A CENTURY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING.*

The century which has just passed, the nineteenth of the Christian era, is distinguished from any of the preceding hundred-year periods in the world's history by the advances made in the cooperation of investigators in numerous branches of science in the formulation of doctrines regarding the nature and coordination of natural phenomena, which stand the test of experiment and calculation, thus leading to a nearer approximation to the understanding of the laws which govern such phenomena, and so to the development into a profession of the 'Art of directing the great sources of power in Nature for the use and convenience of Man,' which Art is entitled Civil Engineering. This definition is itself one of the most noteworthy products of the Nineteenth Century, and a study of the sequence of events and reasoning which led to its formulation is not without interest.

Ever since man became endowed with consciousness and the power of reasoning, he has been striving to solve the problems of the physical world around him in which he perceived matter in motion, which was evidenced to his senses by sight and touch, by sound and taste and smell, but which was devoid of sentience, so far as he could

*President's address before the American Society of Civil Engineers at the Annual Convention at Niagara Falls, N. Y., June 25, 1901. Transactions Am. Soc. C. E., XLV., 599.