

No-one would have believed, in the last years of the nineteenth century, that human affairs were being watched from the timeless worlds of space. No-one could have dreamed that we were being scrutinized, as someone with a microscope studies creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water. Few men even considered the possibility of life on other planets. And yet, across the gulf of space, minds immeasurably superior to ours regarded this earth with envious eyes; and slowly, and surely, they drew their plans against us.