Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

BOOKS AS FRIENDS

Have you discovered that books are among the most profitable and faithful friends that you can make in this world? They never go back on you. They give you their best and ask nothing in return. They do not even ask that you read them carefully or that you take care of them after you have read them. All they want is that you enjoy them, keep them if you like them.

A book never asks that you make no new friends among their kind, that is, it is not jealous as human friends often are. Indeed, it knows that one of its duties is to create a desire in you to make more friends among books. It knows that if it has made a place in your mind for itself that nobody will ever take that place away however many more books will come to rest beside it in your mind.

When you have made a real friend of a book as I hope many of you have done take good care of it, put your name in it, keep it dusted, give it a place of its own on your bookshelf, for I am taking it for granted that you have a bookshelf of your own. If you have not do not rest until you have set one up - a short shelf to begin with which will grow as your friends among books increase and multiply.

The more good books you read and keep, the stronger and happier you will be. Books feed your mind in the same way that good food feeds your body. Fill your mind with them and you will

have little time to fret and complain, less time to make other people unhappy. Indeed, the chances are that the books will make you feel that you want to make other people happy because you are happy yourself.

Make friends of books then, they will never desert you.

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library