SOME SOIL FACTORS AFFECTING TREE GROWTH 1

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It is just one hundred years since Liebig, in his famous report to the British Association upon the state of organic chemistry, delivered with vitriolic invective the death sentence to the theory held by contemporary plant physiologists that plants obtain their carbon from the soil. He did it in these words, “All explanations of chemists must remain without fruit, and useless, because, even to the great leaders of physiology, carbonic acid, ammonia, acids and bases are sounds without meaning, words without sense, terms of an unknown language, which awaken no thoughts

1 Address of the retiring vice-president and chairman of the Section on Agriculture, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Columbus, Ohio, December 30, 1939.