

# YOU NEVER CAN TELL

*Ella Wheeler Wilcox, SRC  
(1850-1919)*

You never can tell when you send a word,  
Like an arrow shot from a bow  
By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,  
Just where it may chance to go.  
It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend.  
Tipped with its poison or balm,  
To a stranger's heart in life's great mart,  
It may carry its pain or its calm.

You never can tell when you do an act  
Just what the result will be;  
But with every deed you are sowing a seed,  
Though the harvest you may not see.  
Each kindly act is an acorn dropped  
In God's [the Divine's] productive soil  
You may not know, but the tree shall grow,  
With shelter for those who toil.

You never can tell what your thoughts will do,  
In bringing you hate or love;  
For thoughts are things, and their airy wings  
Are swifter than carrier doves.  
They follow the law of the universe -  
Each thing must create its kind,  
And they speed o'er the track to bring you back  
*Whatever went out from your mind.*

