“Bon jour mes amis!” Here we are, again in Paris, where the preparation of the Exposition Universelle proceeds...yes, we’ll have one here too! And we all know how these things occur: time is lost initially, the inauguration date gets closer and then we must run to finish all, in a hurry. Luckily the technology helps, new materials are available to save time and efforts, this is the right time to experiment them. Mr. Eiffel reviewed his project and decided that, for the great tower he designed for this Expo, it is more convenient to use a material lighter than steel. And he rapidly put in place two nice lines for moulding Composites. But this year the Expo will unveil numerous new other technologies, don’t miss their details. Be careful, don’t get lost through the pavilions, the construction site is still open, and only God knows if we’ll be able to finish all within May first! Anyway, you follow me and I’ll show you in detail this new part of the ‘Ville Lumière’...

Here, on the quais of the Seine, a new piece of Paris is appearing, my friends! Construction of all styles to host the invited nations, glass houses for the exhibitions, great symbols of technical capability and grandeur! We can’t make a bad impression, the whole planet is looking at this event and they will judge us, at the end! Sure, we’re late: we wasted a lot of time deciding who’s the boss and now we must run to finish the job.

For the great tower, the main symbol of this year’s Expo, Mr. Gustave Eiffel (yes, the same man who made the inner structure of the Statue of Liberty, that our country kindly offered to New York a few years back) rapidly reviewed his plans and decided to experiment a new construction technique: he’s making the tower with Composites! Carbon fibres and Epoxy resins are quickly moulded under high pressure, to make long beams in two different designs: these can be easily transported and assembled at the crazy height of 324 metres! Look here, below, the final phase of the moulding operations and, on the right, the team of workers busy at painting the tower while this is still rising. One coat of paint will be enough for many years to come, since the new material doesn’t rust at all!

When the structure is finished, they will also install two modern lifts, to allow the visitors to reach the summit: it might even become a popular attraction!

Imagine, the Expo didn’t even start and many tourists are already pouring in to see the construction site! Special open-top boats have been built for this use – one is mooring right now, here on the left – from which the visitors, sailing on the Seine, enjoy the best views of our splendid town. This thing could become popular...

Here, above, they are finishing a building full of electric gizmos that will allow us to communicate through the air with the rest of the world: the height of the tower will surely help the positioning of the needed antennas. Below, using large insulated panels made nearby with Polyurethane foam, the Palais du Etrus - you’d call it the Refrigeration Palace – is under construction. It is destined to the exhibition of all the technologies for the refrigeration: yes, my friend, a cool storage in every house is another gift of the electricity, if you can afford to buy one of the Frigidaire cabinets that will be on show here. The first models are still coming from the factory on a barge, but in a few days they will be manufactured right here, in the finished building. They will make them injecting Polyurethane foam in a big steel casing with this modern equipment... but this new vacuum-assisted technology is still under patent protection, it is better to discourage these nosy chaps holding a photo camera, before they copy too much of the construction details! Clochards and triflers spend the day on the side of the river, but Police encourage them to move: it’s Expo time, now!

Did you notice the beautiful buildings just finished, here above, that will host the various national pavilions? Their architects really took pleasure in designing them, imagine how much they will end up in cost! On the right the huge globe, symbol of the world, that will welcome the visitors at the entrance gets the final touches: also on the cost of this artwork there are a lot of rumours, but what can we say... it’s la mode! When a lot of public money flows it must find a safe place to rest... or not? On your left you can appreciate how easy it is to lift the Composite beams on top of the tower: with a light crane they’re up in no time! Under the tower a symbol of the Nation is manufactured in multiple copies: our beloved Semeuse, the seedeter with her hair blown by the wind that appears miniaturised on our coins and stamps, is now available in large format and will decorate the Exhibition boulevards. Thermaformed in line with a modern equipment (please notice the steam-driven clamping and trimming stations, and the recovery of the scrap sides made on a roller to ease the recycling operations...) it is then hand-decorated by our painters, well-known around the globe. We could not avoid showing here our automobiles, built in the nearby Régie factory, that are carried around on a wooden causeway that crosses the whole area. It seems that they will become famous, in the near future! God save us...

An astonishing technology, these Composites: imagine, with few rolls of Carbon Fibre tissue you get a sort of sandwich (here below) that is laid on a hot steel mould mounted in a special press. Once the mould is closed an Epoxy Resin is injected on the tissue and reacts in a few seconds: you get, after a few minutes, a solid beam strong as the steel but half of its weight! Then the rough edges are trimmed and the beam can be mounted: isn’t that a true miracle? To speed up the operations, Mr. Eiffel set up two parallel production lines, one for the supporting beams and another for the diagonal ones. This way he’d be able to finish the tower in time! Standing on the platform above the first two presses, the Ingegnere (but... is that he himself??) is illustrating the details of the project to journalists convened here for a Press Conference. A rich buffet awaits them at the end of the interesting speech. That’s hard work... But... something sinister is taking place, here below! Elegant folks are discreetly exchanging bundles of banknotes in the quiet corners of the site: that has something to do with the construction contracts, it seems! The Police ought to check this more carefully, we could not accept that the cost of this Expo, funded with public money, would be inflated because of these illegal trafficking: here it’s France, parbleu! Far below, right in the angle, a fine painter is drawing the tower, and he can imagine it already finished. Well, folks, the guided tour ends here. It has been nice, as usual: thank you so much, Nitti!!