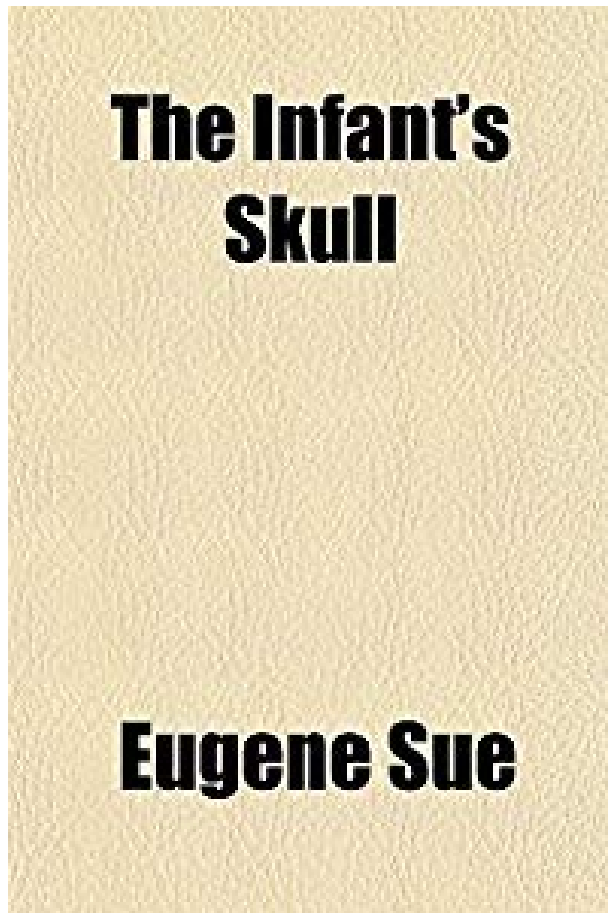


The Infant's Skull; Or, the End of the World, a Tale of the Millennium



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This historic book may have numerous typos, missing text or index. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. 1904. Not illustrated. Excerpt: ... CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNTAIN OP THE HINDS. A spring of living water, known in the neighborhood by the appropriate name of the "Fountain of the Hinds," empties its trickling stream under the oaks of one of the most secret recesses of the forest of Compiègne. Stags and hinds, deers and does, bucks and she-goats come to water at the spot, leaving behind them numerous imprints of their steps on the borders of the rill, or on the sandy soil of the narrow paths that these wild animals have worn across the copse. One early morning in the year 987, the sun being up barely an hour, a woman, plainly dressed and breathing hard with rapid walking, stepped out of one of these paths and stopped at the Pountain of the Hinds. She looked in all directions in surprise as if she expected to have been preceded by some one at the solitary rendezvous. Pinding her hopes deceived, she made an impatient motion, sat down, still out of breath, on a rock near the fountain, and threw off her cape. The woman, barely twenty years of age, had black hair, eyes and eye-brows; her complexion was brown; and cherry-red her lips. Her features were handsome, while the mobility of her inflated nostrils and the quickness of her motions betoken a violent nature. She had rested only a little while when she rose again and walked up

and down with hurried steps, stopping every now and then to listen for approaching footsteps. Catching at last the sounds of a distant footfall, she thrilled with joy and ran to the encounter of him she had been expecting. He appeared. It was a man, also in plain garb and in the vigor of age, largesized and robust, with a piercing eye and somber, wily countenance. The young woman leaped at a bound into the arms of this personage, and passionately addressed him: "Hugh, I meant to ove..."