

“God Will Take Care of You” ~ Civilla Durfee Martin

This popular hymn of spiritual encouragement was written, in 1904, by Mr. and Mrs. Stillman Martin. It was composed while the Martins were spending several weeks as guest at the Practical Bible Training School at Lestershire, New York, where Mr. Martin was involved in helping the president of the school, John A. Davis, prepare a songbook. The Reverend W. Stillman Martin, a well-known Baptist evangelist, was invited to preach at a church some distance from the Bible school. That Sunday morning, Mrs. Martin became suddenly ill, making it impossible for her to accompany her husband to his preaching engagement. Mr. Martin seriously considered cancelling his speaking assignment, since it would be needful for him to be gone from her for a considerable time. Just then, however, their young son spoke up and said, “Father, don’t you think that if God wants you to preach today, He will take care of Mother while you are away?” Agreeing, Mr. Martin kept his preaching appointment, and the service proved to be unusually blessed of God, with several people professing Christ as Savior as a result of the sermon.

Returning later that evening, Mr. Martin found his wife greatly improved in health, and while he was gone she had, in fact, been busily engaged in preparing a new hymn text, inspired by the chance remark of their young son earlier that day. That same evening, Stillman Martin composed the music for his wife’s words just as they are still sung today. The next year, this hymn appeared in a collection, *Songs of Redemption and Praise*, compiled for the school by W. S. Martin and President John Davis. “God Will Take Care of You” soon became a favorite hymn of Christian people everywhere.

Civilla Durfee Martin was born on August 21, 1866, in Nova Scotia. She taught school and studied music for a time before marrying Dr. Martin. Following their marriage, she traveled and aided him greatly in his ministry and evangelistic campaigns. Together they collaborated in writing a number of gospel songs. Of this song, Civilla Martin said: *“I was confined to a sick bed in a Bible school in Lestershire, New York. My husband was spending several weeks at the school, making a songbook for the president of the school. “God Will Take Care of You” was written one Sunday afternoon while my husband went to a preaching appointment. When he returned I gave the words to him. He immediately sat down to his little Bilhorn organ and wrote the music. That evening he and two of the teachers sang the completed song. It was then printed in the songbook he was compiling for the school.”* Mrs. Martin is also know for writing the popular, gospel song text “His Eye Is On the Sparrow,” in which she collaborated with Charles Gabriel. Mrs. Martin died in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 9, 1948.

Walter Stillman Martin was born at Rowley, Essex County, Massachusetts, in 1862. After receiving his education at Harvard University, he was ordained to the Baptist ministry. Dr.

Martin became well known throughout the country for his Bible conference and evangelistic ministries. In 1916, Mr. and Mrs. Martin became members of the Disciples of Christ denomination, when he became a professor of Bible at the Atlantic Christian College in North Carolina. After 1919, Mr. and Mrs. Martin made their home in Atlanta, Georgia, while continuing their ministries until his home-going on December 16, 1935.

One of the lessons that any Christian leader soon realizes in ministering of God's people is that all believers need much encouragement and comfort from time to time. This hymn has been greatly used of God for this purpose.

A Blind man was seen crossing the street at a dangerous place in the Hronx, New York city. A friend nearby overheard him singing softly, "God will take care of you," and asked, "Why arc you singing that hymn?" He replied: "Because I must cross this dangerous street, and maybe one of the many wagons might strike me and I might get killed. But the thought came to me that, even if it did occur, my soul would.go straight to God. And if he led me across all right, it would be jlist another evidence of his care of me. So I could not help singing to myself, 'God will take care of you.' Hallelujah!"

A little Sunday school girl once told her mother she was never afraid to pass through a certain dark hallway leading to their home, "because," she explained, "I simply sing, 'God will take care of you,' and I always come through safely."

This hymn was sung at each session of the State Christian Endeavor Convention, Altoona, Pennsylvania, in Ioio, At the close of one of the sessions a man, touched by the song, inquired after salvation. A little later some delegates, while singing this song at their hotel, noticed several men at the door of a nearby barroom attracted by the singing. One had a glass of beer in his hand, which he quietly poured into the gutter leading to the street before the strains of the song were finished.

"God Will Take Care of You."

A gentleman walking along one of the streets of a large city was accosted by a boy who pleaded for a penny. The gentleman was at first inclined to send him away, but something in the boy's face forbade that, so he asked: "What do you want to do with a penny?"

"Buy bread, sir," was promptly answered.

"Have you had nothing to eat today?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Boy, are you telling me the truth?" asked the gentleman, looking in his face.

"Indeed I am, sir."

"Have you a father?" questioned the gentleman, now thoroughly interested in the boy.

"No, sir; father is dead."

"Where is your mother?"

"She died last night. Come with me and I will show you where mother is."

Taking the hand of the boy, the gentle

man followed his guide down a narrow alley, and stopped before a miserable place, the boy called home. Pushing open a door he pointed to his dead mother and said, "There is my mother, sir."

"Who was with your mother when she died?" asked the gentleman, deeply moved.

"Nobody but me, sir."

"Did your mother say anything before she died?"

"Yes, sir; she said: 'God will take care of you, my son.'"

Sooner than his dying mother had dared to hope, God had honored her faith by sending to her son one whose heart was touched with tenderest pity for his condition. The gentleman was a Christian, to whom God had entrusted much of this world's goods, and the little orphan was kindly cared for by him.

God in his Word is called the Father of the fatherless. He has said that none of them that trust in him shall be desolate, and it is safe to trust in his promise.— *Kind Words*.

*Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath His wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.*

Refrain

*God will take care of you,
Through every day, over all the way;
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you.*

*Through days of toil when heart doth fail,
God will take care of you;*

*When dangers fierce your path assail,
God will take care of you.*

Refrain

*All you may need He will provide,
God will take care of you;
Nothing you ask will be denied,
God will take care of you.*

Refrain

*No matter what may be the test,
God will take care of you;
Lean, weary one, upon His breast,
God will take care of you.*

Refrain