises. For though I do not pretend to have any deep learning or extraordinary subtlety in the matter, it has yet been my good fate, as I apprehend it, to notice many things which have escaped the eyes of others. Also I think that my mind, since it has ever been clear from sedentary humours and the blunders which come from mere knowledge of books, may have had in many matters a juster view and a clearer insight.

Of my own folk I have little to tell. Tam Todd has long since gone the way of all the earth, and lies in Lyne Kirkyard with a flat stone above him. New faces are in Barns and Dawyck, and there scarce re-